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Building Bridges - Visit to Sri Lanka

A.V. Balasubramanian travelled to Sri Lanka during the period 17th to 24th June. The trip was undertaken in his capacity as the Asian Coordinator for the project COMPAS (Comparing and Supporting Endogenous Development). During the course of the trip he visited various partners of the COMPAS project based at - Noul, Kurunegella, Navalpithiya etc. He also attended a two day convention of COMPAS partners in Sri Lanka hosted by ECO at Navalpithiya. A meeting was also held at Peradeniya which was attended by researchers and faculty from the University of Peradeniya and the Open University of Sri Lanka to review the existing programmes of collaboration between the academic community and the COMPAS members as well as discuss future possibilities.



A.V. Balasubramanian and Bertus Haverkort in an experimental farm at Sri Lanka

COMPAS Family gets together - International Workshop

An International Meeting of various partners of the project COMPAS (Comparing and Supporting Endogenous Development) will be taking place at Chennai in September and is being hosted by our centre. The COMPAS project has as its members 26 organisations including NGOs and University departments spread over Asia, Africa, Europe and Latin America. Currently, our centre is the coordinator for the Asian partners. The International Meeting will take place for a period of two weeks between September 17th and September 30th. Delegates are expected from eleven different countries from all over the world. The programme would include exchange of experiences between partners, interaction with various NGOs, Government Agencies, Academics and Research Institutions in India and field trips to various locations in Tamil Nadu, Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh.

New Projects at CIKS

Preparation of audio-visuals on non-chemical pest control

CAPART (Council for Advancement of Peoples' Action and Rural Technology) has sanctioned a project to our centre for preparation of three audio-visuals on - "Non-Chemical methods for pest control". Under this project, we would be preparing three audio-visuals on the topics (Neem, Biological pest control and cultural and social practices for pest control).

Conservation of Indigenous Genetic Resources

A project entitled "Community Seed Banks for Conservation of Indigenous Genetic Resources : Empowerment, Capacity Building and Training", has been sanctioned under the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) GEF/CCF Small grant programme. Under this project we would be taking up conservation of indigenous paddy and vegetable varieties involving 200 farmers in three blocks of Kanchipuram district.

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PROJECT WATCH

A round-up of our activities this quarter

Planning Meeting for COMPAS International Workshop

A meeting was held at the FRLHT office, Bangalore on 20th April to discuss and plan the International meeting of Compas partners which would be hosted by CIKS, Chennai. The Indian partners discussed the forthcoming workshop in Chennai. In this meeting the objectives of the workshop was spelt out. Details regarding the structure of the meeting, an overall plan for the field visits, were finalised.

Workshop on Vrکشayurveda

On 5th June our centre hosted a workshop on - "Vrکشayurveda : An introduction to Traditional Indian Plant Science". The objective of the workshop was to give an introduction and overview of traditional Indian plant science and present the work that is being carried out in this area by our centre for several years. The presentations were made by the CIKS research team. The participants included staff members from the department of botany of Madras Christian College, Stella Maris College, Ethiraj College and Women's Christian College. There were also representatives from Sri Jayendra Saraswathi College of Ayurveda and AMM Murugappa Chettiar Research Centre. As a follow-up to this meeting,

various colleges have expressed interest in collaborating with our centre to take up experiments based on traditional Indian plant Science.

Training on Organic Vegetable Gardening

The topic for the Trainers Training Programme was organic vegetable gardening held on 28th June. A quiz programme was conducted by K. Vijayalakshmi for our trainees to test the extent to which they have been able to grasp the lessons that has been taught to them over the last 10 months. The farmer trainees were divided into several groups and there was a very active and enthusiastic participation by the farmers. Farmers were also shown videos on vegetable gardening, mushroom cultivation and tree planting.

Using Diversity Award Partners Meeting

CIKS has been a recipient of using biodiversity award (IDRC, Canada) for its work on indigenous vegetable conservation involving women. A meeting of all partners of the using diversity award from South India was held at the Hulemagli village in Sirsi at Uttara Kanada between 21st April to 23rd April. K. Vijayalakshmi participated in this workshop and made detailed presentation about the work of CIKS

and the future potential of the project.

