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## International Orchid Fest

### Minister Declares Special Agri Zone in Wayanad

The international Orchid fest organised at RARS, Ambalavayal was inaugurated by Minister for Agriculture V. S. Sunil Kumar on 17 March.

Minister also declared Wayanad as special agricultural zone for floriculture and specialty rice on the occasion.

In his inaugural speech the minister said that the special agricultural zone project will help the farmers to enhance productivity and explore international market, leading to higher income. 'Conservation of traditional rice varieties, propagation of millets and expansion of aromatic rice farming will be taken up in seventy acres along with fruit village projects in ten villages. The rice project will be spread to 450 acres by 20-21 fiscal and fruit villages will be extended to all parts of the district.', said the minister.

The Orchid Fest jointly organised by KAU and The Orchid Society of India (TOSI) included a national conference on current Trends in Conservation, Sustainable Development and Social benefits of medicinal and



Minister for Agriculture V. S. Sunil Kumar inaugurates Orchid Fest at Ambalavayal on March 17

floricultural significance of Orchids and an international Orchid show.

C. K. Saseendran MLA delivered Key-note address in the inaugural function presided over by Ambalavayal Grama Panchayat President Seetha Vijayan. KAU Executive Committee member Dr. A. Anil Kumar, Director of Research Dr. P. Indira Devi, ICAR ADG Dr. P. Janakiram, TOSI President Prof. Promila Pathak, KAU GC member Cheruvayal Raman and RARS head Dr. P. Rajendran spoke.

## GC Approves 666 crore budget

### Thrust on farmer friendly initiatives



K. V. Vijayadas MLA presenting KAU budget 2018-19 in GC meet

KAU budget 2018-19 with an outlay of Rs. 666.70 crore was approved by the annual meeting of General Council held at Vellanikkara on 24 March 2018.

The budget presented by K. V. Vijayadas MLA in the meeting chaired by Vice-Chancellor Dr. R. Chandrababu envisages a series of innovative programmes in academic, research and extension sectors.

K. V. Vijayadas MLA described the budget as an attempt to ensure all possible support to farming community.

The estimated receipt under nonplan is 340.40 crore, that under plan is 82.5 crore and a total receipt of 242.80 is anticipated under external aided projects. The non plan expenditure is pegged at 519.38 crore while the estimated plan expenditure is 77.70 crore.

Vice-Chancellor assured the house that initiatives for institution building, academic improvement, strengthening of research and extension activities will be taken up in a time bound manner.

#### BUDGET HIGHLIGHTS

- Support for Attapadi farming, Scientific intervention in Kanthallur-Vattavada belt and Seed mission for enhanced planting material production.
- New College at Ambalavayal, New department for Organic farming, Finishing school for VHSE students.
- Enhancement of Seats for BSc (Ag), Capacity building programme for students.
- Development of drought tolerant varieties, Use of nano technology for productivity enhancement, Farmer innovation centres, Technology incubators and entrepreneurship hubs.
- Village adoption, Package for urban agriculture, Farm science congress, farm tourism models and KAU web portal.

Executive Committee members K. Rajan MLA, G. S. Jayalal MLA, Dr. A. Anil Kumar and Dr. T. Pradeep Kumar, Registrar in charge Dr. P. Indira Devi and other University officers were present. K. Krishnan kutty MLA, M. Vincent MLA, Dr. B. Suma, P. K. Sreekumar, Kunjammad Kutty, Dr. S. Estelitta, Anil Radhakrishnan, K. D. Babu, C. H. Muthu, Vasim Fajl, Abin George, Dr. Thomas George, Dr. Sakir Hussein and Dr. K. K. Sathyan participated in the discussions.

# Awards & Recognitions

## Award for KAU IPR Cell



**KAU IPR Cell Coordinator Dr. C. R. Elsy receives award from Union Minister Suresh Prabhu**

IPR Cell of KAU received Special mention award for best facilitation of registration of GI and promotion of registered GI in India.

The award was presented by Suresh Prabhu, Union Minister of Commerce and Industry in a function organised by Ministry of Commerce and Industry on April 26, World Intellectual Property day 2018 at New Delhi.



**T.P. Anseera**, PG Scholar, CoH, Vellanikkara secured Best Paper Presentation Award in the international conference on Sustainable Development: Futuristic Challenges and Prospects jointly organised by Extension Education Society and TNAU at Coimbatore during 09-10 March 2018.

