

# SLAAS NEWS

Newsletter of the Sri Lanka Association for the Advancement of Science



Vol. 3 No. 2 May – August 2008

## Annual SLAAS Awards - 2008

Applications are invited until 7<sup>th</sup> September 2008 for the following awards.

**Environment Awards** for the two categories (a) School Children, and (b) the General Public. They are open for Individuals, Organizations and Institutions in both the Public and the Private Sector, who have made significant contributions in sustainable management of the environment.

**Physical Science Awards** for undergraduate students or recent graduates who have completed individual research projects in the fields of Physics / Computer Science / Mathematics / Statistics as a partial requirement for a B.Sc. Degree of a Sri Lankan University during the period from 1<sup>st</sup> July 2007 to 30<sup>th</sup> June 2008.

**Manamperi (Engineering) Award** for the best undergraduate Engineering project submitted to a Sri Lankan University by students registered during the academic year 2007 / 2008. Applications are invited until 15<sup>th</sup> October 2008.

Application forms and further details on these awards are available at Sri Lanka Association for the Advancement of Science, 'Vidya Mandiraya' 120/10, Wijerama Mawatha, Colombo 7. Telephone +94-11-2688740, +94-11-2691681, Fax.+94-11-2691681, e-mail: [hqslaas@yahoo.com](mailto:hqslaas@yahoo.com), [hqslaas@gmail.com](mailto:hqslaas@gmail.com), Website: <http://slaas.org>.

**General Secretary / SLAAS**

## 64<sup>th</sup> ANNUAL SESSIONS

### THEME SEMINAR

**'SCIENCE FOR SUSTAINABLE USE OF WATER RESOURCES'**

02<sup>nd</sup> December 2008

Sri Lanka Foundation Institute Auditorium

# SECTIONAL ACTIVITIES: May – Aug. 2008

## SECTION A

### **Oral Health Awareness for School Children**

Resource person - Professor B.G. Nanayakkara of University of Ruhuna

A total of 200 school children from three leading schools in Galle district participated.

30<sup>th</sup> May 9.am to 12 noon at Faculty of Medicine, University of Ruhuna

### **A programme on 'Healthy food habits' for school children**

Resource person - Dr. Sagarika Ekanayaka.

24th June at Anula (Primary) Vidyalaya, Nugegoda

### **A series of awareness programmes for antenatal mothers on 'Oral health'**

Resource person - Dr. R.D.F.C. Kanthi, Consultant Community Dentist

6<sup>th</sup>, 14<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup> May at the antenatal clinics of the De Soysa Maternity Hospital

### **A seminar on Metabolic Syndrome - a joint activity with Sri Lanka Medical Association**

Moderated by Professor Rezvi Sheriff, Senior Professor of Medicine, University of Colombo and Professor Ravindra Fernando, Professor of Forensic Medicine, University of Colombo.

Resource persons: Dr. Noel Somasundaram, Consultant Endocrinologist, National Hospital of Sri Lanka, Dr. Udaya Ranawaka, Consultant Neurologist and Senior Lecturer in Medicine, Faculty of Medicine, University of Kelaniya, Professor Chandrika Wijayarathne, Professor in Reproductive Medicine, Faculty of Medicine, University of Colombo, Dr. Pujitha Wickramasinghe, Senior Lecturer in Paediatrics, Faculty of Medicine, University of Colombo  
6<sup>th</sup> June 2008 at SLMA auditorium 10.30 am to 12 noon

## SECTION B

**Popular Lecture** on "Persistent Organic Pollutant-Unintended" on Friday, April 4<sup>th</sup> 2008 at Open University auditorium, Nawala with Mr. Bandulasoma Wijegunasekara, Head, Chemical and Microbiology Laboratory, ITI as resource person. About 30 participants participated in the workshop.

**Training Workshop on micro irrigation** in collaboration with the Vidatha Center, Maspotha and Citigardens Pvt. Ltd. for selected farmers at Maspotha in Kurunegala on 3 April 2008 at Maspotha Vidatha Center. Dr. MMM Najim, the President-SLAAS Section B served as coordinator as well as resource person. The activity was supported by Citigardens Pvt. Ltd. who provided transportation from Colombo to Maspotha and also made a demonstration of equipments used for micro-irrigation on the site. About 30 participants participated in the workshop

## SECTION C

**Guest lecture** by Mr. S. P. Damopegedara on "Vehicle tracking systems using satellite communication" on 26<sup>th</sup> May, 2008 at 5.00 pm at the SLAAS auditorium.

