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ICA Asia Pacific Coop News

29th Annual Conference on Co-operative Legislation & Policy held in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia



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ICA Asia Pacific Coop News

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8th Ministers' Conference on Co-operative Legislation & Policy held in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

H.E. Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi, Hon'ble Prime Minister of Malaysia inaugurated the 8th Ministers' Conference on Co-operative Legislation and Policy at Kuala Lumpur Convention Centre on Monday the 12th March 2007, attended by 315 participants (141 overseas participants from 21 countries and 174 participants from Malaysia).

The inaugural session was addressed by H.E. The Prime Minister of Malaysia, Hon'ble Minister of the Ministry of Entrepreneur and Cooperative Development (MECD) Dato' Seri Mohamed Khaled bin Nordin, Government of Malaysia and Mr. Ivano Barberini, President of ICA. Mr. Li Chunsheng, President, ICA-AP and Mr. Prof. Dr. Mohd Ali Hj



Co-operative Ministers and others with the ICA President at the Conference

Baharum, Acting President, National Co-operative Organization of Malaysia (ANGKASA), represented the co-operative movements of Asia Pacific and Malaysia respectively at the dias.

The Theme of the Conference was "Fair Globalization through Cooperatives" The Conference was hosted by the Ministry of Entrepreneur and Co-operative Development (MECD), Government of Malaysia in collaboration with the International Co-operative Alliance, Asia-Pacific Region (ICA-AP) and ANGKASA.

The pre-conference consultation to endorse the framework of the conference and draft the contents of the Draft Declaration for the consideration of the participating Ministers was held on 11 March 2007



Malaysian PM speaking at the Conference

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ICA President addressing the Conference

which was attended by the Secretaries to the Governments and the Chief Executives of the ICA Member Organizations.

The Conference was quite successful in terms of achieving its core objective of sensitizing the Governments to the need of realizing full potential of co-operatives in building national economy especially in the context of globalization demanding the legislative cum policy support for the

co-operatives to play an important role in equitable distribution of the benefits accruing from the liberalized global economy.

Entrepreneur and Co-operative Development Minister Datuk Seri Mohamed Khaled Nordin at the closing function of the conference advised co-operatives to look to the global markets and exert their global potential or risk being left on the sidelines. He also said that enlightened co-operative members and leaders, enhanced entrepreneurship and a conducive environment were fundamental necessities to ensure that co-operatives continue to move forward.

The benefits of the outcome of this conference would be reaped by the time of next Ministers' Conference supposed to be held in 2011 when the co-operatives themselves would showcase successes by conforming to the highest standards of professionalism and corporate governance, forging strategic alliances and surviving in the ever changing and challenging business environment. There is an imperative need to vigorously follow the



Mr. Hagen Henry, Head of Co-op Branch, ILO speaking at the Conference

recommendations of the conference being documented by ICA Asia Pacific.

The technical papers presented at the Conference alongwith "K.L. Declaration" the framework unanimously adopted by the Governments for future legislative and policy reforms are available on ICA-AP website www.icaroap.coop

– Rajiv I.D. Mehta

Kuala Lumpur Declaration

8th Ministers Conference on Co-operative Legislation and Policy

- ♦ Noting the multi-dimensional impact of globalization on the socio-economic lives of peoples of Asia and Pacific and their institutions particularly co-operatives;
- ♦ Taking note that while globalization and liberalization of national economies has resulted in enhanced economic growth and prosperity, its gains have not been equitably distributed among the people particularly the poorer and more vulnerable sections of the community;
- ♦ Appreciating the desire of the

Co-operative Movement to participate in the developmental process in harnessing the gains of globalization aimed at poverty reduction, employment generation and equitable national development ;

- ♦ Realizing the importance of enabling co-operative legislation and policies for creating conducive environment for development of co-operatives;
- ♦ Appreciating the role of ICA to continuously facilitating the dialogue between the Co-operatives and the Governments

to enhance the role of co-operatives for the economic growth and prosperity in the region.

We, the participants of the 8th Ministers Conference on "Co-operative Legislation and Policy" held at Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia from 12-15 March 2007:

- ♦ Urge upon the Governments to catalyze the process of re-orienting the Co-operative Legislation and Policy to strengthen apolitical and autonomous character of co-operatives and to provide a positive level playing field to co-

operatives to enable them to compete in the globalised market.

- ♦ Call upon the Co-operative Movements to contribute effectively in the process of economic development, amongst others, by organizing small producers including farmers, workers and protecting consumers through self-help mode and also ensuring increased participation of women and youth in the co-operatives.
- ♦ Exhort Co-operatives and Governments to strengthen management capacity, participatory governance and fair business relationship for ensuring healthy functioning of

co-operative system through innovative strategies.

- ♦ Calls upon Co-operatives and Governments in the region to periodically review the efficacy/effectiveness of Co-operative Legislation and Policy as well as to introduce appropriate reforms considering the dynamic changes and trends emerging in their respective national economies.
- ♦ Recognizing co-operatives are an important and significant sector of the national economy effectively contributing to its development, we affirm our support for the Co-operative Movement as a sustainable and efficient institution through:
 1. Encouragement of co-

operative entrepreneurship by inculcating entrepreneurial spirit and skills among the members, leaders and managers of the co-operatives through education and training.

2. Attainment of economies of scale and strategic business alliances among co-operatives both domestically and internationally.
3. Role clarity among different tiers to enhance the impact of the Co-operative Movement.
4. Harnessing the gains of the fair globalization and liberalization for the benefit of members.

□

First Training Course on Enhancement of Farmers' Income and Poverty Reduction through Co-operatives

The FMDI (IFFCO) segment of the First Training Course was inaugurated on 11th January, 2007 by Mr. D.K. Bhatt, Marketing Director of Indian Farmers' Fertilizer Co-operative (IFFCO).

Mr. Shil Kwan Lee, ICA Regional Director, Mr. Ikuo Ashikari, General Manager, IDACA, Mr. Hisashi Sakata, First Secretary at the Embassy of Japan in India, and Mr. Bhagwati Prasad, Chief Executive of National Co-operative Union of India, addressed the participants.

Dr. R.N. Kundu, Chief Manager, welcomed the participants while Dr. Bhattacharya, General Manager, HRD, has given the vote of thanks.

There were 12 participants, from Cambodia, China, India, Indonesia, Laos, Myanmar, Nepal, Philippines, Sri Lanka, Thailand and Vietnam. The participants proceeded to the Institute of Rural Management [IRMA] on 25th January, and they attended the IRMA



The participants of the 1st Training Course at FMDI, India

segment of the course till 24th February, 2007.

The field study visits in Thailand will take place during 27 February-08

March, 2007 and then the Part III of the programme will be held at IDACA, Japan, 9 March-21 April, 2007.

– Prem Kumar

2nd Training Course on “Capacity Building for Marketing”

The 2nd Training Project for “Capacity Building for Marketing-2006” was formally inaugurated on 6th February 2007 in the Conference Hall of IDACA by Mr. Kazuo Tsukada, Executive Director, IDACA. Mr. A.K. Taneja, Program Officer, ICA-AP also addressed the Inaugural Session.

The programme is funded by the Government of Japan in the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (MAFF).

The main objectives of the training project were as follows:

- 1) To study marketing methods for farm products by theory and case study;
- 2) To study the methods for the rural development.

Twenty-four participants from 9 ASEAN countries – one from Malaysia, two each from Cambodia and Myanmar, three each from Brunei, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Philippines and Vietnam, four from Thailand attended the Training Programme.

The IDACA had developed a training curriculum, which included classroom lectures on various aspects, handled by the IDACA faculty members and specially-invited guest lecturers, organised field study visits and arranged direct communication with farmers and leaders of agricultural co-operatives.

The field study visits were arranged to agricultural co-operatives in Shizuoka Prefecture of Japan. In Shizuoka Prefecture, it included the JA Shizuoka Prefectural Union; JA Shizuoka Prefectural Economic Federation and its facilities; JA Mikabi and its facilities; JA Shizuoka-shi and observation of Farmers’ Market run by it. In addition, the participants visited the headquarters of MAFF, ASEAN Rural Community Plaza in Tokyo and JA Zennoh Distribution Center, including a A-Co-op Store run



Participants of the 2nd Training Course on Marketing at IDACA, Japan

by JA on retail business in Kanagawa prefecture.

The participants also held group discussions and prepared brief reports on the experiences gained by them. An end-of-the-Course Evaluation session was also held.

The emphasis during the Training Project was on the methods and techniques adopted by various organisations and JA group in distribution of agricultural products and marketing business in Japan.

The training course emphasised on practical studies and learning. Basic aspects of Japanese agriculture, agricultural co-operative system, detailed introductions to organisation and functioning of agricultural co-operatives in Japan were given.

Special topics of interest to the participants like “marketing methods for farm products by theory and case study”, “Strategy for Marketing of Agricultural Products”, etc. for future development were presented.

During the study visits programme to agricultural co-operatives in Shizuoka

Prefecture the participants were able to interact with farmer leaders and to observe their various activities as carried out by the JAs.

The training course was designed in such a way that the participants, after returning to their respective countries, are able to help organise and strengthen the marketing activities of their respective Primary Co-operatives and other similar groups and make use of experiences of Agricultural Co-operatives in Japan.

At the valedictory session, Mr. Kazunari Sakai, Assistant Director, International Economic Affairs, International Affairs Department, Minister’s Secretariat, Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (MAFF), addressed the participants.

Besides, Mr. K. Tsukada, Executive Director, IDACA and Mr. A.K. Taneja, Program Officer, ICA-AP, also addressed the participants and congratulated them for their co-operation in successful completion of the programme.

– A.K. Taneja

International Workshop on Strengthening of HRD & Networking of Co-operative HRD Institutions for Asia-Pacific Region

Co-operative HRD Institutions in Asia-Pacific Region are conducting Training and Education Programmes for personnel in Co-operatives in their respective countries. These institutions are following many innovative methods of training and education, using different types of training materials and their faculty is having different experience and exposure to co-operatives in their fields. Due to some commonalities in the co-operative movement in the region of Asia-Pacific there is an urgent need to share HRD practices followed by countries in the region. The Movement would be further strengthened if these practices are shared either personally or through a network. The National Co-operative Union of India (NCUI) in collaboration with Vaikunth Mehta National Institute of Co-operative Management (VAMNICOM), Pune, India, and active support from International Co-operative Alliance and Co-operative Learning Centre of British Columbia Institute of Co-operative Studies, has launched a Global HRD Network portal for Co-operative Institutions with the objective to address information regarding HRD Institutions around the Globe in the field of Co-operatives.

An International Workshop on Strengthening of HRD and Networking of Co-operative Institutions for Asia-Pacific Region was organized by International Co-operative Alliance-Asia and Pacific (ICA-AP) in collaboration with National Co-operative Union of India (NCUI) and Vaikunth Mehta National Institute of Co-operative Management (VAMNICOM) at Pune (Maharashtra) from 25th to 28th February 2007. The objective of the workshop was to facilitate the delegates to share HRD practices in their respective countries and to seek their suggestions for improving the effectiveness and



International Workshop on Strengthening of HRD & Networking of Cooperative HRD Institutions for Asia-Pacific

At VAMNICOM, Pune, India (26 -28 February 2007)



Participants of the International Workshop on Networking of HRD Institutions with Mr. Iain Macdonald, ICA DG, Late Dr S.S.Sisodia, Mr. Bhagwati Prasad, Mr. Shil Kwan Lee and others

usefulness of GHRD portal. Thirty-two participants from Malaysia, Sri Lanka, Vietnam and India attended the workshop.

The opening ceremony of the workshop was held at Jubilee Hall of VAMNICOM in the forenoon of 26th February. The workshop was inaugurated by Mr. Iain Macdonald, Director General of ICA Geneva and presided over by Dr. S.S. Sisodia, President of NCUI. The opening session was also addressed by Mr. Shil Kwan Lee, Regional Director of ICA-AP and Mr. Bhagwati Prasad, Chief Executive of NCUI and Director of VAMNICOM. A vote of thanks was proposed by Professor Paramjit Sharma, Head, Centre for IT, VAMNICOM who was the Coordinator of the workshop.

The GHRD Centre was also inaugurated by Mr. Iain Macdonald, Director General of ICA Geneva. So far 35 institutions have registered with the GHRD Centre [www.hrd.co-op].

Country reports (sharing HRD practices) were presented by the

participating countries at the workshop. A case study on "Innovative HRD Practices of IFFCO" was presented by Mr. D. Bhattacharya, General Manager (HRD) of IFFCO.

How to strengthen collaboration among HRD institutions in Asia for training, education, research and publication was also discussed at the workshop. The participants gave many ideas in this regard.

Field study visits were arranged to Warnanagar in Kolhapur District, 250 km from Pune, on 27th February where the delegates could get an opportunity to experience one of the strongest models of co-operative development in India. The participants visited institutions like sugar factory, dairy plant, paper plant, co-operative bank, mahila udyog, consumer store, wired village project and children's orchestra. Local sight-seeing tour was also organized on 28th February to Kelkar Museum, Aga Khan Palace and Rajneesh Ashram.