The award was for the paper on Information Communication Technology for management of Natural Resources Co-authored by Dr. Jiju P. Alex, Professor.

## Best Thesis Award



**Priyanka S. Chandran receiving award for the best MSc. thesis on Spices, Medicinal and Aromatic crops**

Priyanka S. Chandran, PhD scholar, Department of Plantation Crops and Spices, CoH, Vellanikkara bagged Smt. Vijaya V. Korikanthimath award for the best MSc. thesis on Spices, Medicinal and Aromatic crops published in India during 2016. The award constituted by IISR, Kozhikode was presented to her during the SYMSAC IX organised by Indian Society for Spices at SASRD, Nagaland University, Medziphema Campus, during 15-17<sup>th</sup> March 2018. She undertook research on Collection and characterization of unique genotypes of nutmeg (*Myristica fragrans* Houtt.) under the guidance of Dr. N. MiniRaj, Professor.

**Akhil Ajith**, PG Scholar, CoA, Vellayani secured Best Poster Presentation Award in the international conference on Sustainable Development: Futuristic Challenges and Prospects jointly organised by Extension Education Society and TNAU at Coimbatore during 09-10 March 2018.



The award was for the poster on *Catalytic Role of FPO in doubling farmers' Income*, Co-authored by Dr. N. Kishore Kumar, Professor.

## National Bio diversity Award for Wayanad Farmer



**Vice-Chancellor Dr. R. Chandrababu congratulates Shaji N. M.**

Shaji N. M., Mananthawady, Wayanad district has been selected for National Biodiversity Award (special citation), 2018 by National Biodiversity Authority (NBA).

Shaji, who is conserving a wide spectrum of tuber crops including wild tubers, paddy and vegetable crops under organic cultivation has been selected for individual award for conservation of domesticated species.

According to communication received by KAU, which facilitated Shaji's nomination for the award, the award ceremony will be held at PJTSAU, Hyderabad on 22 May 2018, the International Day for Bio diversity.

Shaji met KAU Vice-chancellor Dr. R. Chandrababu to thank the University for the guidance and support.

Vice-Chancellor congratulated Shaji for the award and said that the university as well as whole farming community in Kerala should feel proud of this award.

'I am happy to see a farmer from Wayanad got this award and he was guided by KAU. The University has been constantly and relentlessly supporting the farming fraternity and hence this is a matter of pride for us as well. Farmer First is our motto and all our endeavours are meant for farmers' benefit. Our efforts for guiding farmers to national recognition has also been recognized. I wish to help more farmers from Kerala win national recognitions,' said the Vice-Chancellor.

Director of Research Dr. P. Indira Devi, Director of Extension Dr. Jiju P. Alex and KAU IPR Cell coordinator Dr. C. R. Elsy were present.

## Coconut Mall, Paddy Heritage Village Inaugurated

Minister for Agriculture V. S. Sunil Kumar inaugurated a Coconut mall, the heritage paddy village project and paddy harvest at Pilicode on March 18.

In his inaugural speech the Minister said that the Government will ensure financial support for the heritage paddy village project and declare Pilicode as the first heritage paddy seed village in the state.

The new mall at RARS will promote agri entrepreneurship in the area, minister said. Value added products produced from coconut, fruits and vegetables in the station will be made available for public from the mall.



*Minister V. S. Sunil Kumar inaugurates harvest festival at heritage paddy project at Pilicode on March 18*

The function was presided over by M. Rajagopalan MLA. Panchayat President T. V. Sreedharan, KAU Executive Committee member Dr. A. Anil Kumar, Director of Research Dr. P. Indira Devi, Comptroller E. P. Rajamohan and Associate Director Dr. P. R. Suresh participated.

*"Government of Kerala is committed to paddy development programmes across the state. The Paddy heritage village project in Pilicode will be fully supported by the state Government"*

**- Minister**

## KVKs to promote Integrated Farming, Revive rice production systems

The three day pre action plan meet of KVKs of Kerala and Lakshadweep held from March 1 to 3 resolved to implement coordinated programmes for extensive revival of rice production systems and promotion of integrated farming systems in the state.