**Guest lecture** by Dr. Vajira Palipana on "Sick Building Syndrome". on 30<sup>th</sup> May at 3.30 p.m at the SLAAS auditorium.

**Seminar** on 'Electric/Hybrid Vehicles' on May 30 with the participation of Electromobiles Ltd. who demonstrated the fully electric battery operated scooter.

## SECTION D

A **Public lecture** is planned for the month July.

A **seminar** on Social insects, their economic importance and conservation is scheduled will be held on 22<sup>nd</sup> August at SLAAS Auditorium Resource persons: Dr. Shriyani Dias, Dr.G. Punchihewa and Dr. N.C. Kumarasinghe.

## SECTION E-1

**Public lecture** “Science of Weather Forecasting” Dr. Someshwar Das, Head, Theoretical Division, SAARC Meteorological Research Centre, Bangladesh in collaboration with the Metrological Department of Sri Lanka on 13<sup>th</sup> May at 4.00 pm at the Mini Auditorium, UCSC.



**One day seminar** on Physics for A/L students at Ananda Collage was conducted by Dr. D.D.N.B. Daya on 11<sup>th</sup> June.

**Seminar** on IT for O/L teachers under the coordination of Dr. D.N. Ranasinghe and Mr. W.G.D.M. Wathugala on July 25<sup>th</sup> at UCSC.

**Two day training programme** on “Data Analysis using SPSS” is scheduled to be organised during August.

## SECTION E-2

**Workshop** on “Treatment of Industrial Effluents” in collaboration with Department of Chemistry, University of Kelaniya and sponsored by Ocean Lanka (Pvt) Limited at Faculty of Science, University of Kelaniya on 13<sup>th</sup> May 9:00am to 12:30pm. ‘Overview of Industrial Waste Management’ by Mr. R M Upali Senarath, Senior Manager, Environment Management Department, Board of Investment of Sri Lanka, ‘Microbial Treatment of Industrial Wastewater’ by Dr. (Mrs.) Indrika Abeygunawardena, Department of Microbiology, University of Kelaniya, ‘Removal of Heavy Metals from Industrial Effluents by Natural Substances’ by- Prof. Namal Priyantha, Department of Chemistry, University of Peradeniya and ‘Low-cost Methods for Effluent Treatment- Engineering Aspects’ by Dr. C.S. Kalpage, Department of Chemical and Process Engineering, University of Peradeniya.

**Awareness Programme** on “Water for Life and Impairment of Water due to Agrochemicals” in collaboration with Rice Research and Development Institute (RRDI), Bathalegoda 30<sup>th</sup> May 8:00am to 16:30pm. ‘Rainbow colors in water’ by Mr. M N A Mubarak, Research Officer, Industrial Technology Institute, ‘Future of paddy cultivation in Sri Lanka’ by Mr. S W Abeysekera, Scientist, RRDI, ‘Bioindicators to detect pesticide toxicity’ Dr. Ayanthi Navaratne, Senior Lecturer, University of Peradeniya, ‘Paddy cultivation, Water and Pesticide (What we should know ?)’ by Ms. Anuruddhika Abeysekera, Weed Scientist, RRDI. Lectures followed by a quiz for selected participants. There were about 100 school

children from five leading schools in the area with two teachers from each school. Gifts for the winners, runners up and successful audiences were provided by Lada Trade center, Mirihana and DSI group.

**Seminar** on “Industry and Environment” in collaboration with Central Environmental Authority and Puritas (Pvt) Ltd. Postgraduate Institute of Science (PGIS), Peradeniya on 27<sup>th</sup> June 9:00 to 15:00. ‘Role of Central Environmental Authority in Industrial Pollution Prevention’ by Dr. Sanjaya Ratnayake, Director (Environment Management), ‘Consequences on Environment due to Industrial Development of Sri Lanka’ by Mr. R. M. Upali Senerath, Senior Manager, Board of Investment of Sri Lanka, ‘Impact of Industry on the Environment, Mr. R. N. R. Jayaratne, Senior Environmental Officer, Central Environmental Authority, Industrial Waste Management – Dr. Gemunu Herath, Dept. of Civil Engineering, University of Peradeniya, ‘Water in the Industrial Environment by Prof. H. D. Gunawardhana, Department of Chemistry, University of Colombo and ‘Legislative Issues Associated with Industrial Pollution’ by Mr. Jagath Gunawardene, Senior lawyer and Advisor to the Minister of Environment & Natural Resources. Participants were industrialists, academics, research students and undergraduates. At the end of the seminar, there was an open discussion among the participants and resource personnel. The event was chaired by Prof, O. A. Ileperuma of University of Peradeniya. Many practical problems faced by industrialist were taken into discussion and productive suggestions were made.