- K. Sethumadhavan

Mangalore University Employees' Credit Co-operative Society Ltd.

Mangalore University Employees credit co-operative society (R) celebrated its silver jubilee function on 3rd March 2007.

Honorable Vice-Chancellor of Mangalore University Prof. K. M. Kaveriappa presided over the function. Shri M.C. Nanaiha Ex-minister of Karnataka, Syndicate member of Mangalore University, Mr. P Nair Communication Officer, ICA-AP, New Delhi, Dr. Sundar Naik IFS, Registrar of Mangalore University and Palangappa, Deputy Registrar of Cooperatives Mangalore were the chief guests in the function.

Mr. Nanaiha a pioneer in the co-operative movement of Kodagu District in Karnataka shared his experience and suggested various strategies for the success of co-operatives in the given local socio-economic situation. Mr. P. Nair elaborated the role of ICA-AP in University/college co-operative development. Mr. P. Nair has given the background of FCEI, and explained the situation university cooperatives elsewhere. He also emphasized to consider the factors responsible for the development of University cooperatives in the region. Dr. Sundar Naik released the souvenir and Mr. Palagappa wished MUEC society.

Prof. K.M. Kaveriappa in his Presidential address suggested several schemes for the extension of activities of MUEC society and promised all support from the University for their Implementation.

Prof. T. N. Sridhar, President of the MUEC society welcomed guests and the gathering. Mr. Thimappa Naik, Secretary of the society briefed the achievements of MUEC society in his report. All the ex-Presidents and Secretaries of the society for the last 25 years were honored on the occasion. Prominent among them are



Dr. Kaveriappa, Dean, Mr. Nanaiha, M. P. Nair, Dr. Sushir Naik and Dr. T.N. Sridhar at the lighting of inaugural lamp

Prof. B.G. Shenoy and Prof. Yashavanth Dongre.

After the function a cultural program "Yakshagana" was staged by a

professional troupe in the region. Dr. Shripathi K.P, Director M.U.E.C Society, compered the Program.

– P. Nair

NCDC presents awards of Excellence



NCDC Award ceremony - Mr. Shil Kwan Lee, Mr. P. Uma Shankar, Late Dr. S.S.Sisodhia and others on the dias.

The ICA Regional Director for Asia-Pacific, Mr. Shil Kwan Lee, was a member of the team which selected excellent co-ops. Dr. P. K. Mishra, Secretary, Agriculture and Co-

operation, who is also the Vice-Chairman of National Co-operative Development Corporation (NCDC) gave away the awards on 4th January 2007.

ICA Committee on Youth Co-operation for Asia and the Pacific meets in Singapore

The first meeting of the ICA Committee on Youth Co-operation for Asia and the Pacific was held in Singapore, 2-3 February, 2007.

Fourteen members from Singapore, India, Nepal, Thailand, Vietnam, Philippines, Indonesia and Korea participated at this meeting. Mr. Shil Kwan Lee, Regional Director, ICA-AP,



Participants at SNCF office

Mr. Zulkifli Mohd., Chief Executive, SNCF, Mr. Tsubasa Nakamura and Mr. P. Nair, both from ICA-AP also participated at this meeting.

Mr. Teo Say Hong from Singapore has been elected Chair of the Committee, while Ms. Nguyen Thi Thu Hao of Vietnam and Ms. Lasalette M. Gumban from the Philippines were elected as Vice-chairs. Mr. Tsubasa Nakamura and Mr. P. Nair were appointed as Secretary and Co-Secretary of the Committee.

The delegates undertook a study visit to ITE Co-operative and Telecom Credit Co-operative. The Committee had its official meeting on 3rd February, 2007 wherein apart from elections, it held serious discussions about convening the Global Youth Conference in Singapore during



Participants at the ITE Co-operative

October 2007 in conjunction with the ICA General Assembly. Co-operative Business Innovation through Youth was the suggested theme for the global seminar.

It was also decided to collect an annual subscription of US\$100 from each member organization to build up some funds for the Committee.

– P. Nair

Conference on University Co-ops in Purwokerto, Central Java, Indonesia

The University Co-operative of UNSOED, in collaboration with the Rector of Jenderal Soedirman University, organized a Conference and Planning exercise at Purwokerto, Central Java on 20-24 March, 2007.

The meeting convened a number of sessions, with the Minister of Co-operatives and Small and Medium Enterprises, Minister of Sport and Youth Affairs, and Minister for National Education, participating in these events. Several MOUs were signed between the ministries and the University of UNSOED. Detailed presentations were made by eminent speakers like Dr. Mohammad Taufik, Ir. Agus Mukharram, Ir. Marsudi Rahardjo, Dr. Djabarudin Djohan, Drs. Robby Tulus, Mr. Abat Elias, Drs. Agung Pratapa, Mr. P. Nair (ICA A-P) spoke to almost 80 student co-operative leaders from all over Indonesia, who participated.



Mr. P. Nair, Mr. Robby Tulus, Dr. Djohan, with the participants

Mr. Robby Tulus and Mr. P. Nair were interviewed by the local FM Radio Station Tara Valeria on 23rd March, where they talked about development efforts in University co-operatives in the Region. Role plays, work plans, group discussions and other methods were used to drive home the points to these young co-operative leaders, who will ostensibly become future co-

operative leaders in Indonesia. Work Plans for future course of action were prepared by the delegates and they were presented on 24th March, 2007.

Mr. Suroto Ph, Prof. Dr. Rubijanto Misman, Dr. Mrs. Istigomah, and several other activists, moderated the sessions.

– P. Nair

Mr. M.V. Madane passes away

Mr. Madhav Vishwanath Madane passed away on 5th February, 2007 at Pune, his home town due to a cardiac arrest.



Mr. Madane was born in 1930s in Malegaon. He had his education in Mumbai (Bombay), Agra and Pune. He also studied for two years at the Co-operative College, Stanford Hall, Loughborough, UK. After a brief spell of Journalism in Pune, he became the Principal of the Co-operative Centre, then the Chief Executive of Bombay Provincial Co-operative Institute. In 1962, he joined the International Co-operative Alliance, Regional Office for Asia-Pacific as a Joint Director. In 1975, Mr. Madane took up an assignment in Afghanistan as the Senior Advisor with FAO upto 1985, when he was transferred to FAO Headquarters in Rome. On his return to India, Mr. Madane rejoined the ICA as Project Director. After retiring from the ICA, Mr. Madane has been active in co-operative activities in India and globally. He was seriously into co-operative research and has been the Chair of the Asia-Pacific Regional Research Group. He was also director of Indian Society for Co-operative Studies.

He had authored several books on co-operative subjects, especially on co-operative agriculture in Japan and Korea, on HRD in co-operatives and had also written a novel, Red Star Over Kabul.

We pray to God Almighty to rest his soul in peace and give courage to his family members to face this sad loss, which will be equally felt by the co-operators globally.

Dr. S.S. Sisodia passes away

Dr. Sawai Singh Sosodia, President of National Co-operative Union of India, passed way on 24 March, 2007 in New Delhi, due to a cardiac arrest.



Dr. Sisodia was born in November 1924 in Barnagar, Ujjain District of Madhya Pradesh. He was a graduate and a leading Advocate of the Supreme Court of India. He was awarded Ph.D. in Political Science by Vikram University. He was a great scholar and author of well known books on Foreign Policy of India, Centre-State Relations and International Trade Agreements.

Dr. Sisodia served in the cabinet of Late Smt. Indira Gandhi, as Minister of State for Finance, and as a member of Rajya Sabha for more than 2 terms. He was also a member of the Madhya Pradesh Legislative Assembly for many years and a minister in the erstwhile Madhya Bharat. He also held the position of the Chairman of the Food Corporation of India.

Dr Sisodia served as Chairman of DCCB, DCU and State Co-operative Union of Madhya Pradesh. He was also the Chairman of the National Federation of Urban Co-operative Banks and Credit Societies.

He was the President of NCUI for almost 5 years and also served in many committees of the ICA, its Standing Committee for Asia and the Pacific and also a member of the Board of Directors of ICA.

ASPACON condoles the sudden demise of Dr. Sisodia, whose contribution to the co-operative movement will be long remembered. We pray to Almighty to provide eternal peace to his soul and give courage to his family to bear this loss.

Ms. Alma T. Gabud passes away

Ms. Alma T. Gabud, long time serving dedicated staff of NATCCO Network, Philippines, passed away on 27 March 2007.



She has served the co-operative movement for more than 29 years in various capacities.

Her kidney ailment did not deter her a bit in her desire and passion to contribute to the development of co-operative movement.

A lot of co-operators from Asia-Pacific and globally who came across Alma would remember her warmth and sincerity.

We pray to Almighty to rest her soul in peace and also give courage to her family, friends and loved ones, to face this grave loss.



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First Co-operative Forum for Enhancing Co-operative Work held in Dubai

The First Co-operative Forum for Enhancing the Co-operative Work was held at Dubai, UAE, on 12-13 June 2007. More than 100 delegates from GCC countries (Gulf Co-operation Council) – United Arab Emirates, State of Bahrain, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Sultanate of Oman, State of Qatar and State of Kuwait, attended the Forum. Ministry of Social Affairs, Government of UAE in collaboration with International Co-operative Alliance, hosted the Forum.

H.E. Mariam Mohammed Khalfan Al Roomi, Hon'ble Minister of Social Affairs, Government of UAE, inaugurated the Forum and Mr. Ivano Barberini, President of ICA presided over the inaugural function.

The following resource persons spoke at the Forum:

1. Mr. Shil Kwan Lee, Regional Director, ICA-AP
2. Mr. Hans Muenkner, Professor, Germany
3. Mr. Kim Yook Kon, NACF, Korea
4. Mr. Bhagwati Prasad, NCUI, India
5. Mr. Zulkifli Mohammed, SNCF, Singapore
6. Mr. Tsubasa Nakamura, Japan, ICA-AP
7. Mr. Rajiv I.D. Mehta, ICA-AP
8. Dr. S.C. Mishra, Professor, India

On the basis of the interaction between co-operative leaders and Government officials, following action



Mr. Ivano Barberini, H.E. Mariam Mohd Khalfan Al Roomi, Hon'ble Minister of Social Affairs, Govt. of UAE, distinguished dignitaries and Mr. Shil Kwan Lee.

plan was proposed at the end of the Forum:

01. There is a need of a more comprehensive dialogue between the co-operative movements and the Governments in GCC region to ameliorate the prospects of co-operatives in this potential region.
02. The general development policy environment in the Gulf region reflects inequalities between the corporate and co-operative sectors. As we all know, co-operatives belong to the economically vulnerable user members to get their needs served through the co-operative institution created by them.

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The Hon'ble Minister, Mr. Lee and Mr. Barberini in discussions.

03. Co-operatives as a matter of fact are the most legitimate value driven peoples/ community based organizations/enterprises and thus require a fair and preferential treatment over other forms of business

organizations. This aspect needs to be incorporated in the national development policy and be reflected clearly for visible impact domestically and internationally.

04. There is a dire need to build the capacity of the co-operatives at

primary and secondary levels by the dissemination of right knowledge-cum-information on co-operatives and the businesses they are in along with the development of managerial and operational skills for optimum utilization of capital and human resources for an assured success of the co-operatives. ICA Asia pacific will be more than willing to provide necessary technical support in the process of capacity building.

05. Dialogue between government and co-operatives and also at different levels of co-operatives is essential and to yearn for successful sustainable co-operative economy, governments and co-operatives together must strategize exposure cum exchange programs to successful co-operatives in the region. ICA-AP will be happy to facilitate the visit of co-operative fraternity from the Gulf region to other parts of Asia.

- A.K. Taneja

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Study Visit cum Training Programme of co-op leaders and Government officials of Afghanistan, Bhutan, Maldives & Pakistan held in India

The Training programme was inaugurated by the President of NCUI, Mr. G.H. Amin in the presence of Mr. Bhagwati Prasad, Chief Executive of NCUI and Mr. B.D. Sharma, Sr. Consultant, ICA Domus Trust on 21st May 2007 at Vaikunth Mehta National Institute of Co-operative Management (VAMNICOM), Pune.

Mr. Bhagwati Prasad welcomed the participants and thanked the ICA-AP for organizing the programme for promotion of co-operatives in Afghanistan, Bhutan, Maldives and Pakistan. He also spoke briefly about the co-operative movement of India.

Mr. B.D. Sharma thanked the National Co-operative Union of India (NCUI) and VAMNICOM for collaborating in this programme. He apprised the participants about the mission and vision of ICA.

Mr. G.H. Amin, in his inaugural address, extended a very warm welcome to all the participants. He said that he is convinced that co-operatives in many fields have proved their importance, capabilities and made many notable contributions along with the private and public sector counterparts in business and services in our country.

Inaugurating the programme he said, "As a mass movement, co-operation would have certain weaknesses. But, it should not deter their commitment to overcome those hindrances/shortcomings and face the daunting challenges by following well crafted, multi-pronged strategies. They should become self-reliant, promote excellent value based management, educate the rank and file, so as to improve their governance."

