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# KERALA ACADEMY OF SCIENCES

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### Introduction

Kerala Academy of Sciences (KAS) is a professional organization of scientists, technologists, physicians, academicians and science managers. The KAS was founded, and was registered as a society, in 1989 in the campus of the University of Kerala due to the pioneering efforts of Prof. Dr. K. T. Augusti, a renowned Professor of Biochemistry, University of Kerala. The Academy received registration under the Travancore Cochin Literary, Scientific and Charitable Societies Registration Act, 1955 with Prof. Dr. R. N. Pillai, University of Kerala as the Founder President and Prof. Dr. K. T. Augusti as the Founder General Secretary of KAS who continued to serve, and thus build up, the Academy for several years. The Academy has three categories of memberships: Honorary Fellowship by conferment on renowned scientists, technologists and medical professionals; Fellowship by nomination of its life members and Life Membership by application. The Academy has conferred Honorary Fellowship on Dr. P. K. Iyengar, Dr. K. Kasturirangan, Dr. M. S. Swaminathan, Prof. Dr. M. S. Valiathan, Dr. Varghese Kurien, Dr. G. Madhavan Nair, Dr. K. Radhakrishnan, Prof. Dr. M. Vijayan Prof. Dr. V. N. Rajasekharan Pillai and Prof. Dr. A. Ajayaghosh and it has in its rolls, fifty nine fellows (FAS) and three hundred and ninety life members

### Objectives

The objectives of KAS include the promotion of a scientific temper among public, to provide a common forum for exchange of ideas for scientists and technologists, to publicise the achievement of science, to encourage interdisciplinary research, to strive for improving facilities for scientific research in Kerala, to organize seminars, workshops etc to achieve the above aims, to institute fellowships and award lectures and publish bulletins and proceedings.

### Vision

In the last two decades, the Academy has strived much to popularize science and to promote science as a career, to facilitate science research and to cultivate an enthusiasm for science among the students in Kerala. Thus the Academy endeavours to promote progress of science, both in pure and applied branches, in the state of Kerala and in the nation. The Academy realizes that attracting young talents to science is crucial and due to the manifold of other avenues available to the talented ones, an interest in science needs to be inculcated at the higher secondary school level. The Academy considers that the Fellows and Life Members of the Academy bear in them the responsibility to individually and collectively promote science in all its aspects through meetings, discussions, seminars, workshops, competitions, publications, recommendations to the government and extension activities. The Academy actively seeks out resources, both financial and personnel, to conduct the

above activities from state and union governments, foundations and similar sources. The present council KSCSTE, and the earlier council STEC, both, has remained a very strong supporter of the Academy, ever since its inception, for its activities in relation to the promotion and spread of the message of science and in its attempt to nurture the scientific talent amongst the young

### Management

The Academy has a President, two vice-presidents, a general secretary, a joint secretary and a treasurer as elected office bearers. The Academy is managed by a sixteen-member executive council that includes the above office bearers and ten additional members elected from the fellows and life members. The past Presidents of KAS include illustrious personalities such as Prof. Dr. C. G. Ramachandran Nair, (former Chairman, STEC), Dr. C. S. P. Iyer (formerly BARC, NIIST, IITK), Prof. Dr. K. N. Ninan, (IIST, former Deputy Director, VSSC), late Dr. M. R. Das (Founder Director of RGCB and former Chairman, KSCSTE) and Prof. P. R. Sudhakaran, Univ. of Kerala. Currently, Prof. Dr. Oommen V. Oommen, (Chairman, KSBB and former Head, Dept. of Zoology, Univ. of Kerala) is the President. Apart from the Founder Secretary, Prof. Dr. K. T. Augusti University of Kerala, Dr. T. K. Abraham (JNTBGRI), Shri. V. P. Balagangadharan (VSSC), Prof. Dr. V. Prasannakumar (Univ. of Kerala), Dr Benny George (VSSC), Shri. N. Raveendran Pillai (VSSC) and Prof. Dr. G. M. Nair (Univ. of Kerala) have served the Academy as General Secretaries. Owing to their selfless, devoted and sustained hard work, the Academy could grow, garner public visibility, serve the cause of science and inculcate much interest in science among students. Dr. K. G. Ajit Kumar, Associate Professor, and Head, Dept. of Botany, M. G. College is the current General Secretary of the Academy.

### Activities and Achievements

The yearly activities of the Academy generally include Nehru Centenary Celebration, Foundation Day Celebration, National Science Day Celebration and Prof. Dr. Augusti Endowment Lecture, in addition to lectures by eminent personalities on special occasions, science related quiz and similar competitions and workshops addressed at students, college faculty and scientists. The notable activities in the recent past include: ♦Participation as the state level selection and training agency in the “Red Rover goes to Mars” programme of the Planetary Society, USA and NASA; the National Environment Awareness Campaign and Multiple Lecture Series held in 11 schools during 1999-2003

♦Annual Convention of the Academy in 2004 at which the Honorary Fellowship of the Academy were conferred on Dr. G. Madhavan Nair, the then Chairman, ISRO and the Fellowship of the Academy was conferred on five life members of KAS; Lecture Series of 15 lectures in schools and Symposium on “Higher Education in Chemistry” during 2004-2005.

♦Symposium on “Nutrition, chronic disease and aging” and a state-wide Workshop Series on “Effective Formulation of Research Projects” that resulted in a significant increase in projects to KSCSTE submitted for funding during 2006-2007.

♦Preparation of Kerala Science Report; participation in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Thiruvananthapuram Pusthaka Mela; participation in the 97<sup>th</sup> Indian Science Congress at Thiruvananthapuram and the highly successful conduct of the “Science is Exciting” programme in 40 schools and publication of a booklet on the theme “Science is exciting” during 2008-09.

♦Organization of a session at the 24<sup>th</sup> Kerala Science Congress at Kottayam organization of a series of lectures entitled “Khorana Lecture Series” at different districts of Kerala and the conduct of the Khorana Young Scientist Programme during 2010-13.

During the above period, the members of the Academy had opportunities to listen to the Nobel Laureates Dr. Alan MacDiarmid, Prof. Ada Yonath and Prof. Dr. Roger Tsien during the visit of these dignitaries to Thiruvananthapuram. The Academy was also invited by the State planning board to provide inputs on science-related matters during the 12<sup>th</sup> FiveYear Plan formulation. Most recently, the Academy in association with Infosys Science Foundation lecture at Kozhikode by the Infosys Prize Winner Dr A Ajayaghosh. The Academy, up on invitation by Indian National Science Academy (INSA), has recently made a presentation at New Delhi where it received much praise for its activities from the president of INSA.

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