KAU Vice-Chancellor Dr. R. Chandrababu inaugurated the meeting on March 1. The Vice-Chancellor in his inaugural address appreciated the vibrant and vital extension services rendered by KVKs for transferring the technologies developed by the research system. He also called upon the KVK scientists to be sensitive to the needs of local farmers and plan

interventions to improve their livelihood. KAU Director of Research Dr. P. Indira Devi raised the multiple challenges faced by the agricultural sector and called upon the scientists of KVKs to work out strategies to address the concerns about quality of the farm produce as well as income of farmers.

Dr. Jiju P. Alex, Director of Extension pointed out that KVKs are best equipped to extend viable farming models since they only combine expertise of different disciplines., Dr. D. V. Srinivasa Reddy, Principal Scientist, ATARI, Bengaluru insisted on need based action plans including training programmes.



*KAU Vice-Chancellor Dr. R. Chandrababu inaugurating the three day pre action plan meet of KVKs of Kerala and Lakshadweep*

## Awareness the key to combat climate change : Expert

Environmentalist and former KFRI scientist Dr. S. Sankar has called for a weathermatic approach to mitigate the challenges posed by climatic change.

Inaugurating the world meteorology day celebrations at Academy for Climate Education and Research (ACCER) of KAU, Dr. Sankar said that we are neither weather ready nor climate

smart, as the scenario demands. 'How's the weather is the first query a britisher will raise but Indians in general and Keralites in particular are

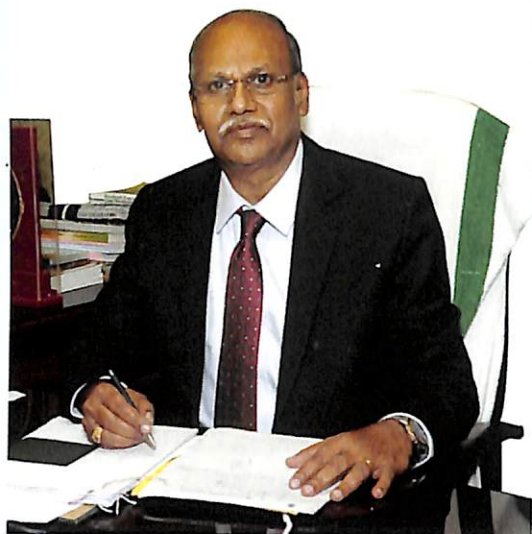
not bothered to know the weather or effect of its fluctuations. We are yet to realise that weather fluctuations affect our life in many ways. The awareness on ill effects of climate change will necessarily ignite thinking on ways to overcome it. Proper awareness is essential to even comprehend the theme of this meteorology day *ie.* Weather ready, Climate smart and water wise.', he said. Dr. A. B. Anitha, Executive Director, CWRDM, Kozhikode delivered the key note address. She pointed out that even as demand for water is increasing, water resources are getting depleted, on

account of natural variability as well as human interventions in nature.

' Though we receive 2.6 times unit rainfall than rest of the country, we have to support 2.7 times more population with it. Thus the per capita water availability in Kerala is only 9,880 liters whereas the corresponding figure in Rajasthan is 16,000 litres. Yet we call our state a land of rivers.', she said.

Director of Research Dr. P. Indira Devi and Dr P. O. Nameer spoke on environmental protection and conservation of natural resources.

## *Message from the Vice-Chancellor*



# **Enhancing water productivity- Need of the hour**

**W**ater has always been a valuable natural resource and it is becoming scarce. It is very much essential and cannot be locally manufactured or imported as in the case of other produces. Water is also a component of life in all living beings. Unless we care for our water resources and optimize their use, future generations will be deprived of this precious, finite commodity.

Protection of natural water sources and recharging ground water are important strategies. Haritha Keralam mission promoted by the Government of Kerala has succeeded in renovation of many water resources and the resultant relief we experienced this summer is apparent and appreciable. The organised movement to clean the streams and tributaries of major rivers had a telling effect in water conservation. Not to forget the rejuvenation of many wells and ponds taken up across the state with public involvement and Government funding. While the assets so recreated have to be protected and nurtured, more such activities need to be undertaken for conservation of ground water.

At the same time producing enough food for the world population, projected to touch 7.8 billion in 2025, is another challenge we have to confront with. Agriculture is the largest consumer of water and the gross use of green and blue water would grow manifold in view of increasing demand for food. Irrigation accounts for about 72% of global and 90% of developing-country water withdrawals. As pressure on available land and water resources increase, achieving higher water productivity is the only pragmatic option.