Six participants (3 from Bhutan, 2 from Maldives and 1 from Pakistan) attended the programme. Mr. S.



The participants with Mr. B.D. Sharma, ICA; Mr. G.H. Amin, President, NCUI; Mr. Bhagwati Prasad, Chief Executive, NCUI and Mr. Bhosle, Associate Professor, VAMNICOM

Bhosale, Associate Professor at VAMNICOM was the main co-ordinator of the programme.

The above programme has been successfully concluded and the participants returned to their respective countries. The Afghan delegation and one participant from Pakistan were unable to attend. However the positive aspect is that all the participants were enlightened and

occupied senior positions and are directly associated with promotion of co-operatives in their respective countries.

From Maldives and Pakistan, the Registrars of Co-operative Societies participated and from Bhutan the senior officers responsible for promotion of co-operatives participated.

– A.K. Taneja

2nd Training Course on Promotion of Sustainable Enterprises for Rural Women

The ICA-AP with the support of Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (MAFF) of the Government of Japan and in collaboration with IDACA will be organizing the Second Training Course on Promotion of Sustainable Enterprises for Rural Women from 13 July to 18 August, 2007.

Twelve rural women leaders of agricultural co-operatives (two each from China, India, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines and Vietnam) have been selected. The first part of

the programme consist of study visits to co-operatives in the Philippines and the second part will consist of training course in Japan, through class room lectures and extensive study visits.

The objectives of the course are (a) to learn the method of enterprise development by rural women through case studies; (b) study management method of micro-enterprises by rural women; and (c) to learn the method of encouraging women to be involved in rural community development.

– K. Sethumadhavan

Dissemination Meeting of HIV/AIDS Awareness Project for Co-operatives in India

The ICA-AP in collaboration with NCUI and RCSHA has successfully implemented the Project on Prevention of HIV/AIDS for co-operatives through Sensitization of Co-operative Leaders and Training of Co-operative Education Instructors in 4 states.

Therefore, a dissemination meeting and workshop was held to discuss and share experience and learning from the project. The major objective of the meeting was to spread information about the program among various agencies working for HIV/AIDS prevention and cure and also to meet with the prospective partners who may collaborate in extension of the Project.

The meeting was held on 8th May, 2007 at NCUI Meeting Hall in New Delhi. Mr. G.H. Amin, President of NCUI inaugurated the meeting and delivered inaugural address. Mr. Bhagwati Prasad, Chief Executive of NCUI and Mrs. Savitri Singh, Gender Advisor, ICA-AP welcomed the participants. The experts from UNAIDS, ILO, AIF, RCSHA, DFID, CDCGAP, Clinton Foundation and NACO participated in the meeting



Mrs. Savitri Singh, Mr. G.H. Amin, President, NCUI, Mr. Bhagwati Prasad, Chief Executive, NCUI and Mr. Silke on the dias.

and made their comments and observations. The participants appreciated the efforts of co-operatives to fight against HIV/AIDS and observed that co-operatives are now seen as a potential vehicle for mainstreaming the HIV/AIDS interventions. Health Advisor of DFID, India, Dr. Silke observed that besides creating awareness and training, the

co-operative's role should be visible in providing support to infected women, and HIV/AIDS widows and orphans.

The programme of the meeting consisted of introduction and briefing on project activities, experience of Master Trainers – Training process, methodologies, experience, observation of NCCT Principals, experience of Trainees and observations from the invitees and future road map to extend the activities in other states as well as periodical strengthening of existing resources as pool of trainers.

During the project, four workshops for 200 co-operative leaders and 8 TOT for about 220 men and women co-operative trainers of the 4 states have been held.

The main training for 110 men and 110 women co-operatives completed in December, 2006. Thereafter, 4 follow up/refresher training, one in each state, was held in February-March, 2007.



The participants posed for a photograph.

– Mrs. Savitri Singh

The Amendment Bill for Consumers' Livelihood Co-operative Society Law in Japan enacted

The Amendment Bill for the Consumers' Livelihood Co-operative Society Law was enacted, having unanimously passed both at the Upper House Plenary Session held on April 20 and the Lower House Plenary Session held on May 8, 2007. The amended Act will be in force as of April 1, 2008.

No substantial amendments have been made to the Consumers' Livelihood Co-operative Society Law for more than half a century since it was originally established in 1948.

With the change of the society and economy and the advancement of Japanese consumer co-operatives, a discrepancy has arisen between the Law and the actual situation of consumer co-ops. Therefore, the Japanese Consumers' Co-operative Union has required the amendment of the Law as a whole, having established the "Requirement proposal for the amendment of the

Consumers' Livelihood Co-operative Society Law" in 2005.

The Law will be comprehensively and drastically amended for the first time in 59 years since it was originally established, responding to the change of consumers' livelihood, actual situation of Japanese consumer co-operatives and the social expectations for consumer co-ops.

Regarding the aspect of organizational operation, the internal governance will be enhanced through the clarification of authorities and responsibilities of board of directors and other internal bodies. The external checking system, individual members' right to bring a legal claim, etc. will also be developed.

Regarding the aspect of business, strict rules of the law from its original establishment will be relaxed. For example, in the business area, which is currently restricted within a

prefecture, will be extended to adjoining prefectures if it is felt necessary for the implementation of a retail business. Business of consumer co-ops will remain unavailable for non-members, but in exceptional cases will be clarified under the Law. Regarding insurance business, the soundness and transparency of the management will be secured for the protection of policy-holders. Health and welfare services will be clearly stated in the Law as a part of consumer co-op's business.

The Japanese Consumers' Co-operative Union welcomes the amendment of the Consumers' Livelihood Co-operative Society Law and will take rapid action toward the organizational and operational adjustment in compliance with the amended Law, aiming at further fulfillment of its social role and contributing to consumers and communities.

— Jiro Ito

57th General Assembly of JCCU elects new President

The 57th Annual General Assembly of the Japanese Consumers' Co-operative Union (JCCU) was held on June 14 and 15, 2007, in Tokyo. This year, the General Assembly was honored to receive congratulatory messages from President Ivano Barberini of the International Co-operative Alliance (ICA) and other senior officials, and by the attendance of 834 out of 873 registered representatives.

JCCU President Shugo Ogura spoke at the opening of the Assembly. In his address, Mr. Ogura expressed his appreciation toward Diet members, public officials and other related parties for the passage of the bill to amend the Consumers' Livelihood Co-operative Society Law for the first time in these 59 years. He pledged



The JCCU Annual General Assembly in progress.

further contribution to members and local communities and the fulfillment of expected social role through business and other activities on the basis of the 10th National Medium-Term Plan.

Mr. Toshifumi Yamashita was elected as the President of Japanese Consumers' Co-operative Union (JCCU) at the 57th General Assembly on 15 June 2007. He took over presidency of JCCU from Mr. Shugo Ogura, who is a member of ICA Audit and Control Committee.



Mr. Shugo Ogura, outgoing President and Mr. T. Yamashita, incoming President of JCCU

Mr. Yamashita started his career in co-operative movement in 1967 and as a leader of a consumer co-operative. Since then he has been playing important roles in organizing business federations, amendment of Consumer Co-op Society Law, etc. Internationally, he is the Vice-Chairperson of CCW (Consumer Co-operative Worldwide), a member of ICA Working groups on Governance and International Accounting Standards.

The Managing Director, Toshio Ito submitted six agenda items, including the 2006 activity report, 2007 business plan and budget and the 10th National Medium-Term Plan, which was deliberated with enthusiasm by the representatives.

The basic policies of the 10th National Medium-Term Plan are: to

best serve the everyday lives of members; to live together with local communities by seeking more open organization; and to maximize Co-

op's role as a consumer organization. The items of agenda were voted on after discussions and were approved without exception. *– Jiro Ito*

2nd ICA/Japan Training Course on Enhancement of Farmers' Income & Poverty Reduction through Co-operatives to commence

On the basis of the achievements of the Training Courses on "Strengthening Management of Agricultural Co-operatives in Asia" for 20 years beginning 1986, a Training Project on "Enhancement of Farmers' Income and Poverty Reduction through Co-operatives" has been developed and agreed upon by MAFF, Govt. of Japan for implementation through the ICA. Under this Project, the 2nd ICA/Japan Training Course on "Enhancement of Farmers' Income and Poverty Reduction through Cooperatives" will be held from 9th December 2007 to 19th April, 2008 in India-Thailand-Japan. The training programme will be implemented by the ICA-AP with the collaboration of

IDACA, Tokyo (Japan), IFFCO/FMDI, Gurgaon (India), Institute of Rural Management (IRMA), Anand (Gujarat), India, and ICA member-organizations in India, Thailand and Japan.

A total of 12 participants (men and women) will be selected from among the candidates to be nominated by the ICA member-organisations from Cambodia, China, India, Indonesia, Iran, Laos, Myanmar, Nepal, Philippines, Thailand and Vietnam.

The training programme will be held in several phases and at different locations in India, Thailand and Japan.

– Prem Kumar

Tentative upcoming activities of ICA-AP

1. Regional Training Workshop for Managers of Consumer Co-operatives – Singapore, during July, 2007.
2. A programme on Women Development and HIV AIDS is being planned for August, 2007, in Bangladesh.
3. Seminar on Strengthening the Role of Co-operatives in Rural Development – New Delhi, India, during September, 2007.
4. Seminar on the Impact of Multilateral and Bilateral Agricultural Trade Negotiations on Co-operatives – India, during November, 2007.
5. An ICA Asia-Pacific CEO Forum on Co-operative Enterprise Development will be held during November/December, 2007.
6. ICA-AP will hold the following events in Singapore, in conjunction with the ICA General Assembly:
 - Meeting of the ICA Asia-Pacific Standing Committee,
 - Meeting of the Consumer
- Committee,
- Global Seminar on Consumer Co-operatives,
- Meeting and Global Seminar of ICA Consumer Sub-Committee on University/Campus Co-operatives,
- Meeting of the Regional Women's Committee,
- Meeting of Regional Co-operative Banking Association,
- Meeting of the Asia-Pacific Health Co-operative Organisation.
7. Study visit to Korean Agricultural Co-operatives will be held during September, 2007.
8. A Trainers' Training Workshop for Leadership Development of Women in Co-operatives will be held, November, 2007 in Bangkok.
9. A study visit for Women leaders to successful women co-operatives will be held in India during December, 2007.

– P. Nair

RICM, Bangalore celebrated Silver Jubilee

The Regional Institute of Co-operative Management (RICM), Bangalore celebrated its Silver Jubilee function on March 30, 2007.

At the invitation of the Chairman, Mr. B.S. Vishvanathan, Mrs Barberini, wife of Mr. Ivano Barberini, ICA President, lit the inaugural lamp.

Mr. G.T. Devegowda, Minister of Co-operation, Government of Karnataka, Mr. Ivano Barberini, Mr. G.H. Amin, President, NCUI, Mr. Ajit Kumar Singh, Chairman, NAFED, Mr. Bhagwati Prasad, Chief Executive, NCUI, Mr. S.K. Jhakar, Chairman, IFFCO, Mr. K Shrinivasan Gowda, Chairman, IFFCO-Tokio, Mr. B.S. Vishwanthan and other dignitaries attended the event. *- P. Nair*



Mrs. Barberini lighting the inaugural lamp.

PPCS re-configures UK processing facility

PPCS is planning to re-configure its United Kingdom frozen processing facility to reflect increasing consumer preference for chilled lamb.

Chairman Reese Hart said that following a strategic review of its international operations, PPCS has entered into a conditional sale of its Brooks of Norwich plant. On completion of the sale, PPCS will lease back part of the plant for the required volumes of frozen products packed

in-market. The retained processing area will operate as a standalone toll-processing unit. A significant change in market demand since PPCS invested in Brooks of Norwich in 1988 is behind this decision.

The consumer trend in the United Kingdom is an increasing preference for chilled rather than frozen lamb. United Kingdom retailers have consolidated the packing of chilled meat with a small number of large

multi-species operators. The initiative delivers on PPCS' commitment to ongoing improvements in performance.

PPCS is a leading New Zealand value-added meat exporter, which has set up processing plants in UK, Oman, Belgium, Germany, Hong Kong, Korea, Japan and the US.

*- Mr. Ramsey Margolis,
Executive Director, New Zealand
Cooperatives Association*

Nepal Co-operatives celebrate Golden Jubilee

The National Co-operative Federation of Nepal (NCF) and its affiliated co-operatives celebrated their Golden Jubilee in Kathmandu on 03 April, 2007.

The ICA President, Mr. Ivano Barberini and Regional Director Mr. Shil Kwan Lee participated at the events.

The Golden Jubilee celebrations attracted a large number of co-operative delegates in Nepal.



