

## **I. ESTABLISHMENT OF INTERNATIONAL AVIAN RESEARCH CENTRE, UNIVERSITY OF CALICUT**

- i) Submitted a proposal for establishing an International Avian Research Centre (IARC) in Calicut University, as a collaborative venture between the University of Calicut (UoC) and Kerala Veterinary and Animal Sciences University. The IARC is conceived as an independent interdisciplinary centre of advanced research especially focussing on Avian Biology, Wildlife Sciences and Zoonoses, and management issues related to species conservation.
- ii) In this regard, an MoU was signed between the University of Calicut (UoC) and Kerala Veterinary and Animal Sciences University (KVASU).
- iii) The MoU was signed by the respective registrars of the Universities in the presence of the Honorable Minister of Forests, Animal Husbandry and Zoos, Government of Kerala in his chamber on 21/08/2019.
- iv) After the signing of the MoU, on the day both the Vice-Chancellors decided to conduct specific long term courses and short term programs as training and certificate courses as inter-university joint programs.
- v) The MoU specifically entrusts IARC to take-up joint programs in collaboration with KVASU as per the set objectives of IARC.
- vi) A core committee was formed at the level of Vice-Chancellors of both Universities to support, advise and monitor the activities of the IARC
- vii) The establishment of IARC is the first time that an International Centre was established as an inter-university collaborative venture to promote advanced research in specific avian and associated themes in the country.
- viii) Further, the undersigned (Dr Zubair Medammal, Assistant Professor, Department of Zoology, Calicut University) was appointed as the Coordinator of the centre to initiate and proceed with IARC's activities and organize its developmental program.
- ix) Subsequently, the Vice-Chancellor has kindly allotted the second floor of the old Life Science Building for the functioning of IARC. Since a new building is being built for Science Block, the Vice-Chancellor has also kindly decided to allot a dedicated independent space for IARC in that block.

## **II. SENSITIZATION PROGRAMME FOR STUDENTS AND RESEARCHERS**

- i) On 04/01/2020 the IARC organized a sensitization on wildlife focusing on snakes and their ecology.
- ii) The major aim of the program was to convey the scientific message on ecosystem services of snakes, the need for their conservation, and how to handle conflict situations involving snakes in the specific socio-ecological and environmental context of the state.
- iii) The program was inaugurated by the Registrar, University of Calicut. The inaugural session and subsequent technical session were also attended by the Registrar (UoC), The Director of Qatar Zoo, and former Director of Salim Ali Centre for Ornithology and Natural History-SACON (a MoEFCC national Centre of Excellence”).
- iv) In-house faculties and Head of the Department of Zoology and other departments also contributed significantly to the success of the program
- v) For the program, external experts were brought from various places as resource persons, herpetologists, and specialists in ecological / wildlife management and conservation.

- vi) The participants included more than 50 students from various academic institutions across different districts of Kerala.
- vii) The participants were imparted with hands-on training on the ecological relationships among various taxa focussing on reptilians.
- viii) They were also given basic training in managing ecological conflicts among snakes and human beings.
- ix) As Coordinator of IARC, Dr Zubair Medammal (Department of Zoology) coordinated the whole program.

### **III. SPECIAL LECTURE - PROF. (DR.) MARC D. ABRAMS, PENN STATE UNIVERSITY, USA**

- i) On 16/01/2020, a Special Lecture on 'The Impacts of Historical Ecology and Global Change – Land Use and Climate' by Prof. (Dr.) Marc D. Abrams (Steimer Professor, Department of Ecosystem Science and Management, Pennsylvania State University, USA) was organized on behalf of IARC in the university campus.
- ii) The special lecture was inaugurated by the Dean of Science, the University of Calicut and various heads of the departments participated.
- iii) The lecture was attended by postgraduate and research students of various departments of the university as well as from neighbouring and other institutions including academicians from KVASU.
- iv) Further to the lecture Prof. (Dr.) Marc D. Abrams also expressed his interest in initiating collaborative programs with the research centre, on climate change, forestry, and wildlife-related issues.

### **IV. PROPOSAL FOR INTEGRATED MSC (BIOSCIENCE) PROGRAM AT IARC**

- i) A proposal to start M.Sc. (Bioscience) Integrated Programme at IARC was submitted upon the call from the Principal Secretary, Higher Education Council, Government of Kerala was submitted by the Coordinator (IARC).
- ii) Subsequently, the program was approved and the necessary process/formalities to start the program is in progress.
- iii) On the direction of the Vice-Chancellor, a committee has been formed to formulate regulations regarding the conduct of the M.Sc. (Bioscience) Integrated Programme at IARC, University of Calicut
- iv) This is the first time in the University that an integrated M. Sc. (Bioscience) Programme being started.



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