Water Productivity, defined as the physical or economic output per unit of water application or as crop yield per cubic meter of water consumption, is a highly relevant and critical factor directly linked to production of food for ever enhancing population. In the broadest sense water productivity reflects the need to derive more food, income, livelihood and ecological benefits at lesser social and environmental costs per unit of water consumed. Increasing water productivity is particularly relevant in water scarce areas. Many arable areas in India in general and those in Kerala in particular are not water rich as they are believed to be. This brings to light an imminent need to enhance water productivity.

With the increase in demand for irrigation water competition across water-using sectors also increase and the challenge is to produce more food with less water. This goal will be realistic only if appropriate strategies are found for water savings and for more efficient water uses in agriculture. Water productivity varies from field to field and depends on many factors, such as crop patterns and climate, field water management, land and infrastructure, and inputs including labour, fertilizer and machinery. Therefore it is imperative that the controllables among these are efficiently managed to attain maximum water productivity.

Increase in water productivity can be achieved both by the increase in crop yield and improvement in basin efficiency, but major contribution comes from increase in the crop yield. Better cultivars and better agronomy are key factors in enhancing water productivity. The stress should be on increasing crop yield and several proven agro techniques to achieve this are in vogue. For example, SRI technique in rice is a potent tool to enhance productivity by using lesser water. Micro irrigation is another successful method for increasing water productivity.

Generally water productivity in farmers' fields has been lower than experimental plots. This underlines the need to educate farmers about the practices to enhance water productivity and transfer appropriate technologies to them. Making people aware of the techniques to enhance water productivity and empowering them to adopt such techniques is the need of the hour. I take this opportunity to solicit more attention to this need and more efforts in this regard. Let's use water more efficiently and increase crop productivity and farmers' income.

## KAU Models Enthuse Maharashtra Minister

KAU's Food Security Army (FSA) and allied farm mechanisation protocols are excellent concepts worth emulating, said Maharashtra minister Deepak Vasant Kesarkar.

Interacting with KAU Vice-Chancellor Dr. R. Chandrababu after visiting ARS, Mannuthy, the minister of state for Home, Finance and planning, Maharashtra, said that he wants to have a tie up with KAU to replicate the models in Maharashtra. 'I am impressed by the Food Security Army, Agro Machinery Operation and Service Centers (AMOSCs), Mobile units for Agro machinery service and



*Maharashtra Minister Deepak Kesarkar in conversation with Vice-Chancellor Dr. R. Chandrababu*

repairs, which are all excellent models. Growth of farmers' income is possible only through such innovative and pragmatic approaches. I want to extend these models to Maharashtra, may be in some districts (to start with), he said.

Vice-Chancellor offered support for replicating FSA, AMOSC and other allied models in Maharashtra. 'Extending our technology for agricultural development in other states is highly satisfying. We are only happy to support the move through Government of Kerala,' said Dr. R. Chandrababu.

Registrar Dr. S. Leenakumary, Director of Research Dr. P. Indira Devi, Agricultural mechanisation Special Officer Dr. U. Jai kumaran and ARS head Dr. A. Latha participated in the interactions.

## Minister Calls for Optimum use of ICT

Four new Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) developed by KAU's Centre for e-learning (CeL) was launched by Minister for Agriculture V. S. Sunilkumar on April 13.

In his inaugural address the minister called for the optimum use of ICT to strengthen agricultural development programmes.

'KAU, with required expertise and know how, should take up the responsibility of guiding farmers in adopting and adapting to technologies. Since the agricultural technologies are developed in KAU labs, this University has the right and responsibility to propagate them. If this responsibility is not discharged, unscientific practices will be spread

### NEW MOOCs

- \* Safe food-our right for good health
- \* Wealth from waste
- \* Poly Kitchen Garden-nutritional sufficiency at family level
- \* Forests & Sustainable Cities

and the farmers will suffer,' he said. The minister also distributed certificates for persons who successfully implemented lessons learnt from online courses of CeL.

KAU Vice-Chancellor Dr. R. Chandrababu said that online courses facilitate global dissemination of knowledge and support skill development. 'KAU is the pioneer institution

in online courses in agri-culture. The four MOOC courses being launched, aim at aiding sustain-able development and support objectives of Haritha Keralam mission. I would like to see more such courses being formulated,' he said.