ICA President, Mr. Barberini, Mr. Shil Kwan Lee, Regional Director, ICA, Dr. Deepak Prakash Baskota, Chairman, NCF, Nepal and other dignitaries on the dias

ICA Youth Conference: "Co-operative Business Innovation through Youth"



18 - 19 October 2007

Raffles City Convention Centre

Theme: "Innovation in Co-operative Business"



The ICA Regional Youth Committee in collaboration with ICA Global Youth network, the youth representative at ICA board, Mr. Juan

Carlos Mejia Cuartas and the Singapore National Co-operative Federation are organizing a Global Youth Conference on 14th October

2007 at the Raffles City Convention Centre.

This will be followed by a study visit to co-operatives and youth activities on 15th October 2007.

This event needs registration. You could register yourself by visiting the following link before 31st July 2007- at www.icasingapore.coop/portal/accesInd.asp?proc=youth

For more information, contact:

Mr. Teo Say Hong
Chairman of the Regional Youth Committee <wenwen@sncof.org.sg>
or Mr. Tsubasa Nakamura
<tsubasa@icaroap.org.sg>

– P. Nair



All registered participants to the Youth Conference who are under 35 years of age are invited to attend the ICA General Assembly as observers with no registration fee. When registering for the Youth Conference, please indicate that you plan to attend the ICA General Assembly.

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International Co-operative Trade Fair held in Bali, Indonesia

The Co-operative Identity Statement of International Co-operative Alliance (ICA) has strongly emphasized the need of co-operation among co-operatives to optimally utilize the comparative strength of unified small producers in negotiating trade agreements on mutually beneficial terms with all fairness and respect for either side.

The ICA-AP in collaboration with DEKOPIN - the Indonesian Co-operative Council organized an International Co-operative Trade Fair in Bali, Indonesia from July 12 - 15, 2007. The Trade Fair was formally inaugurated by Ms. Maria Elena Chavez Pirson, Dy. Director-General, ICA, Geneva along with Mr. Adi Sasono, the



Distinguished delegates and co-operative leaders.



His Excellency, Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono, President of Republic of Indonesia delivering the inaugural speech.

President of DEKOPIN and Mr. Shil Kwan Lee, Regional Director, ICA-AP, at Discovery Shopping Mall, Denpasar, Bali, Indonesia on 12th July 2007.

Exhibition stalls were put up by the co-operatives of Indonesia, Iran, Sri Lanka, Thailand, India, Malaysia and the Philippines.

The trade fair was organized to commemorate the completion of six decades of co-operative movement in Indonesia. His Excellency Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono, President of Republic of Indonesia inaugurated the National Co-operative Day of Indonesia on 12th July 2007. More than 5000 delegates from Indonesia and 15 foreign countries - Canada, China, India, Myanmar, Malaysia, New Zealand,

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Philippines, Pakistan, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Spain, Timor Leste, UAE, Korea, Switzerland, attended the celebrations.

To make the event more meaningful, following activities were also held between 10 and 15 July 2007 in Bali in conjunction with the Trade Fair:

- Seminar on Capacity Building of Co-operatives through HRD Networking & 20th Meeting of the ICA Committee on HRD for Asia and the Pacific – 10-11 July.
- Co-operative Day of Indonesia – 12 July 2007
- International Co-operative Trade Fair – 12 to 15 July 2007



Mr. Shil Kwan Lee, Regional Director, ICA-AP, Mr. Adi Sasono, President of DEKOPIN and Ms. Maria-Elena Chavez Pirson, Dy. Director General, ICA inaugurating the Trade Fair.

- Conference on Poverty Reduction and Advantage of Co-operatives in Protecting Small Farmers and

Rural Entrepreneurs – 13 July 2007

- Symposium on Trade Networking – 14 July 2007

The main objective of the Symposium was to encourage and motivate co-operatives in the region to establish business alliances with overseas co-operatives as a win-win strategy in the market oriented economy.

Mr. Rajiv I.D. Mehta, Development Director, ICA-AP, coordinated and anchored the above events alongwith Mr A.K.Taneja, Program Officer, ICA-AP, and his counterpart in DEKOPIN, Mr. Yuzri Suhud, Secretary General, DEKOPIN. – A.K. Taneja

Second ICA-Japan Training Course on “Promotion of Sustainable Enterprises for Rural Women”



Rural women course participants with representatives of IDACA and MAFF.

The International Co-operative Alliance-Asia and Pacific [ICA-AP] in collaboration with the JA-ZENCHU [Central Union of Agricultural Co-operatives of Japan] and the Institute for the Development of Agricultural Co-operation in Asia [IDACA] held the 2nd Training Course on “Promotion of Sustainable Enterprises for Rural Women” from 13th July to 18th August 2007 in the Philippines and Japan.

The generous financial assistance was provided by the Ministry of Agriculture,

Forestry and Fisheries [MAFF] of the Government of Japan to conduct this program. 12 women participants, two each from China, India, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines and Vietnam attended the Training Course.

The Part-I of the program - Comparative Study Visits - was held in the Philippines from 13th to 22nd July in collaboration with the National Confederation of Co-operatives [NATCCO], a member-organization of ICA.

Part-II of the program held at IDACA

from 23rd July to 18th August included extensive classroom work and study visits to agricultural co-operatives in Shimane Prefecture of Japan. Lecture-cum-practical field study visits assignments were combined to impart necessary knowledge to the participants on the working of women’s associations and the general activities of agricultural co-operatives in Japan. In view of the experience gained by the participants through class room lectures, field study visits in the Philippines and Japan, the participants were able to develop brief outlines of their Action Plans which they would be recommending to their respective organizations on return to their home countries.

An end-of-the Course Evaluation was conducted at the conclusion of the Training Course and Certificates of Participation were awarded to each participant at IDACA in Tokyo on 17th August. The concluding session was attended by Mr. Kosei Banura, Section Chief, Int’l Co-op Division, Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries [MAFF]; Mr. Kazuo Tsukada, Executive Director of IDACA; and Mr. K. Sethumadhavan, Planning Officer of ICA-AP. – K. Sethumadhavan

ICA-AP organizes Workshop for Senior Executives of Co-operatives

The ICA Asia-Pacific will be organizing a workshop for Senior Executives of Co-operatives in the region, at Hotel Holiday Inn, Wellington, New Zealand, 27-30 October, 2007.

The workshop is being sponsored by the Indian Farmers' Fertilizer Co-operative (IFFCO) and hosted by New Zealand Co-operatives Association. The objective of the workshop is to share business experience of successful co-operatives for enhancing competitiveness of cooperative enterprises in the globalize market. A

total of approximately 50 senior level executives of co-operatives from the Region are expected to participate. With the growth of globalization and the emergence of new markets, co-operative enterprises too must stake their futures on the values that provide them with unique advantage. Key among them is their capacity to respond creatively to the market opportunities left unmet by the corporate sector.

In the Asia Pacific region, co-operatives are playing important role in the agriculture, consumer, housing, banking and social sectors as an

alternative model for the delivery of services vital to its members. In many communities, co-operatives are the linchpins for regenerating local economies and creating viable, sustainable employment through community owned, managed and controlled enterprises.

Presentations on "Coop Advantage of Doing Business" will be made by representatives from New Zealand co-operatives, Amul, India, IFFCO, India. NACF, Korea, Union of Consumer Co-operative, Kuwait, the Singapore Co-operative Movement.

– Rajiv Mehta

7th ICA Regional Workshop for Managers on "Management of Consumer Co-operatives in Asia-Pacific"

A 3-day workshop on "Management of Consumer Co-operative in Asia-Pacific" was organized by ICA-AP from 30th July to 1st August 2007, at the NTUC FairPrice Training Institute in Singapore. It was attended by 22 co-operators from Vietnam, Philippines, Sri Lanka and Thailand. The workshop commenced with the welcome address by Mr. Zulkifli Mohammed, Chief Executive of Singapore National Co-operative Federation (SNCF), followed by the presentation on NTUC Fair Price by Mr. Kao Beng Lee, Head of the Training Institute.

Mr. Hidenori Yamashita, store manager of Co-op Miyazaki, Japan was invited as a resource person and he made a presentation on "Store Operation" which includes many pictures of handmade POP (Point-of-Purchase) in his stores. He highlighted that his store has been aiming at unique store which cannot be copied by competitors.

The main lectures cover four important areas of store management, "Store Management", "Visual Merchandizing", "Basic Category Management", "Staff Training and



Participants of the Workshop at the NTUC Fairprice Institute in Singapore

Development". Mr. Dave Rao and Ms. Juliana Tan, experts of Fair Price, proceeded to the above lectures with concrete episode as well as basic knowledge.

On the second day, the participants had the opportunity to visit Fair Price Xtra, which was opened in December 2006 as the first hypermarket under Fair Price, two Fair Price supermarket stores and its competitors and they realized

strength and weakness of each store through the observation. On the final day, action plans of each participant on "What they want to achieve after the workshop" were presented. Participants committed themselves to introduce POS (Point-of-Sales) system, to conduct in-house trainings, to increase active members, to improve unattractive store layout and so on.

– Tsuabsa Nakamura

ICA-AP signs MoU with Union of Consumer Co-operative Societies, Kuwait



Mr. Shil Kwan Lee with Mr. Mohd. Amer Al-Mutairi signing the MOU

The ICA-AP Regional Director, Mr. Shil Kwan Lee, and Mr. Rajiv Mehta, Development Director, ICA-AP, visited the Union of Consumer Co-operative Societies, Kuwait at the invitation of the Kuwaiti Consumer Co-operative movement to discuss with them co-operative development efforts in the Middle East countries.

A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) has been signed by the Union of Consumer Societies, whereby the



H.E. Sheikh Khalid Al-Sabah, Minister of Foreign Affairs and Co-operatives, Government of Kuwait, with Mr. Shil Kwan Lee, Regional Director, Mr. Rajiv Mehta, Development Director, ICA and Mr. Mohd. Al-Mutairi and others.

Kuwaiti Consumer Co-operative Union would provide financial support to the ICA-AP in organizing a series of conferences in all countries of the Gulf region, culminating in the setting up of a Co-operative Development Centre in Kuwait. Initially it is proposed to convene these Conferences in Kuwait, UAE, Qatar, Oman, Saudi Arabia and Bahrain, with a Regional Conference in Kuwait again.

The MoU was signed by Mr. Shil Kwan Lee on behalf of the ICA and Mr. Mohd. Amer Al-Mutairi, Chairman of the Union. Senior members of the staff of UCCS and board members were present.

Strategies and support for the setting up of Co-operative Development Centre and other future activities will be finalized later.

– Rajiv Mehta

ICA-AP organizes Agricultural Co-operative study visit to Korea



Participants of the Workshop at NACF, Korea

The ICA-AP has organised a Study Tour to Agricultural Co-operatives in the Republic of Korea, 10-15 September, 2007, in collaboration with the National Agricultural Co-operative Federation (NACF).

Six participants from India, Malaysia, Sri Lanka and Vietnam participated at the study tour.

A joint workshop was also organised during this period by ICA-AP and NACF.

– Savitri Singh

ICA-Japan Training Project for “Capacity Building for Marketing – 2007”



Participants of the Marketing Course at IDACA.

The 1st Training Project for “Capacity Building for Marketing in 2007” was formally inaugurated on 23rd August 2007 in the Conference Hall of IDACA by Mr. KON-NO Masahiro, General Manager, Agricultural Policy Department, Central Union of Agricultural Co-operatives (JA Zenchu). Kazuo Tsukada, Executive Director, IDACA and Mr. A.K. Taneja, Program Officer, ICA-AP also addressed the Inaugural Session.

The programme is funded by the Government of Japan in the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (MAFF).

18 participants – two each from Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Myanmar and Thailand and four each from the Philippines and Vietnam attended the Training.

The IDACA had developed a training curriculum, which included class-room lectures on various aspects, handled by the IDACA faculty members and specially-invited guest lecturers, field study visits and direct communication with farmers and leaders of agricultural co-operatives.

The field study visits were arranged to agricultural co-operatives in Fukushima Prefecture of Japan. Including the Fukushima Pref. Union and JA Zen-Noh Fukushima Headquarters, facilities run by JA Shin-Fukushima; JA – Aizu-Midori/briefing on organization and business activities, including commodity-wise group; observation of the facilities attached to JA Aizu-Midori & discussions with farmers, observation of Farmers’ Market run by JA Sukagawa-Iwase

The participants also held group discussions and prepared brief reports on the experiences gained by them. An end-of-the-course evaluation session was also held.

The emphasis during the Training Project was on the methods and techniques adopted by various organisations and JA group in distribution of agricultural products and marketing business in Japan.

Special topics of interest to the partici-

pants like “Organization and business activities of agricultural co-operatives – JA, distribution of agricultural products and marketing business of JA, activities for supply of safe and reliable products by JA, farm guidance and commodity-wise group of JA, agro-processing business and marketing of processed products, planning of marketing business and marketing strategy of JA, were presented.

During the study visits programme to agricultural cooperatives in Fukushima Prefecture, the participants were able to interact with farmer leaders and to observe their various activities as carried out by the JAs.

The training course was designed in such a way that the participants, after returning to their respective countries, are able to help organise and strengthen the marketing activities of their respective primary co-operatives and other similar groups and make use



Participants of the marketing course at a field study visit.

of experiences of Agricultural Co-operatives in Japan.