Workshop on Plant Extracts and Indigenous Seed Conservation

As a part of our ongoing Trainers Training Programme we had conducted a workshop on 4th May at our field station in Anjur. During this workshop farmers were taught to prepare several plant extracts for pest control. A session on the importance of indigenous varieties was also conducted. A couple of farmers who had been cultivating indigenous varieties as a part of our biodiversity conservation programme also shared their experiences in this workshop. The workshop ended with the participants viewing two video films on biodiversity conservation.

Meeting on Kitchen herbal gardens at Ninnakarai and Kumili

Two meetings were organised on 19th April in our field area at Ninnakarai and Kumili villages. The objective of the meetings, was to obtain inputs from a cross section of villagers, particularly women, about common ailments for which they were in need of medical attention. The plan is to produce a package of medicinal plants that can be helpful for these problems as part of a Kitchen Herbal Garden. The meetings were attended by K.S. Sudhakar and K. Subramanian of CIKS and Gowthaman, Ayurvedic Physician.

Training Workshop on Indigenous Health Care

On 27th May a workshop on preparation of certain ayurvedic medicines was conducted by Gowthaman. The trainees got to prepare Vyagrathi kashayam used for controlling fever, Thalisedi churanam which could be used for controlling cold, Oma thailam used for alleviating pain and Draksha lehyam for general health. All the trainees prepared this and also took samples for their use. They were also given instructions as to how to use them.

Review workshop on Vrکشayurveda and Biopesticides

Our centre has been involved in testing out a number of Vrکشayurveda recipes in the field for the last seven years. A number of college and school students have also been involved in several projects related to Vrکشayurveda with our guidance. Besides this we have also been preparing certain biopesticides based on the principles of Vrکشayurveda. In order to take stock of the work that we have done over the last few years and also to plan for future work in these areas we had a day long workshop on 3rd May at our centre. Besides our research staff our consultant Dr. Shyamsundar also participated in this meeting. Detailed presentations were made regarding the experiments done over the last few years and the outcome. Possibilities for future were also spelt out.

CIKS TALK

*Seminars, Discussions, Presentations,
Workshops, Fairs...*

Visit to Aduthurai Rice Research Station

Subhashini visited Aduthurai on April 18th to meet the scientists there and discuss the methodologies for setting up experiments in the rice field. On 30th May she made another visit to the research station and got 15 rice varieties from the germplasm collection of the research centre.

National Technology Day

K. Vijayalakshmi participated in the National technology day celebrations organised by the Murugappa Chettiar Research Centre. She gave a lecture on the "Relevance of vrkshayurveda in agriculture". There was a lively discussion following the lecture. MCRC has shown a keen interest in collaborating with us on vrkshayurveda research programmes.

Planning Meeting for Lecture Series on Protection of Indige- nous Knowledge

At the invitation of Prof. Nirmal Sengupta of Madras Institute of Development Studies (MIDS), A.V. Balasubramanian and K. Vijayalakshmi participated in the meeting that was held on 8th May for planning a series of workshops on protection and development of traditional knowledge. Suggestions were made about various

areas that could be taken up for discussion and resource persons and panelists were identified.

Exhibition and Seminar on Home Gardening and Horticulture at Chennai

The horticulture growers association had organised a seminar on the latest techniques in horticulture and home gardening on 20th May at Virugambakkam in Chennai. There was also an exhibition as a part of this. We participated in this exhibition and displayed our work and publications. This gave us an opportunity to interact with several farmers. S. Ramesh and S. Arumugasamy participated in the exhibition.

Visit to FRLHT and AME, Bangalore

A.V. Balasubramanian and K. Vijayalakshmi travelled to Bangalore between 24th and 26th May. During the visit they had discussions with Dr. Padma Venkat of FRLHT to explore collaborative work that can be taken up between CIKS and FRLHT in the area of Vrksayurveda. They also met Mr. Joe D'Souza, Executive Director of AME (Agriculture, Man and Ecology) to discuss the possibility of undertaking collaborative efforts in the area of organic farming.