The function presided over by K. Rajan MLA was attended by Executive Committee members Dr. A. Anil Kumar and Dr. K. Aravindakshan; VFPCCK CEO Jeeja Kumari, KAU General Council members Dr.B.Suma, P. K. Sreekumar, C.H. Muthu and K.D. Babu, Director of Research Dr. P. Indira Devi, Director of Extension Dr. Jiju P. Alex, heads of institutions, teachers and students.

## KAU, UK University plans Tie-Up

Coventry University, UK and Kerala Agricultural University have decided to explore the possibilities of collaboration in academic and research activities.

The decision was taken in a discussion between Coventry University representatives Mark Holton - Director of Group Organization Development and Dr. Andrew Turner - Associate Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Teaching and Learning) and KAU officials held on February 3.

The identified areas for collaboration are Development of climate resilient water management strategies in command area of river diversification system, student exchange programmes in biotechnology and molecular biology, Organic agriculture, Bio-solid waste management technologies and institutional intervention for sustainable agriculture and rural development, said Dr. P. Indiradevi, Director of Research, KAU.



*Coventry University representatives with KAU officials*

Mark Holton evinced keen interest in the various farmer intervention activities and technologies developed by the University. The Coventry University has a Research Centre on Organic Agriculture and research is being carried out in various fields like agro-ecology, intercropping, aquatic systems, management of organic waste and grey water etc., said Dr. Andrew Turner.

## Academic Council nod for New College, Seat enhancement

Academic Council meeting held on February 22 cleared the proposals to increase the seats in existing colleges and establish a new agricultural college at Ambalavayal in Wayanad.

Vice-Chancellor Dr. R. Chandrababu, who chaired the meeting attributed the increase in seats to heavy demand for BSc (Hons) degree course. 'The number of seats in agriculture colleges in the state has been stagnant for several years while the demand has been constantly increasing. The insufficiency of seats has prompted aspiring students to seek admissions outside the state. By increasing the number of seats we can provide opportunity for quality education to more students from the state.', he said.

Vice-Chancellor also agreed to consider the demand of student representatives to reduce the fees for revaluation, re examination and

registration of additional semester. Subcommittees have been constituted to examine these issues along with other demands for enhancing fellowship for PG and PhD scholars, revision of syllabus of some courses, reframing PG entrance exam module, policy for recognizing degree from foreign universities and unification of academic calendar.

The 131<sup>st</sup> meeting of the council also approved the recommendations of board of studies in the faculty of agriculture and agricultural engineering. Minutes and action taken reports of previous meeting was confirmed. Registrar Dr. S. Leena Kumary; Faculty Deans Dr. A. Anil Kumar, Dr. K. Vidya sagan and Dr. Santhi Mary Mathew; Director of Extension Dr. Jiju P. Alex; Director of Students Welfare Dr. Manoj T. I.; students' representatives Akhil Ajith, Archana Unnikrishnan and Hena M.; teachers' representatives Dr. A. V. Santosh kumar, Dr. M. Joy and Shivaji participated.

*"The proposed college at Ambalavayal has the potential to become the best agricultural educational institution in South India. The agricultural background of Wayanad and the aptitude of Wayanad population is congenial to agricultural education and research. Education being the strongest tool for social change, it will trigger progress and development of Wayanad"*

**: Vice-Chancellor**

## Technology for Polyhouse Tomato Production Developed



Vice Chancellor, Dr. R. Chandra Babu inaugurated the harvesting of the tomato hybrid raised in the poly house at the Centre for Hi-Tech Horticulture and Precision Farming, Vellanikkara on February 1.

The hybrid suitable for naturally ventilated Polyhouses of Kerala was identified by the centre through a series of trials. Poly house tomatoes have indeterminate growth habit. The average yield expected from a plant is 8 – 10 kg and the average weight of fruits is 90-110 g.

Although tomatoes are widely grown in protected structures all over the country and abroad, successful cultivation of this crop in Kerala was not feasible due to poor fruit set. The newly identified hybrid performed very well, said Dr. C. Narayanan Kutty, ADR (Vegetable Mission).

## Collector Calls for Convergence of Schemes

Thrissur District Collector Dr. A. Kowsigan IAS, has called for convergence of different farm development and farmer welfare programmes introduced by different agencies.