At the valedictory session, Mr. Hirofumi Kobayashi, Manager, WTO/EPA Office, Agricultural Policy Dept., Central Union of Agricultural Coops (JA-Zenchu), addressed the participants.

– A K Taneja

Effective Communication: The Mantra for Success

Top academicians and experts from the fields of journalism, public relations and corporate communication drove home the need for Effective Communication at the three-day workshop organized by National Film And Fine Arts Co-operative Ltd., (NAFFAC) from August 6-8, 2007 at New Delhi.

In the course of the workshop organized by NAFFAC in collaboration with NCCE, Editors, PR Personnel and Officers from the Co-operative and allied organizations got an enriching exposure to the field of effective communication from top professionals of the industry and academicians in various aspects of corporate communication.

In his inaugural address to the participants at the workshop, Shri Bhagwati Prasad, Chief Executive, NCUI stressed that communication is an integral part of the functioning of cooperatives and cannot be taken for granted.

In the opening lecture of the workshop, Dr Vasantha Patri, eminent psychologist and counselling expert emphasized that communication is the basis for all human interaction, at home, at work, within nations and at all levels. She spoke at length about the various barriers that affect the smooth flow of communication and asked the participants to work towards eliminating all impediments that hamper effective communication.

Noted journalist, Sunny Thomas gave the participants useful tips on effective writing keeping in mind the need for clarity, readability and perspective.

Mr B.D. Sharma, Consultant, ICA, discussed at length the communication challenges faced by the co-operative sector.



Participants with Mr. Bhagwati Prasad, Chief Executive, NCUI at the inauguration of the NAFFAC workshop.

An absorbing and lucid lecture by Ms Shalini Sethi, Communication Consultant, World Bank gave the participants a complete perspective on Event Management.

In his lectures on Effective Communication for the broadcast media, Mr E. Isaac, Programme Director, Doordarshan discussed how even one-minute television documentaries can carry the vision of an organization to audiences spread far and wide. Mr Isaac showcased some of the prime-time one-minute Doordarshan documentaries produced under the series titled "The Millennium Mahatma" to get across the message of Mahatma Gandhi to the people.

Veteran journalist, Professor Bandhopadhyay gave several useful tips to the participants on Effective Press Relations.

Advertising expert, Professor Sood, laid stress on integrated advertising

communication with the right media mix to promote the image of cooperatives.

Prof. N.N. Sarkar, graphics expert, gave useful suggestions on bringing out aesthetically designed print and promotional material as it adds to the corporate identity of any organization.

Veteran journalist, Neelkant Patri in the final lecture on effective communication gave useful tips on economic journalism based on sound knowledge of business developments and economic policies.

Mr Vinay Kumar, Managing Director, NAFFAC presented the participants with certificates at the end of the three-day workshop.

Dr Neb, Senior Consultant, NCCE in his valedictory address asked participants to incorporate all the knowledge gained at the workshop and to make effective communication the key to the success of their respective cooperatives.

– Jyoti Raghavan, NAFFAC

Workshop on Enhancing Role of Women in Co-operative Development

The ICA-AP and Department of Co-operatives of Bangladesh jointly organized a workshop on "Enhancing Role of Women in Co-operative Development" held in Dhaka, Bangladesh on 22 & 23 August, 2007.

The Chief Guest, Mr. Mohd. Anwarul Iqbal, Honourable Advisor in charge of the Ministries of Local Government, Rural Development & Co-operatives and Ministry of Labour & Employment inaugurated the workshop. Mr. Shil Kwan Lee, Regional Director, ICA-AP also joined as Special Guest. Mr. Md. Nazrul Islam, Secretary-in-Charge, Rural Development and Co-operative Division, chaired the function.

The workshop was attended by about 30 national participants including resource persons from ICAAP, UNAIDS, Bangladesh, UNIFEM Office for South Asia and FAO, Dhaka. The proceedings of the workshop were divided into 3 sessions:



Mr. Mohd. Anwarul Iqbal, Mr. Shil Kwan Lee, Mrs. Savitri Singh and others at the inauguration

- Understanding Co-operative Movement in Bangladesh & ICA
 - Gender integration and women empowerment initiative by cooperative department and movement of Bangladesh (focus on policy, law, programmes, achievements and gaps).
 - HIV/AIDS & Co-operatives.
- Savitri Singh

New ICA-AP Building to be constructed in India



A model of the proposed new building of ICA-AP at Noida, India.

The ICA Asia-Pacific Regional Office recently acquired a plot of land in NOIDA, India, which was specially allotted to it by the Indian government authorities.

The building is being designed by a well-known architect and the construction will be completed in the year 2008.

It will have 6-storeys excluding 2 basements. The construction of the building is financed by the ICA Domus Trust.

An architect's view of the building is given here.

– Shil Kwan Lee

ICA hosts Mr. S.K. Jakhar, Chairman IFFCO and Mr. G.H. Amin, President NCUI

The ICA hosted Mr. S.K. Jakhar, Chairman of Indian Farmers' Fertilizer Co-operative Limited, who has been nominated by the Indian Co-operative Movement to be on the ICA Global board, and Mr. G.H. Amin, President of National Co-operative Union of India and a member of the ICA Regional Standing Committee in the ICA-AP's Regional office in New Delhi, on 10 August, 2007.

Dr. Gopal Saxena, Director Co-operative Development in IFFCO and other officials of IFFCO and NCUI also accompanied them.

Mr. Shil Kwan Lee, ICA Regional Director, made a presentation on the past and present activities of the ICA in Asia-Pacific and requested both IFFCO and NCUI to support ICA's co-operative



Mr. G H Amin, President of NCUI. Mr. S.K. Jakhar, Chairman IFFCO and Dr. Gopal Saxena, IFFCO at ICA-AP.

development activities. He also thanked both IFFCO and NCUI for the continued

support these member organizations provide to ICA-AP
– P Nair



Condolence Message on the demise of Mr. Ajit Singh, Chairman, NAFED

The ICA Regional Office for Asia-Pacific, New Delhi, condoled the sad demise of Mr. Ajit Kumar Singh, Chairman, National Agricultural Co-operative Marketing Federation of India. [NAFED]. He was elected Chairman of NAFED since 1998.

He was a very positive supporter of ICA-AP activities and he evinced keen interest in the development of agricultural co-operatives, both at national and global levels. He also participated in the meetings of the ICA Agricultural Co-operative Organisation and Agricultural Committee of Asia-Pacific.

Mr. Shil Kwan Lee, ICA- AP, Regional Director attended the condolence meeting on 10 August, 2007 and delivered a condolence message.

2nd ICA/Japan Training Course on "Enhancement of Farmers' Income & Poverty Reduction through Co-operatives"

The Second ICA/Japan Training Course on "Enhancement of Farmers' Income and Poverty Reduction through Co-operatives" will be held in India, Thailand and Japan from December 9, 2007 to April 19, 2008, with 12 participants, from Cambodia, China, India, Indonesia, Iran, Laos, Myanmar, Nepal, Philippines, Thailand and Vietnam.

Brief time-table of the training course: Home Country Assignments in respective home countries [HCAs]

– Dec 9, 2007- Jan 9, 2008

Part-I: India Part of the Programme – Jan 10, 2008 to Feb 24-25, 2008

Part-II: Comparative Field Study Visit in Thailand – Feb 27-Mar 5, 2008

Part-III: Japan Programme held at IDACA – Mar 6-Apr 18, 2000

Departure from Japan – Apr 19, 2008

– Prem Kumar

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ICA-AP organizes National Conference on Co-operative Development

The ICA in Asia-Pacific and ICA Domus Trust, in collaboration with the National Co-operative Union of India and the National Co-operative Development Corporation, organised a National Conference on Co-operative Development in India from 18-19 December, 2007, at the Grand Hotel, Vasant Kunj, New Delhi.



Distinguished delegates and co-operative leaders at the National Conference

The objective of the Conference was to deliberate on the scope and potential of co-operatives in providing assured livelihood to agriculturists, weavers, artisans and self employed youths in rural areas; to correlate the priorities of the central governments with that of the local self rule institutions; to suggest alternative approaches for development through co-operatives to complement the role of local governments in the development of rural areas and to provide gainful occupation to millions of informal on-farm and off-farm workers through co-op business networking in globalize setup.

Thirty delegates representing national level co-operative federations in India, registrars of co-operatives, secretaries of industries, specialists in rural development organizations, managing directors and chief executives of specialized co-operatives, apart from selected resource persons, participated

at the Conference and had discussions on the various aspects of co-operative development in India and the needs to further boost the development.

Mr. Hans Dahlberg, former Chief Executive of ICMIF, narrated the development of co-operatives in Europe and also on the ICA initiative of Global 300 in line with Fortune 500 of the commercial sector.

Dr. Jin-Kook Kim from ICA, Geneva explained the WTO impact and possible course of action for the co-operatives.

Mr. Sanjeev Chopra, Secretary-Agriculture, Government of West Bengal, explained about the national and global scenario on co-operatives and what lies ahead for them.

The delegates, richly contributed to the thought churning process and came out

with suggestive measures which the co-operatives and the government of India, should initiate.

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Mr. P. Umashankar, Mr. Shil Kwan Lee and Mr. G.H. Amin at the Conference

The two day Conference was inaugurated by Mr. G.H. Amin, President of National Co-operative Union of India. Mr. Shil Kwan Lee, ICA-AP Regional Director stressed on the

need of capitalising emerging global trade opportunities and advised the cooperatives to convert their weaknesses into their strength. Mr. Bhagwati Prasad, Chief Executive of

National Co-operative Union of India, made a presentation on the Global HRD network. Prof. Arvind Gupta of IRMA, India and Mr. PVA Rama Rao from National Institute of Rural Development and former Managing Director of NABARD presented very well researched papers on the Indian co-operative situation. Mr. S.M. Jharwal, Special Secretary in the Ministry of Agriculture and Co-operation gave the valedictory address on the closing day. Mr. P Uma Shankar, Managing Director of NCDC, New Delhi, was instrumental in organizing this Conference and spoke to the Conference on various factors of the Indian co-operative set up. Mr. Rajiv I.D. Mehta, Director-Development, assisted by P. Nair and Mr. Suresh Babu anchored the Conference, with the support of the staff of ICA Asia-Pacific.

– P. Nair

Workshop of Senior Executives on The Co-operative Advantage of Doing Business

– The Alternative Way to Compete in Free Market Economy

To share the business experiences of successful co-operatives for enhancing competitiveness of co-operative enterprises in the globalize market, the ICA-AP in collaboration with IFFCO organized a workshop of senior executives from identified co-operatives in the Asia Pacific region from 27 to 29 November 2007 at Wellington in New Zealand.

In all twenty-seven participants from 8 countries from the region finally made it to the workshop and about more than 10 important participants from the countries like India, Iran, Kuwait, Pakistan and UAE couldn't make it due to last minute change in their program on account of the circumstances beyond their control.

The workshop was inaugurated by Hon'ble Lianne Dalziel, Minister of Commerce, Small Business & Women's Affairs, Government of New Zealand. The Regional Director of ICA Asia-Pacific, Mr Shil Kwan Lee delivered a



Hon'ble Minister Ms. Lianne Dalziel being presented a memento by Mr. Shil Kwan Lee, Regional Director, ICA-AP. Mr. Rajiv I.D. Mehta, Dev. Director is also present.

special address at the inaugural session. The workshop was jointly conducted by Mr Ramsey Margolis, Executive Director of New Zealand Co-operatives Association and Mr Rajiv I.D. Mehta, Director-Development, ICA-AP.

Resource persons from Japan, Korea, New Zealand, Singapore, UK and ICA AP made presentations on the theme of the workshop "The Co-operative Advantage of Doing Business" through case studies of successful business co-

operatives in their respective countries. The case studies catalyzed effective participation of the participants in the group discussions on linking co-operative advantage to business and effectively serving the members through co-operatives. The following co-operative advantages were found extremely relevant in the development of co-operative enterprises:

- ◆ The greatest advantage the co-ops enjoy is their understanding on the needs of the local community on account of their being member based organizations with strong linkages with the community and civil society at large.
- ◆ Co-operatives are democratically controlled organizations controlled by the elected representatives who do have the potential to leverage the political considerations and build good relationship with the governments in promoting the interests of the co-operative institutions.
- ◆ The core objective of serving the needs of the co-operative community injects the desired spirits and sense of belongingness among the members and inspires them to be competitive to survive and progress.
- ◆ Co-operatives when fully owned and controlled by members acquire enough flexibility in controlling the costs on account of the value based management practices soaked with the modest aspirations of the members.
- ◆ Enlightened membership and committed leadership coupled with knowledgeable and experienced professionals/managers can position the co-operatives at enviable position in the market.
- ◆ Co-operative values and their ethical business practices address the issue of corporate social responsibility and if publicized well could add value to the co-op brand image contributing to an assured success of the co-operative enterprise in any form of economic system.
- ◆ Co-operative solidarity factor if

capitalized in trade promotion could swiftly connect the business from local to global level.

