

The workshop on hypospadias with live operations, operative videos and short discussions covering all related topics was held to develop better skills to identify and perform the surgery early in childhood (6 months to 1 year). It was of interest to urologists, paediatric surgeons and plastic surgeons as the incidence of hypospadias is increasing over the years. Hemanth Pathak (TN Medical College and BYL Nair Charitable Hospital, Mumbai) spoke on introduction to hypospadiology and general consideration and an overview of hypospadias management. According to Pathak, incidence of hypospadias is as high as 1 in 125 live male births. In the live video session, he showed the Snodgrass repair for distal hypospadias in a two-year-old child. In another video session, he showed preputial onlay for distal hypospadias following the Asopa Procedure in a 14-year-old child. Amilal Bhat (SP Medical College, Bikaner) spoke on Snodgrass repair for proximal hypospadias, preputial tube urethroplasty for proximal hypospadias, ra-

tional approach in management of chordee without hypospadias and hypospadias dressing and post-operative care. In the live video sessions, he showed various surgical techniques followed in hypospadias. The operations performed to correct hypospadias vary according to the degree of abnormality. The extra foreskin is sometimes needed to construct a new urethra. When the operation is completed, the extra skin is removed so the child will look circumcized. S. B. Mane (Department of Paediatric Surgery, JJ Hospital, Mumbai) spoke on 'Children with severe hypospadias – Evaluation for intersex, and hypospadias repair with preputioplasty'. R. B. Nerli (KLES Kidney Foundation) spoke on the use of testosterone prior to hypospadias repair. He also spoke on the psychological, social and sexual effects of hypospadias. Although it is relatively common, it is little discussed in the field of psychology. The current practice is to advise regarding operation early in childhood, in order to avoid emotional consequences due to

awareness of a congenital deficiency and the experience of a surgery. In the same context, it is now seen as important that the parents accompany the child during the pre- and post-operative processes. Another principle objective is to prepare the parents for the child's surgery, giving them information on surgical procedures, duration of hospitalization, possible complications and the required post-operative care. In the concluding session all the speakers discussed the etiology (hereditary, genetic, endocrinal and environmental factors) of hypospadias and their surgical correction experiences in hypospadias.

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MEETING REPORT

Biodiversity, bioresources and biotechnology for sustainable livelihood of rural community*

The conference was attended by more than 250 delegates from various research institutions and colleges. The Department of Biotechnology Natural Resource Awareness Club (DNA Club) members from Tamil Nadu also attended the conference.

S. Kannaiyan (National Biodiversity Authority) inaugurating the conference explained various types of biodiversity prevalent in our country and the different measures to be taken up by the National

Biodiversity Authority for protecting and conserving biodiversity. He stressed that our community needs more alternatives. He also discussed GM crops and their importance and stated that use of GM crops as an alternative for the country's food security was essential. M. A. Vijayalakshmi (VIT, Vellore) delivered a special lecture on biotechnology for pharmaceutical industry. She discussed recent advances and challenges, and stages of biopharmaceutical production.

In the first technical session, R. R. Rao delivered a lecture on 'Floristic diversity in India: Conservation and bioprospection'. He noted that classical biology is important for doing any advanced research. R. Govindarajan (NBRI, Lucknow) gave a lecture on the need for standardization of herbal drugs, with special emphasis on chromatographic techniques. He gave an idea about the chromatographic techniques used for the secondary metabolites isolation. P. Nammalwar Rajan (formerly at CMFRI) delivered a lecture on the present status of marine biotechnological research and development in India. He explained about the potential fields for biotechnological research in the areas of marine, biomedical, marine toxins, marine industrial chemicals, mariculture and marine bio-fouling. Rajalakshmi (MSSRF, Chennai) gave a lecture on bioresources in the Muthupet mangrove forest, Tamil Nadu. She explained the biotechnology option for enhancing nutrition security. She noted that improving or maintaining yield potential of crops under increased abiotic stresses will be a challenge for the future. The technical session concluded with a talk by Mary N. Mohankumar (IGCAR), who dwelt on the knowledge of the cytogenetic biomarkers for healthcare and envi-

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ronmental sustainability. Novel, simple and sensitive biochemical, physiological, cytogenetic and morphological methods were proposed by her.

B. Sesikaran (NIN) discussed biosafety issues in rDNA technology for food crops, and also the developments of rDNA technology that have led to a global increase in the number of commercial GM crops. R. Boopathy (Bharathiar University), delivering a lecture on enzymes in biotechnology, mentioned that more than 30,000 genes and their products are known, but only a little over 10,000 enzymes have been classified by the scientists. V. Sundaraesan (CIMAP) dwelt upon the diversity of MAPs, the utilization of plant resources and CIMAP's successful leads. He explained how CIMAP had formulated the products from the plants, and also about its marketing strategies. J. R. B. Alfred (formerly at ZSI) explained how biodiversity prospecting helps in sustainable development. He added that biotechnology offers a way to convert biological resources into economically valuable products; biotechnology and biodiversity are interdependent and unfortunately grossly misused. *Rachycentron canadum* (COBIA), a potential resource for coastal aquaculture in India, was discussed by V. Sundaraj (*Sea Queen*, Chennai). The urgent need to popularize the species and

its culture technology was also stressed by him. S. S. Rajan (University of Madras) discussed how crystallography is useful for designing novel and life-saving drugs. He explained that at present several studies are being carried out using crystallographic information to understand the drug-protein/DNA and protein-protein/DNA interactions, which reduces the choice of molecules to be experimented. The session was followed by 12 oral and ten poster presentations related to the theme of the conference.

Managalam Balasubramaniam (EXNORA, Chennai) explained how rural women could improve the livelihood. K. Ramalingam (Government Arts College, Chennai) discussed the role of biotic association and ecosystem impact on biodiversity of fishes. He raised the question whether we should continue our assault on the environment and remain as mute spectators, witnessing the decline in fish population and their diversity. M. Sakthivel (Aquaculture Foundation of India) delivered a lecture on seaweed cultivation. He explained the characteristics of the *Kappaphycus* seaweed and its geographical distribution as well as the advantages of marketing this seaweed. He also noted that the Government of Tamil Nadu has issued an order supporting seaweed cultivation and also that he has formulated

SHGs for marketing seaweeds. Ram Boojh (UNESCO, New Delhi) shared his experiences in the 2007 International Climate Change Conference at Bali, Indonesia. S. A. Salgare (Salgare Foundation, Mumbai) delivered a lecture on the effect of herbicide maleic hydrazide (MH) on pollen germination and tube length of stored pollen of Apocyanaceae. Lakshman Nayak (Berhampur University) delivered a lecture on bioaccumulation of trace metal in two species of crabs from Chilka lagoon, along east coast of India. K. M. Muthuchelian (Madurai Kamaraj University) explained the various areas of the biodiversity and livelihood improvement strategies with the help of people's participation.

Two-day parallel sessions were organized separately for school students. Various competitions relevant to the theme of the conference were organized.

C. K. Sreedharan (Chief Conservator of Forests, Tamil Nadu) gave the valedictory address on the wildlife biodiversity of India.

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