**SLAAS General President at Seminar** on “Industry and Environment”

## SECTION F

**Public Lecture** “The Current Status and Prospects of Oil Exploration in Sri Lanka” by Dr. Neil R. de Silva, Director General, Petroleum Development Secretariat 14<sup>th</sup> May at 5.00 p.m. SLAAS Auditorium

**Public Lecture** “Comments on the Strategies of Oil Exploration in Sri Lanka” by Mr. Dulip Jayawardena, Geologist & Energy Researcher 12<sup>th</sup> June at 5.00 p.m. SLAAS Auditorium

**Public Lecture** “Provincial Councils after Twenty Years” by Mr. Ranjan Samaraweera, Executive Director, Institute of Professional Public Administrators 10<sup>th</sup> July at 5.00 p.m. SLAAS Auditorium

## Environment Committee

**Climate change impacts on the paddy cultivation and adaptation options** The programme was conducted as part of the ‘Sanhinda’ programme, which is funded by United Nations Development Programme, of the Disaster Management Center with about 125 participants. It was held on 29<sup>th</sup> May at SLAAS auditorium.

**A residential workshop** on ‘Safe use of Pesticides’ to school teachers and students in Matale District

**Two day workshop** on safe use of pesticides was conducted for school teachers and students in Matale District with the assistance of the Office of Registrar of Pesticides. The council members of SLAAS were present at the distribution of certificates and the students' presentations in drama form on what they had learnt during the training and how they would disseminate that knowledge. This Programme, held on 26<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup> June at the In Service Training Center at Peradeniya was funded by 'Motivation Sri Lanka'.

**The impact of floods** as the next 'Sanhinda' programme will be held on 21<sup>st</sup> August 2008.



**Workshop on 'Safe use of Pesticides'**



**Students enacting a drama on 'Safe use of Pesticides'**

## General Research Committee

**Symposium on Water: Research Trends in Sri Lanka**, 14<sup>th</sup> July at the Gall Face Hotel, Colombo The aim of the symposium was to gather information concerning research that has been conducted in Sri Lanka on "water" by researchers in local universities and research institutions. The following recommendations were made: i Revise the National Water Resources Policy document by removing the sections on water pricing and water entitlements, ii Formulating an umbrella organisation such as a river basin authority or water council to manage water resources in a more holistic manner, iii Initiation of a national data base on water sector information, hydrological, climatic, watershed information, surface and ground water quality, research findings etc., iv Supporting multidisciplinary research on water sector inviting groups of scientists from various disciplines focused on urgent issues such as ground water quality, quantity, heavy metal distribution in water resources and the effects of water quality on diseases such as Chronic Renal Disease (CRD) etc., and v Establishment of a water quality measurement laboratory with quality control and quality assurance programmes, vi Implementation of a water quality surveillance programme in Sri Lanka. Seventy two scientists including twelve resource personnel participated.



Symposium on Water Trends

## Committee for the Popularisation of Science

**Science Day 2008** was held at Telijjawila M.M.V. Matara on 26<sup>th</sup> July. Prof. P. R. T. Cumararatunga, Prof. Hema Pathirana, Dr. Kavan Ratnatunga and Dr. Nalin Wickremanayake were among the participants.

## Science and Technology Advisory Committee

**Genetic Materials and Associated Products (Natural Products in Sri Lanka):** A comprehensive report prepared based on the suggestions made at a Consultative Meeting on the issue will be sent to His Excellency the President and to all relevant Ministries. Consultative Meeting was sponsored by IUCN.

## Media Resource Service

A **press conference** on sustainable solutions to the energy crisis in Sri Lanka in collaboration with the Institute of Environmental Professionals is planned for August.