- ◆ Classic federal character of co-operative institutions is a vital aspect in removing the market imperfections.

It was unequivocally agreed to capitalize the above advantages in developing marketing strategy to promote business interests of the co-operatives and following recommendations were made for the co-operatives in the region:

- Co-operative enterprises should base their futures on the values that provide them with unique competitive advantage in the market place.
- Co-operatives need to pay serious attention to the links between their co-operative and ethical values and the business/commercial success of the co-operative enterprises.
- Co-operatives must learn from the experiences of successful co-ops world over.
- There is a dire need to repair the image of co-operatives by lobbying well with media, government and public for positive image building of co-operatives so that the co-op values remain relevant with the change of the economic patterns.
- Co-ops need to try hard to positioning them as a reliable brand.
- WORD OF MOUTH publicity by the members and users of co-op services being one of the most effective tools in propagating the advantage of co-operative mode of doing businesses should be one of the measures to retain and promote the preferred brand status.
- Marketing slogans for co-operatives must convey the fact that makes co-ops what they are and what investor owned corporations never can be.
- Co-operative leaders, prospective leaders and managers, members and the public must be educated and trained to know the standards to which co-ops are expected to perform, and they must also buy into those standards and work

willingly to meet them.

- Professionals inducted to manage the operations of the co-operatives must have the required expertise and needed passion with a desire to embrace the values of co-operatives in shouldering their responsibilities.
- Co-operative leadership must groom second line for paving way for the youths to understand the business of co-operative in a business like manner.
- Co-ops need to have a well focused approach to business, governance and management with clearly defined rules for business and incorporate reasonable and logical concern for community in a feasible and sustainable systemic form.
- Employment generation through co-operatives must be showcased to broad base the scope of co-operatives in the economic development of a country and involvement of government through enabling policy environment.
- Co-operatives need to show case their strength through quantifiable comparative advantages demonstrated clearly to members and customers.
- Co-operatives being business organizations with a difference ought to be market focused but member driven with a kaleidoscope thinking to reach out to any market and serve any community poor or affluent.
- Co-operatives need to have participatory process of decision making with simpler and more transparent systems.
- There is a need have attitudinal change in the mind set of co-operative members and leaders who always treat co-operatives as the institutions needing preferential treatment and support.
- Co-ops need to give serious consideration to scaling up the impact of co-operatives in the sectors/areas they venture in.
- Co-ops should think big and keep their pace with the changes happening in the markets as well as societies.

– Rajiv I.D. Mehta

ICA-Japan Training Project for “Capacity Building for Marketing – 2007”



Participants of the Course with Mr. K. Tsukada, Executive Director, IDACA

The 2nd Training Project for “Capacity Building for Marketing-2007” was formally inaugurated on November 14, 2007 at IDACA, Japan by Mr. Kobayashi Yasuyuki, Senior Officer, Agricultural Policy Department, Central Union of Agricultural Co-ops (JA Zenchu). Kazuo Tsukada, Executive Director, IDACA and Mr. A.K. Taneja, Program Officer, ICA-AP also addressed the Inaugural Session. The programme, funded by the

Government of Japan in the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (MAFF), with the following objectives :

- 1) To study marketing methods for farm products by theory and case study;
- 2) To study the methods for the rural development.

22 participants, two each from Brunei, Cambodia, Myanmar, Malaysia and Thailand and 3 each from Indonesia, Lao PDR, Philippines and Vietnam

attended the Training Project. Field study visits were arranged to agricultural co-operatives in Fukushima Prefecture of Japan. In Fukushima Prefecture, it included the Fukushima Prefectural Union and JA Zen-noh Fukushima Headquarters, Observation of facilities run by JA Date-Mirai; JA-lide/Briefing on Organization and Business Activities, including Commodity-wise group; Observation of the facilities attached to JA Aizu-lide and discussions with farmers.

During the study visits programme to agricultural co-operatives in Fukushima Prefecture, the participants were able to interact with farmer leaders and to observe their various activities as carried out by the JAs.

At the valedictory session, Mr. Hiromi Iwahama, Director, International Affairs Department, Minister’s Secretariat, Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (MAFF), Government of Japan, addressed the participants.

Mr. K. Tsukada, Executive Director, IDACA and Mr. A.K. Taneja, Program Officer, ICA-AP, congratulated the participants for their co-operation in successful completion of the programme.

– A.K. Taneja

ICA-AP organises Global Youth Conference

The ICA Committee on Youth Co-operation for Asia-Pacific, in collaboration with the SNCF Youth Committee organised a Global Youth Conference in Singapore, 14-15 October, 2007.

More than 150 delegates from Italy, Japan, Indonesia, Philippines, United States, Sri Lanka, Russian Federation, Korea, Thailand, Vietnam, Pakistan, Singapore, Romania, Nepal, Myanmar, India, Canada and Colombia participated at the event. The youth delegates discussed on the issues pertaining to Youth participation in co-operative activities globally and they have also came up with interesting



Group discussion amongst the delegates at the Youth Conference

ideas how the youth could provide innovative ideas for co-operative development. Speakers from Singapore, ILO, Colombia gave innovative ideas for youth involvement in co-op development. ICA President, Ivano Barberini and Chairman of SNCF, Seah Kian Peng addressed the delegates. Jan-Eirik Imbsen from ICA, Geneva facilitated the election of a youth representative to the ICA Board. Mr. Teo Say Hong, Chairperson of the Asia-Pacific Youth Committee has been elected as nominee of youth on the ICA Board. Tsubasa Nakamura and P. Nair facilitated the Conference on behalf of ICA-AP

– P. Nair

9th Meeting of Regional Co-op Banking Association (RCBA)



Mr. B.S. Vishwanathan, President, RCBA (middle) and Mr. Shil Kwan Lee at the meeting

The 9th Meeting-cum-Interactive Session on "Re-inventing Co-operative Banking Sector in Asia-

Pacific" of Regional Co-operative Banking Association (RCBA) was held at Raffles City Centre, Singapore on

15th October 2007. Twenty-seven participants from India, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Pakistan and Thailand attended the meeting.

Mr. Jean-Louis Bancel, President, International Co-operative Banking Association (ICBA) inaugurated the meeting and delivered a lecture on "Re-inventing Co-operative Banking Sector in Asia-Pacific".

Mr. B.S. Vishwanathan, Chairman, RCBA, presided over the inaugural function. Mr. Shil Kwan Lee, Regional Director, ICA-AP, extended greetings on behalf of ICA-AP and informed the participants about the activities undertaken by ICA-AP

The thematic presentation was presented by Mr. Bhagwati Prasad, Chief Executive, National Co-operative Union of India.

– A.K. Taneja

Kerala holds Sixth Co-operative Congress

The Kerala State Co-operative Union held the Sixth Kerala Co-operative Congress at Kochi, 26-28 October, 2007. The Congress was organised under the supervision of Mr. E. Narayanan, Chairman of Kerala State Co-operative Union. The host was the District Co-operative Bank in Kochi, chaired by Mr. M.M. Monaye, MLA.

The Congress attracted almost 3000 delegates from all over Kerala, Manipur, Delhi, Mumbai, Madhya Pradesh, the Co-operatives UK (Manchester), ICA- AP, New Delhi. Mr. Shil Kwan Lee, Regional Director and Mr. P. Nair, Communication Officer of ICA-AP were specially invited to participate in the events.

The Congress convened a National Seminar on 26th October, the Congress on 27th and an International Seminar on 28th. Mr. Shil Kwan Lee (ICA-AP), Mr. Simon Coax, Co-operatives UK (Manchester), Mr. Bhagwati Prasad (NCUI, Delhi), Mr. Karmakar, MD of NABARD, Prof.

Patnaik, Planning Chairman, Kerala, and several others presented papers at the International Seminar.

One of the most important segment of the Congress was a Rally organised by the Kerala Co-operative Movement, which was attended by more than

20,000 delegates and others. Several Ministers from Kerala, prominent political leaders of all parties, former Ministers and MLAs and MPs participated.

The delegates discussed on a variety of themes (14 in all) relevant to co-



Delegates of the Kerala State Co-operative Congress. Mr. Shil Kwan Lee, Regional Director, ICA-AP on the extreme right.

operatives, including the Vaidyanathan Committee recommendations and came out with resolutions on these themes. The Congress, which, though slated to be held once every five years, was held after a gap of 8 years.

The efforts of the State Co-operative Union, the management and staff of



District Co-operative Bank, Ernakulam, Mr. E. Narayanan, Chairman of the State Union and Mr. M.M. Monaye, Chairman of the District Bank, have proved effective in organizing a very good Congress.

– P. Nair

Exposure and Networking Program for Empowerment of Women in Co-operatives



Women delegates of the networking programme

The ICA-AP organised an exposure and networking programme for women co-operators on 11-15 December 2007 at Pune, India.

The challenges of globalization and free trade are affecting lives of people unevenly across the world. The co-operatives worldwide are feeling the heat of unequal opportunities and threats created by the free market. As usual, this has intensified the existing inequalities and insecurities for many poor women. The high-tech means of trade and business are tend to benefit rich than the poor. Women are most likely to suffer more from the rapid changes societies are undergoing due to globalization and free trade.

In the context of the above challenges and the resolution of the ICA Co-operative Minister's Conference for exposure of women cooperators to success stories and networking for

business development, the ICA Regional Women's Committee has been making attempts to share information with women co-operative leaders in the region and expected to find ways and means to promote women's economic security and empowerment through the co-operatives.

The objective of this program is to provide a common meeting ground to Asian co-operative women leaders/ persons responsible for gender and women development in co-operatives for sharing information and experience about success stories and best practices of their co-operatives and most importantly help women to establish a network for mutual cooperation and business interest across the Asia and Pacific Region.

The expected outcome were:

- ◆ Establish contacts among women leaders/co-operative members

and create a network,

- ◆ Collection of information and dissemination of best practices,
- ◆ Identify mechanism to overcome factors that limit women's participation as organizer and decision maker,
- ◆ Business information about products and services as well as know-how for women entrepreneurs,
- ◆ Identify areas of mutual interest and collaboration,
- ◆ Based on the success of the programme, more such programme will be organized in future.

The programme was divided into 3 parts. The first day was the inauguration and class room interaction combined with information sharing of best practices from the participants' countries.

On the second day a visit was arranged to a business organization, Lijjat Papad factory, which is operated by women. It is not registered under Co-operative Act but functioning on co-operative pattern, i.e., collective effort and collective benefit.

In the afternoon the participants visited a co-operative bank where the majority of membership is of women and the chairperson is also a women.

On the third day the delegation visited a co-operative village, promoted by co-operatives. The co-operative village is housing a co-operative sugar factory, a spinning mill, co-operative milk dairy and co-operative consumer store.

– Mrs. Savitri Singh

Training Program for Managers of Consumer Co-operatives in Japan

The training program for managers of consumer co-operatives is organized every year since 2001 by ICA-AP in collaboration with Japanese Consumer Co-operative Union (JCCU). The main purpose of this training program is to expose participants to Japanese Consumer Co-operative System for enrichments in the areas of store operation and management, democratic HAN formation, observe various members' activities including committee meetings as well as to see all the facilities that Japanese consumer co-operatives offer to its members. In effect, ICA-AP and JCCU hope that the program participants will be able to apply the knowledge obtained to the further development of their cooperatives in their home countries upon completion of the program.

In 2007 three training programs have been organized in Co-op Tokyo, Miyagi Co-op and Co-op Kobe respectively.

Co-op Tokyo Program:

This was held from October 11 to October 25 2007. The participants were Mr. Jack Ng Chee Tong from NTUC Fair Price Singapore, Mr. Ngo Thanh Tung and Mr. Vo Quoc Oai both from Saigon Co-op in Vietnam.

Miyagi Co-op Program:

This was held from September 12 to September 23 2007. The participants were Mr. Kulkarni Rajendra Balwant, Super Bazar Co-op India, Mr. Shete Pradeep Sukumar, Warana Bazar Co-op India, Ms. Irene B. Bringas, Abra Diocesan Teachers & Employees Multi-Purpose Cooperative, Philippines.

On September 10, 2007, the trainees arrived in Tokyo and received two-days orientation at JCCU, after which they moved to Miyagi Co-op Sendai on the 12th for the actual training program. The training program was designed to meet the requirements of the trainees.

Lectures were given on various topics as the program advanced and among

them, trainees were impressed about how members' voice is used in co-op management, the home delivery business and planning and opening of co-op stores.

Co-op Kobe Program:

This was held from November 5 to November 19 2007. The participants were Mr. Lai Zhao Wei, Benny from NTUC Fair Price Singapore, Ms. Le Thi Ngoc Man from Saigon Co-op and two other participants from the Cooperative College of Malaysia, Ms. Azlifah Binti Abas and Ms. Nasibah Binti Ahmad.

The trainees, after undergoing an orientation at JCCU for 3 days moved to Kobe on 7th November.

Participants were impressed about members' involvement in store operation, particularly about their frequent meetings to give input and feedback on the store and how to improve upon them.