In his inaugural address at the technology week of Thrissur KVK, Dr. Kowsigan said that the objective of different programmes put in place by Union government, State government and Local Self Government Institutions could be one and the same. Convergence of such programmes will make things easier for implementing agencies and help realise the objectives faster. Changes in knowledge, attitude and skills will lead to performance and hence the forums like technology week is very important., he said.

Vice-Chancellor Dr. R. Chandra babu, in his presidential address, said that researchers should convert the challenges posed by climate change in to an opportunity. 'Farming fraternity is highly vulnerable to the perturbations in weather and it directly affects farmers' income. This also demands new technologies and



interventions, thereby opening new opportunities. The best approach is to boost productivity, develop resilient cultivars and technologies and reduce carbon foot print. Success of research is measured by rate of adaptation by farmers. KVKs play a key role in popularising new varieties and disseminating new agro techniques.', he said.

Director of Extension Dr. Jiju P. Alex, VFPC district Manager A. Amja, Associate director of research Dr. Asha shankar and KVK head Dr. A. Prema spoke. Award winning farmers from Thrissur district were honoured during the function.

## Delegation from US Universities visit KAU

A delegation of fourteen representatives of US universities visited KAU on March 18 as part of the prestigious Fullbright - Nehru international education administrators programme.

Speaking at the interactive programme between US delegation and KAU academics and students Vice-Chancellor Dr. R. Chandrababu expressed willingness to explore the possibility of launching Dual Degree programmes and joint degree programmes in collaboration with universities in the United States.

Academic Officers of different US universities interacted with students and academia of KAU. US-India Education Foundation (USIEF) liaison officer Reshmi Mitra and Regional managers of USIEF Lalitha Nageswari and Maya Sunderrajan, explained the



Representatives of US Universities and USIEF with KAU Vice-Chancellor, Officers and students

Full bright scholarship programmes to students. They explained the modalities of various scholarships and grants provided under USIEF programme.

Academic Director Dr. Sarah T. George, Director of Extension Dr. Jiju P. Alex, Director of Students Welfare Dr. Manoj T.I., and CoH Associate Dean Dr. George Thomas explained academic, research and extension programmes of KAU.

*Post harvest handling of crops, Post harvest handling of crops, food processing and value addition and entrepreneurship development are some of the areas in which our students can seek higher studies in US. I know the value of American education system and I will only be happy to help our students to explore the exceptional educational possibilities there."*

**: Vice-Chancellor**

## KAU to join hands with Lithuanian Varsity

KAU and Aleksandras Stulginskis University (ASU) of Lithuania will join hands to promote academic cooperation. The decision to have students and faculty exchange programmes between the universities was taken at a meeting between KAU Vice-Chancellor Dr. R. Chandrababu and ASU delegation headed by Prof. Raimundas Rukuisa and Prof. Rolandas Domeika held at the KAU Head Quarters.

Vice-Chancellor Dr. R. Chandrababu told the delegation that he wants KAU students to gain the advantages of global education and so he is eager

to associate with reputed foreign universities. 'ASU being a state owned university it is all the more easy to associate with it. We will work out a memorandum of understanding for the exchange programmes and dual degree programmes.', he said.

Prof. Raimundas explained that ASU is a state run institution and the duration of Degree, PG and PhD courses in Lithuania and Kerala being equal, it would be easier to cooperate.



KAU Vice-Chancellor Dr. R. Chandrababu with ASU representatives at KAU HQ

Controller of Examinations Dr. R. Krsihna Kumar and CoH Head Dr. George Thomas also participated in the discussions.

## POWERGRID EXTENDS SUPPORT TO KAU

KAU and POWERGRID have decided to strengthen inter institutional cooperation for mutual support.

An MoU signed between the institutions under Corporate Social Responsibility and Sustainability initiative scheme of POWERGRID envisages funding of the construction of a new students' hostel for girls at KAU main campus at the cost of Rs. 445 Lakhs.

The MoU was signed by KAU Registrar Dr. S. Leena Kumary and POWERGRID General Manager (HVDC) Sri. Jayachandran P. in the presence of

Vice-Chancellor Dr. R. Chandrababu on April 30.

POWERGRID DGM Supriya and KAU Director of Physical Plant Dr. V. R. Ramachandran were also present.

Vice-Chancellor Dr. R. Chandrababu thanked POWERGRID for the support for enhancing academic facilities in KAU. 'With the enhancement in number of seats for KAU Courses and majority of students being girls, the proposed hostel which can accommodate 108 students will be a boon to students. We look forward for more projects in collaboration with POWERGRID', he said.