## Science Education Committee

**Workshop** to educate S & T officers and villagers on 1<sup>st</sup> July at Hanwella Vidatha Resource Centre, Meepe, co-ordinated by Dr. Seetha Wickramasinghe of NSF and Ms. Jayasamara Gunaratne of Technology Transfer Unit (TTU) at Ministry of Science & Technology. Ms. Dhammika S&T officer at Hanwella Vidatha Resource Centre organised the programme and there were about 30 participants. Presentation on “water” by President of the SLAAS and Mr. Kapila and Mr. Dilan from Dept. of Chemistry, University of Colombo, tested the drinking water samples brought by villagers. It was noticed that the tested water samples are free from  $Fe^{2+}$ /  $Fe^{3+}$  and  $NO^3^-$ . Prof. Eugene Wickramanayake, Emeritus Professor in Medicine made the community aware on good health habits. Mrs. Kantha Lankathilake, Senior Lecturer at Faculty of Medicine, University of Colombo, made a presentation on ‘Hazards in small-scale industries’. Dr. S R D Rosa, Chairman of SEC, Senior Lecturer of Physics, University of Colombo informed the community on protection from lightning. Mr. P R K Fernando Secretary of SEC and Gemmologist of Ceylon Mineral Research Laboratory detailed the participants on how to start an enterprise using S & T knowledge.

**Industrial Visit to Lanka Refractories, Meepe:** Several members of SEC participated on a visit to Lanka Refractories at Meepe, Padukka. The General Manager, Mr. Piyasiri and the Production Manager, Mr Chandana Lankath demonstrated the productions (e.g. incinerators, tiles, bricks, heat treatment furnaces etc.) of the factory. Raw materials in use are minerals including quartz, dolomite clay and sand. This visit was co-ordinated by Mr. P R K Fernando.

**You are invited to join SLAAS Yahoo Group  
Join in and discuss issues of interest to SLAAS**

SLAAS has created a Group on YahooGroups to allow members to stay in touch with other members who share your interests and discuss issues of interest to SLAAS.

All members of SLAAS who's E-mail is available will be invited to Join the discussion group. Else please send an E-mail to [slaas-subscribe@yahoogroups.com](mailto:slaas-subscribe@yahoogroups.com) with your Name and SLAAS membership No if known. Only members of SLAAS will be allowed to join the SLAAS Yahoogroup.

Discussions and archives will NOT be indexed on Internet and will be available only to SLAAS members who join the group. Posting may be moderated to ensure discussions stay focused on SLAAS activity.

Discussions can be received as individual E-mail, as a daily digest or read on the web. To read on the web at <http://www.groups.yahoo.com/group/slaas/> when you wish and avoid any E-mail all you need is a free Yahoo ID.

Group Email Addresses

Post message: [slaas@yahoogroups.com](mailto:slaas@yahoogroups.com)

Subscribe : [slaas-subscribe@yahoogroups.com](mailto:slaas-subscribe@yahoogroups.com)

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List owner : [slaas-owner@yahoogroups.com](mailto:slaas-owner@yahoogroups.com)

***Members!***

***Dates to Remember!***

**The Annual Sessions Inaugural Ceremony**

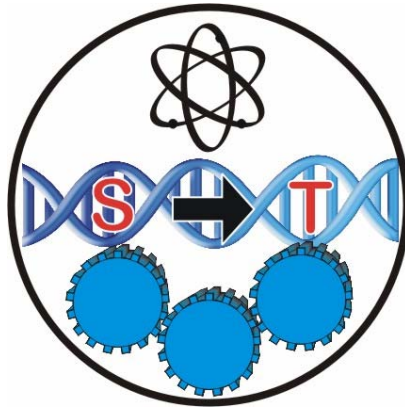
**1<sup>st</sup> December 2008**

**at BMICH**

**Theme Seminar: 2<sup>nd</sup> December 2008 at SLFI**

**Technical Sessions: 3<sup>rd</sup> - 6<sup>th</sup> December 2008**

**at Faculty of Science, University of Colombo**



Exhibition on  
**“Science for Sustainable  
Development of Technology”**

*OPEN TO SCHOOL CHILDREN AND GENERAL PUBLIC*

**Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> to Saturday 6<sup>th</sup> December 2008**

10.00 a.m. – 5.00 p.m.

*Faculty of Science*

*University of Colombo*

To



If undelivered, return to:  
Sri Lanka Association for the Advancement of Science  
120/10 Wijerama Mawatha  
Colombo 7