Mr. Benny mentioned that accountability and trust would increase the level of motivation of the staffs. Another impressive thing to all the participants was Co-op Kobe's decision of using Operational Surplus Rate as a benchmark to decide when to close a store.

On November 12th the trainees were given the chance to have an in-store practical training experience. They later received explanation concerning making order through EOB (electronic order book) and automatic ordering system. Later Mr. Benny and Ms. Man were given the chance to assist in wrapping vegetables and tangerine.

Mr. Benny was impressed about how Co-op Kobe takes weather into account when making orders. He mentioned that while weather does play an important part in the traffic count, NTUC FairPrice have not put enough emphasis in considering this factor.

He also mentioned that Co-op Kobe's inventory management system allows them to check real time sales data of the products down to its product level. This is extremely useful in determining when the appropriate time to start their markdowns.

Ms. Nasibah and Ms. Azlifah agreed that members' active participation is the most important strategy to win competition. Involvement of members in every activity plays an important role to the co-operative.

— Tsubasa Nakamura

Surinder Kumar Jakhar elected to the ICA Board



MR. SURINDER KUMAR JAKHAR, Chairman of Indian Farmers' Fertilizer Co-operative Limited (IFFCO) was elected as a member on the ICA Global Board of Directors, at the General Assembly held in Singapore, 18-19 October, 2007.

Mr. Jakhar thanked the members for reposing their faith in the Indian co-operative movement and pledged all co-operation at the global level.

We at the ICA-AP are happy that Mr. Jakhar joined the board and wish him all success in the future.

ICA Initiatives in Cambodia: Capacity Building Programme for Women Cooperative Leaders of Cambodia



The delegates of the ICA-AP capacity building programme in Cambodia.

The ICA is implementing a project on the promotion of sustainable model of Agricultural Co-operatives in Cambodia in collaboration with AGRITERRA.

So far 5 co-operatives have been organized in 5 provinces of the country i.e. (i) Svay Rieng (ii) Takeo (iii) Siem Reab (iv) Kampong Cham (v) Batombong.

The ICA has supported in construction of a co-operative building and toilet in each co-operative. The building is equipped with functional furniture, computer, electricity generator set and weighing machine for agricultural inputs.

There are a considerable number of women farmers, who are first time members in these co-operatives. These

members need knowledge and information about co-operative business management and functioning of a co-operative system.

ICA has conducted a 5-days capacity building program for the women co-operative leaders in Phnom Penh, in



Some of the delegates with Mrs. Savitri Singh

which 28 women leaders from the five co-operatives and two women staff from the Ministry 30 participated.

The objectives of the training are:

1. Understanding co-operative institution and advantage of cooperative business.
2. Management and leadership capacity building of women co-operative Leaders and members enabling them to manage a co-operative enterprise.

The Training was based on the "Trainers training manual for leadership development of women in co-operatives" developed by ICA and ILO COOPNET. The topics covered during the training were:

1. Understanding sex and gender
2. Fundamentals of co-operatives
3. Relevance and benefits of co-operative institutions for women
4. Various aspects of co-operative enterprise management and business planning
5. Coping with challenge

In the last part of the training, the participants visited to the Barkong Angkor agricultural co-operative in Siem Reab Province. A half-day interactive session was held where the chairperson, directors and other members of the co-operative shared their experiences with the participants of four other co-operatives.

The participants mentioned that it is a rare opportunity for them to come together and share their experiences and concerns about the co-operative business and activities. The sharing gave them many useful information to tackle similar issues in their own cooperatives.

The participants found the program useful and educative.

- Mrs. Savitri Singh

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ICA-AP ANNUAL ACTIVITIES REPORT 2007



ICA Asia Pacific

The International Co-operative Alliance - Asia & Pacific is one of the operating regional offices of the ICA, the world confederation of co-operatives in existence since 1895 and presently head quartered in Geneva.

ICA has 225 member organizations worldwide from 87 countries of which 59 member organizations come from 23 countries in the Asia Pacific region.

Most of the members of ICA are national level co-operative organizations that serve all types of co-operatives operating in all sectors of national economies including those engaged

in agricultural production and marketing, wholesale and retail, small and medium scale industries, financial services, insurance, housing, transport, health and other services.

Over 530 million individual members get benefited from the services of these co-operatives in the Asia Pacific region. The Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific was opened in 1960 and is presently located at 9, Aradhana Enclave, Sector 13, R.K.Puram, Ring Road, New Delhi 110066, India.

ICA also has a sub-office in Singapore since 1999 to promote ICA's business interests.

ICA Domus Trust (IDT) in India

In recognition of the valuable contribution made by Dr. Mauritz Bonow to the development of co-operative movement throughout the world and particularly in developing countries, the ICA Domus Trust (Dr. Bonow Memorial) was set up on 25 October 1988 under the Indian Trust Act with its registered office in New Delhi, India.

The Trust is fully supported by International Co-operative Alliance. IDT has sound financial health and owns its own office at 9, Aradhana Enclave, R.K Puram, New Delhi and presently

constructing an ambitious infrastructure in NOIDA for the advancement of the interests of the Trust.

IDT has qualified and experienced human resource to carry forward the agenda of co-operative development in India and adjoining nations. The ICA Domus Trust has 5 trustees, comprising of the ICA President, ICA Vice-President for Asia and the Pacific, ICA Director-General, ICA Regional Director for Asia and the Pacific and the President of National Co-operative Union of India.

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Message from the President, Asia Pacific

The year 2007 was the year full of events setting stage for futuristic growth of co-operatives in the ICA Asia Pacific region. I am really proud to lead the region with vibrant cooperatives and supportive governments. I would like to compliment and thank all the members of ICA from the region for showing overwhelming response to various initiatives taken by the team of ICA Asia Pacific Office in New Delhi under the leadership of Mr Shil Kwan Lee, the Regional Director of ICA Asia Pacific.

Today in the era of globalization, privately owned corporate houses are going fast and they are skyrocketing. The national and multi-national companies have aggressively entered in the fields like industry, trade and commerce at grass root level, education, knowledge industry, health, agriculture, housing etc that were considered as domain of cooperatives. The co-operatives therefore, have to be a group that innovates, that starts creating intellectual property, that breaks new ground rather than be one that follows established processes and technologies.

We have an immense task ahead of us, to move from where we are now to a new level. We have to **prove and showcase our strength of being a responsive, responsible and reliable co-operative community** and accordingly have to market it to get enviable position in the global market.

Recently, Dr. Dong Shik Shin, Chairman and Managing Director of Korea Maritime consultants, and considered as father of Korean ship building said that the reason why Korea became a leader in global ship building was establishing a **comprehensive master plan for development** of the industry in 1960. He stressed that **it is not merely shipyards but technologically sound manpower and ancillary industry that helps build ships**. He shared the experience with other industrialists during the First International Ship Building Seminar. Such sharing of experiences among the corporate sector through conferences, seminars goes on and on, on a regular basis. I am happy to say that seminal series of activities and events organized by ICA Asia Pacific will certainly bring **desired attitudinal changes in the mindset** of thousands of the leaders and managers of the cooperatives in the region.

Today, cooperatives need to ask a number of questions like, have cooperatives managed to construct an integrated and efficient network? Have the strength of primary cooperatives and cooperative enterprises been reinforced in the competitive market? Are cooperatives seeking potential strategic partners for better undertaking common endeavors? Have cooperatives tap the potential of cooperation between each other? Have cooperatives expanded their field of operations? Are they aggressively pushing ahead? Do cooperatives show any ambition? Have they comprehensively planned ahead? Do the cooperatives consider technologically sound manpower as necessary condition for success and growth? Do the co-operatives recruit young, bright professionals from reputed institutions? Have the cooperatives marketed the very concept of cooperation and cooperative institutions to society at large through publicity? And do the cooperatives think like the private corporate mind and think, and act, as far as the business is concerned?

For long, our thinking has been limited to poverty alleviation. Mere attentiveness to poverty is not sufficient. We must simultaneously have to have aspiration for prosperity. We must strive to improve economy as well as quality of life of the poor. Keeping a poor man's standard of living at the same level year after year is not development. It is mere survival exercise. Cooperatives must develop confidence to handle both poverty and prosperity.

In the past, the movement expanded because it responded to manageable changes in the society and market environment, and reacted accordingly. Considering the speed with which the changes are happening in the market and business environment, cooperatives need to evolve new thinking and innovate new strategies to capitalize inherent strengths and advantages of cooperatives. Even, Albert Einstein had said, **"the significant problems cannot be solved at the same level of thinking we were at when we created them."**

Problem is that all the advantages that cooperatives carry are overshadowed by lack of **entrepreneurship, business acumen and professional management**. And these are the strengths of our competitors, the corporate sector. I am sure, the year 2008 will catapult not only the process of cooperative growth, but a new level of innovative thinking among cooperators in Asia and Pacific.

– Li Chungsheng



Message from the Regional Director

I am glad to bring to you the Annual Activity Report of the ICA Asia Pacific for the year 2007.

It was a year of bringing together the governments and cooperative movements to adopt a shared vision for inclusive growth of economy and generating awareness among the governments and cooperatives about the core strengths and comparative advantages of cooperatives in assuring seamless distribution of the benefits of the economic development.

In 2007, there were significant events like **8th Ministers' Conference** on Co-operative Legislation and Policy with the theme of "**Fair Globalization through Co-operatives**", First Cooperative Forum in UAE, Special events in Indonesia to discuss **capacity building of cooperatives** through HRD networking, protection of small farmers and entrepreneurs through cooperatives, **trade networking** among cooperatives, New Zealand Conference of Senior Executives of Co-operatives to discuss **Co-operative Advantages in Doing Business** to compete well in the open market economy and the National Conference on Co-operative Development in India.

ICA AP during the year also discussed at great length about the need of restructuring ICA and rewriting the vision and key result areas of ICA AP. The activities of ICA AP in 2007 have laid the foundation for a focused four-year strategic plan of ICA Asia Pacific.

Considering the lack of information on cooperatives among the general public, lack of business knowledge among members of the cooperatives and lack of ideological commitment among managers and leaders of the cooperatives, ICA AP through the strategic plan would bring to the minds and hearts of cooperative policy makers and practitioners, the ideals for which a cooperative stands and the real significance of cooperatives in bringing uniform economic development duly ensuring fair distribution of its benefits to all the sections of the society.

So far, the efforts of cooperatives in seeking patronage and support of the government for the growth and development

have not resulted in glaring success of cooperative enterprises. The reason is not inadequate or untimely government support rather the inability of the cooperatives to take advantage of favorable government policies and harness the latent advantages the cooperatives have.

The ICA already has a list of 300 world's major cooperatives and mutual business. These global 300 give us the confidence that cooperative institutions can be successful and reach high level of performance. In the list are enterprises established way back in 1820 (in Germany) and those established recently in 2003. This shows the strength of cooperative movement and its resilience under varied times, political systems, and market conditions.

Economies of countries of the Asia and Pacific regions are growing at 8-10% per annum. Major contributors to this growth are private corporate sector, public sector undertakings and governments' departmentally administered development programs.

The ICA AP during 2008 intends to focus more about the spirit, the soul, the will, the feelings, and the driving force behind the cooperative entrepreneurship by arranging effective interfacing between and among the cooperatives and the governments in the light of ICA's laudable vision.

– Shil Kwan Lee

8th Ministers' Conference on Cooperative Legislation & Policy

The ICA AP has been assiduously pursuing the development of conducive and progressive co-operative policies and enactment of favorable legislation reforms to enable co-operatives to adapt with the fast changing global scenario. In this context ICA AP has conducted seminal series of seven Ministers' Conferences on Co-operative Policy & Legislation from 1990 to 2004.

The principal idea behind these conferences has been to establish an effective dialogue between the policy makers and the stakeholders on critical and key areas enveloping the co-operative sector.

The idea of conferencing on vital issues before the co-operatives came in the year 1990 in the background of co-operatives having received preferential support & financial assistance from governments and in turn governments overwhelmingly protecting and supporting the co-operatives with financial assistance, managerial support and tax benefits to promote income opportunities, equality, justice, social equity & social responsibility.

The main purpose of the Ministers' Conference on Co-operative Legislation and Policy that is organized every 4th year is to understand the priorities of the Governments and assert the advantages of co-operatives in building national economy.

The main objectives underlining the conference include:

- ♦ developing conducive and progressive co-operative policies and enactment of proactive legislation reforms;
- ♦ enabling co-operatives to adapt with the fast changing global scenario;
- ♦ creating a platform at international level for governments & movements to discuss key issues hindering the development of co-operative sector.

In the context of the relevance of Governments in the development of co-operatives, ICA arranged a consultation of Permanent secretaries and top co-operative officials in

Singapore in 1987 to deliberate on the form and type of support from the Governments that must preserve the autonomy and democratic character of co-operatives and infuse required dynamism and self reliance through meaningful co-operation among co-operatives at national and international level.