KAU Registrar Dr. S. Leena Kumary and POWERGRID GM Jayachandran P. Exchange Copies of MoU

## KAU & UWA Launch Collaborative Project



*Dr. Kadambot Siddiq and Dr. Michael Blakeney in conversation with Vice-Chancellor Dr. R. Chandrababu*

University of Western Australia (UWA) and KAU launched a collaborative project on Food security and Governance of local knowledge in Kerala. The project, aimed at extricating small farmers from the twin challenges of multinational agribusiness and climate change, taken up as part of Australian Research Council Discovery Project (ARC DP) in India and Indonesia, began with pilot study among traditional farmers in Wayanad, Malappuram and Palakkad districts.

The modalities of the study were discussed between the KAU Vice-Chancellor Dr. R. Chandrababu and UWA faculties Dr. Kadambot Siddiq and

Dr. Michael Blakeney on April 23. Dr. Chandrababu expressed satisfaction over the existing academic collaboration with UWA and stressed the need to scale it up for the benefit of students and future generation of scientists from KAU.

Dr. Michael Blakeney explained that the project will analyse the local knowledge on plant selection,

breeding and conservation in relation with regional food security laws and policies and Intellectual Property (IP) policies in India. Dr. Kadambot Siddiq said that traditional wisdom is a repository of time tested information about management of crops in harmony with nature. 'Awareness of such knowledge in plant genetic resources is an invaluable tool for developing adaptable technologies. Kerala is chosen because it combines ambitions of agribusiness with concerns of small scale farmers.' He said.

Registrar Dr. S. Leena Kumary, Director of Research Dr. P. Indira Devi, Director of Extension Dr. Jiju P. Alex, Director of Planning Dr. T. Pradeep Kumar, Dr. Jayasree Krishnankutty and heads of institutions under KAU participated in the deliberations.

## KAU to Launch Farm Business School and Entrepreneurship Facilitation programme

KAU has decided to institute a comprehensive support system to help entrepreneurs set up Agri enterprises, based on technologies developed by KAU. This system envisages helping the entrepreneurs through the entrepreneurship cycle and even after, through incubation and handholding support.

The envisage mechanism will have two major components ie. Farm Business School and Entrepreneurship Facilitation programme. While Farm Business School (FBS) is a one week practical oriented intensive training programme on farm business, Entrepreneurship Facilitation programme provides potential entrepreneurs with opportunities to avail the technologies developed by KAU to start an enterprise.

The main target group of FBS programme would be educated youth and farmers who want to initiate a business in agriculture. Lessons on vital aspects such as making business plans, market studies, credit availability, physical infrastructure, input supply etc. would be imparted in addition to the technology part.

Faculty of the Directorate of Extension and its constituent units, Principal Investigators of the technologies developed at various research stations and colleges, experts on Agricultural Economics, Agri Business Management, Entrepreneurship Development, Market Led Extension, Institutional Innovations etc., would lead the orientation sessions in School of Entrepreneurship Development.

## National Banana Fest Union Minister inaugurates KAU Stall



*Union Agricultural Minister Radha Mohan Singh inaugurates the stall put up by CoA, Vellayani at National banana fest at Kalliyur, Thiruvananthapuram*

The Exhibition stall arranged by CoA, Vellayani in banana fest at Kalliyur was inaugurated by Union Minister for Agriculture Radha Mohan Singh.

The stall was enriched with advice on remedies to common pests and diseases of banana, organic farming protocols for banana, value addition technologies and management of organic waste in banana plantations. The value added products of banana and live model of banana- duck- fish-vegetable integrated farming systems exhibited in the stall attracted attention.

## Pooram Exhibition KAU Pavilion Opened



*Minister V. S. Sunil Kumar Inaugurates KAU Pavilion in Thrissur Pooram Exhibition*

KAU pavilion in Thrissur Pooram Exhibition was inaugurated by Minister for Agriculture V. S. Sunil kumar at 2 p.m. on April 21. Executive Committee Member Dr. K. Aravindakshan, Director of Extension Dr. Jiju P. Alex, Director of Research Dr. P. Indira Devi, Controller of Examinations Dr. R. Krishnakumar, General Council Member Dr. B. Suma and Dr. Binoo P. Bonny, General Convener, KAU pavilion were present.