Working group meeting on Aquatic Biodiversity

A.V. Balasubramanian attended the meeting of the Thematic Working group on - "Aquatic Biodiversity" that was held at the Zoological survey of India at Chennai on 6th June. This thematic group is part of the nationwide effort to develop the National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan.

LSPSS Meeting at Coimbatore

A.V. Balasubramanian attended the meeting of the General Body and the Executive Committee of Lok Swasthya Parampara Samvarthan Samithi that met at Coimbatore on 9th June.

Review Meeting of NBSAP at Delhi

A.V. Balasubramanian attended the mid-term review meeting of the National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan on 13th & 14th June. He is the convenor of the thematic working group on Health and Biodiversity.

Workshop on Seed Conservation at Bangalore

A five day residential workshop on different aspects of seed conservation was organised by Green Foundation, Bangalore between 18th to 22nd of June near Hosur. Our Research Associate Subhashini Sridhar

attended this workshop. The resource persons for this workshop were from the Seed Savers Network, Australia and from Auroville. The workshop covered several aspects of in-situ seed conservation and community seed banks. It was also interspersed with several field visits and practical sessions.

25th Anniversary of MCRC

On 28th June A.M.M. Murugappa Chettiar Research Centre (MCRC) had convened a meeting that was organised to commemorate the completion of 25 years of the centre. A.V. Balasubramanian participated in the meeting and in a discussion to formulate a strategy for MCRC work for the next ten years.

Survey for Indigenous Vegetable Seeds

Our researcher K. Subramanian made a five day survey between 23rd - 27th April in the villages of Dindigul district for indigenous vegetable varieties. The idea of this visit was to increase the diversity of our existing collection and also to have access to more seeds for distribution. He was successful in getting six varieties of three vegetables.

Centre for Indian Knowledge Systems
Educational and Training Material on Indigenous Health and Agriculture : Books - Posters - Stickers - Directories - Video Films

Pests of Paddy - Posters Series



A set of three posters covering various pests of paddy and their control measures has just been brought out by our centre. Predators have also been included. These four colour posters are bilingual and are available in English, Hindi and English, Tamil.

Price : Rs.75/- per set

How to Order?

To obtain copies please send a Money Order or Demand Draft favouring "Centre for Indian Knowledge Systems" payable at Chennai. Cheques are NOT acceptable. We also do not send books by VPP.

VISITORS BOOK
A look at who's been dropping in at CIKS

* Lawyer Ms. Aparna Vasu visited us on 4th April. She is working in the area of "Mediation" and she was interested in the role of traditional institutions in this effort.

* Mr. Na. Muthusamy of Koothu-p-pattarai Trust visited us on 23rd April.

* Sri T.K.V. Desikachar and Smt. Menaka Desikachar of Krishnama charya Yoga Manidram visited us on 4th May.

* Ms. Ranjana Subramanian of N logue and Mr. Nathan visited us on 5th May.

* Mr. Murali, Secretary of Horticultre growers association visited us on 16th May.

* Mr. Karthik Subbaraman, journalist visited us on 22nd May.

* Dr. Geetha Rani of M.S. Swaminathan Research Foundation visited us on 2nd June in connection with the survey of traditional technologies

that is being taken up under the National Agriculture and Technological programme to discuss the possible involvement of our Centre in this survey.

* Mr. L. Subramani, freelance journalist visited us on June 13th and interviewed A.V. Bala subramanian about the activities of the centre. Based on the interview he wrote an article on the work of CIKS in the Economic times dated 17th June.

* Mr. Joe D'Souza, Executive Director and Mr. Daniel Anand Raj, Area Team Coordinator – TN from Agriculture, Man, Ecology (AME) - based at Bangalore visited our centre on 28th June for exploring possible ways in which we could collaborate in work relating to sustainable agriculture.

* Mr. Gowtham Shankar from IDEA, Vishakapatnam visited us on 29th June.

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