The consultation process conceived the idea of Co-operative Ministers' Conference first held in Sydney from 8 to 11 February 1990 on "Co-operative Government Collaborative Strategies for the Development of Co-operatives during



Delegates at a group photo in Kuala Lumpur

90s" attended by 99 delegates (9 Ministers) from 19 countries and 10 international organizations including ICA.

The second co-operative Ministers' Conference was held in Jakarta, Indonesia on "Co-operative Government Relationship" from 18 to 21 February 1992 attended by 164 delegates (17 Ministers) from 23 countries and 12 international organizations including ICA.

The third Co-operative Ministers' Conference was held in Colombo, Sri Lanka from 26 to 30 July 1994 on "Co-operative Government Collaborative Strategies for the Development of Co-operatives" attended by 140 delegates (15 Ministers) from 24 countries and 10 international organizations including ICA.

The fourth Co-operative Ministers' Conference on "Co-

operatives in a Changing Socio-Economic Environment” was held at Chiangmai, Thailand from 18 to 22 March 1997 attended by 124 delegates (10 Ministers) from 22 countries and 9 international organizations including ICA.

The fifth Co-operative Ministers’ Conference was held in Beijing, China from 11 to 16 October 1999 attended by 163 delegates (9 Ministers) from 24 countries and 8 international organizations including ICA.

The sixth Co-operative Ministers’ Conference on “Establishing Relevant Legislation & Policy for Co-operatives in the New Millennium” was held in Kathmandu, Nepal from 3 to 6 April 2002 attended by 196 delegates (8 Ministers) from 18 countries and 9 international organizations including ICA.

The seventh Co-operative Ministers’ Conference on “Establishing Supportive Co-operative Legislation for Sustainable Growth of Co-operatives” was held in New Delhi, India from 1 to 6 February, 2004 attended by 168 delegates (8 Ministers) from 17 countries and 9 international organizations including ICA.

The Eighth Ministers’ Conference on Co-operative Legislation and Policy was held in Kuala Lumpur from 12 to 15 March 2007. The Conference was organized by the Ministry of Entrepreneur and Co-operative Development (MECD), Government of Malaysia in collaboration with the ICA Asia Pacific and ANGKASA the National Co-operative Organization of Malaysia. The main theme of the Conference was “Fair Globalization through Co-operatives”.

Deliberations at 8th Ministers’ Conference:

The Conference while arguing need to adopt pro-cooperative development strategies to achieve dynamic growth and equitable income distribution in the process of development diagnosed the ailments of national cooperative development policies that had impeded opportunities in realizing the real growth potential of cooperatives in the era of globalization, and proposed to have a logical and realistic approach for developing cooperatives in the spirit of its declaration ushering an era of new cooperative development strategy.

It was agreed that development and economic growth are not the same thing. One could have one without the other. Economic growth was cited both a cause and consequence of urbanization for the simple fact that cities are the engines of growth.

So the logic: development of a country requires economic growth was unequivocally accepted and the cooperative advantage was seen as emerging option to fight the surmountable formidable challenges of globalize economy.

The cooperative action in proper institutionalized form under the cover of favorable policy environment and proactive legislation was strongly recommended.

Although inclusive growth was seen as panacea for all economic evils, but the possible ways of integrating it within the system were seen like an unrealizable dream if cooperatives were not allowed to perform and position in the social economy. The need to clearly demonstrate the cooperative advantages by quoting real examples was projected high so as to bring up a list of indicators to benchmark its effectiveness. The Conference deliberated on the following merits of demand driven global economy



Mr. Abdullah Badawi, Prime Minister of Malaysia, speaking at the Ministers’ Conference

carving out a definite scope and role for the cooperatives in fair globalization:

- ♦ Multi-dimensional opportunity resonating socio-economic lives of peoples of Asia and Pacific and their institutions particularly cooperatives;
- ♦ Fair globalization and liberalization of national economies that would result in enhanced economic growth and prosperity, where its gains would be equitably distributed among the people particularly the poorer and more vulnerable sections of the community;
- ♦ Inclusive growth pattern of the economies in the region harnessing gains of globalization aimed at poverty reduction, employment generation and equitable development;
- ♦ Proactive legislative regime together with enabling

policies for creating conducive environment for development of cooperatives; and

- ♦ Effective institutional paradigm facilitating the dialogue between the producers and the Governments so as to enhance the role of cooperatives in inclusive economic growth and prosperity.

Essence of the Declaration of 8th Ministers' Conference:

Recognizing cooperatives as an important and significant component of the national economy ensuring wide spread benefits of growth to those who would not normally get included, 8th Ministers' Conference affirmed their support for the strengthening of Cooperative Movement through:

1. *Capacity Building*: Encouragement of cooperative entrepreneurship by inculcating entrepreneurial spirit and skills among the members, leaders and managers of the cooperatives through education and training.
2. *Business Networking*: Attainment of economies of scale through strategic business alliances among cooperatives both domestically and internationally.
3. *Effective Governance*: Transparency and role clarity among members, leaders and the managers of cooperatives and also among different tiers of the cooperatives attributing to strong social capital of the country enhancing the real impact of the Cooperative Movement, and

4. *Beneficial Services to Members*: Harnessing the gains of the fair globalization and liberalization for the economic and social benefit of members.

The Conference finally:

Urged upon the Governments to catalyze the process of re-orienting the Cooperative Legislation and Policy to strengthen apolitical and autonomous character of cooperatives and to provide a positive level playing field to cooperatives to enable them to compete in the globalize market.

Called upon the Cooperative Movements to contribute effectively in the process of economic development, amongst others, by organizing small producers including farmers, workers and protecting consumers through cooperative action duly ensuring increased participation of women and youth in the cooperatives.

Exhorted Cooperatives and Governments to strengthen management capacity, participatory governance and fair business relationship for ensuring healthy functioning of cooperative system through innovative strategies and

Advised Cooperatives and Governments in the region to periodically review the efficacy/effectiveness of Cooperative Legislation and Policy as well as to introduce appropriate reforms considering the dynamic changes and trends emerging in their respective national economies.

8th Ministers' Conference Declaration

- **Noting** the multi-dimensional impact of globalization on the socio-economic lives of peoples of Asia and Pacific and their institutions particularly cooperatives;
- **Taking note** that while globalization and liberalization of national economies has resulted in enhanced economic growth and prosperity, its gains have not been equitably distributed among the people particularly the poorer and more vulnerable sections of the community;
- **Appreciating** the desire of the Cooperative Movement to participate in the developmental process in harnessing the gains of globalization aimed at poverty reduction, employment generation and equitable national development;
- **Realizing** the importance of enabling cooperative legislation and policies for creating conducive environment for development of cooperatives;
- **Appreciating** the role of ICA to continuously facilitating the dialogue between the Cooperatives and the Governments to enhance the role of cooperatives for the economic growth and prosperity in the region.

We, the participants of the 8th Ministers' Conference on "Cooperative Legislation and Policy" held at Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia from 12-15 March 2007:

Urge upon the Governments to catalyze the process of re-orienting the Cooperative Legislation and Policy to strengthen *apolitical and autonomous character of cooperatives* and to provide a *positive level playing field* to cooperatives to enable them to *compete in the globalized market*.

Call upon the Cooperative Movements to contribute effectively in the process of economic development, amongst others, by organizing small producers including farmers, workers and protecting consumers through *self-help mode* and also ensuring *increased participation of women and youth in the cooperatives*.

Exhort Cooperatives and Governments to *strengthen management capacity, participatory governance and fair business relationship for ensuring healthy functioning of cooperative system through innovative strategies*.

Calls upon Cooperatives and Governments in the region to *periodically review* the efficacy/effectiveness of Cooperative Legislation and Policy as well as to *introduce appropriate reforms* considering the dynamic changes and trends emerging in their respective national economies.

Recognizing cooperatives are an important and significant sector of the national economy effectively contributing to its development, *we affirm our support* for the Cooperative Movement as a sustainable and efficient institution through:

1. Encouragement of cooperative entrepreneurship by inculcating entrepreneurial spirit and skills among the members, leaders and managers of the cooperatives through education and training.
2. Attainment of economies of scale and strategic business alliances among cooperatives both domestically and internationally.
3. Role clarity among different tiers to enhance impact of the Cooperative Movement and
4. Harnessing the gains of the fair globalization and liberalization for the benefit of members.

First Co-operative Forum for Enhancing the Cooperative Work in GCC

The First Co-operative Forum for Enhancing the Co-operative Work was held at Dubai, UAE, on 12-13 June 2007.

More than 100 delegates from GCC countries (Gulf Cooperation Council) – United Arab Emirates, State of Bahrain, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Sultanate of Oman, State of Qatar and State of Kuwait, attended the Forum. The Ministry of Social Affairs, Government of UAE in collaboration with International Co-operative Alliance, hosted the Forum.

H.E. Mariam Mohammed Khalfan Al Roomi, Hon'ble Minister of Social Affairs, Government of UAE, inaugurated the Forum and Mr. Ivano Barberini, President of ICA presided over the inaugural function.

The Forum was addressed by the following:

1. Mr. Shil Kwan Lee, Regional Director, ICA-AP spoke on ICA in Asia-Pacific Region
2. Mr. Hans Muenkner, Professor, Germany, spoke about the Recent Development of Co-operatives in Europe
3. Mr. Kim Yook Kon, NACF, Korea presented a case study on NACF, Korea
4. Mr. Bhagwati Prasad, NCUI, India spoke about Networking of Co-op HRD Institutions
5. Mr. Zulkfli Mohd., Chief Executive, SNCF, Singapore, spoke about Development of Co-operatives in Singapore
6. Mr. Tsubasa Nakamura, Advisor, ICA-AP, presented a Case Study on Japanese Consumer Co-operatives
7. Mr. Rajiv I.D. Mehta, Director-Development, ICA-AP spoke on Co-operatives and Micro-Economic Development
8. Mr. S.C. Mishra, Professor, India made a presentation on Scope of Consumer Co-op Stores, and
9. Ministry of Social Affairs of the Government of UAE made a presentation on Structural Operations – Net Working of Co-ops in GCC countries.

The presentations were followed by an open house discussion on expectations of co-operatives and governments from each other.

The following aspects emerged as a result of open house discussions facilitated by Mr. Rajiv ID Mehta.

01. There is a need of a more comprehensive dialogue between the cooperative movements and the Governments in GCC region to ameliorate the prospects of co-operatives.
02. The general development policy environment in the Gulf region reflects inequalities between the corporate and cooperative sectors. Cooperatives being legitimate value driven peoples/ community based organizations/ enterprises deserves a fair and preferential treatment over other forms of business organizations. This aspect needs to be incorporated in the national development



Mr. Ivano Barberini, ICA President and H.E. Mariam Mohd. Khalfan Al Room, Hon'ble Minister of Social Affairs, Government of UAE with other dignitaries.

03. There is a dire need to build the capacity of the cooperatives at primary and upper levels by the dissemination of right knowledge cum information on cooperatives and the businesses they are in along with the development of managerial and operational skills for optimum utilization of capital and human resources for an assured success of the cooperatives, and
04. Constant dialogue between government and cooperatives is essential for successful sustainable cooperative economy. Governments and cooperatives together must strategize exposure-cum exchange programs to successful cooperatives in the Asian region.

International Co-operative Trade Fair (ICTF) 2007

The Co-operative Identity Statement of International Co-operative Alliance (ICA) has strongly emphasized the need of co-operation among co-operatives to optimally utilize the comparative strength of unified small producers in negotiating trade agreements on mutually beneficial terms with all fairness and respect for either side.

ICA-AP in collaboration with DEKOPIN - the Indonesian Cooperative Council organized an International Co-operative Trade Fair in Bali, Indonesia from July 12 to 15, 2007. The Trade Fair was formally inaugurated by Ms. Maria Elena, Dy. Director-General, ICA, Geneva along with Mr. Adi Sasono, the President of DEKOPIN and Mr. Shil Kwan Lee, Regional Director, ICA-AP, at Discovery Shopping Mall, Denpasar, Bali, Indonesia on 12th July 2007.

Exhibition stalls were put up by the co-operatives of Indonesia, Iran, Sri Lanka, Thailand, India, Malaysia and the Philippines.

The Trade Fair was organized to commemorate the completion of six decades of co-operative movement in Indonesia. His Excellency Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono, President of Republic of Indonesia inaugurated the National Co-operative Day of Indonesia on 12th July 2007. More than 5000 delegates from Indonesia and 15 foreign countries – Canada, China, India, Myanmar, Malaysia, New Zealand, Philippines, Pakistan, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Spain, Timor Leste, UAE, Korea, Switzerland, attended the celebrations.

To make the event more meaningful, following activities were also held between 10 and 15 July 2007 in Bali in conjunction with the Trade Fair:

- Seminar on Capacity Building of Co-operatives through HRD Networking and 20th Meeting of the ICA Committee on HRD for Asia and the Pacific : 10-11 July.

- Co-operative Day of Indonesia : 12 July 2007
- International Co-operative Trade Fair : 12 to 15 July 2007
- Conference on Poverty Reduction and Advantage of Co-operatives in Protecting Small Farmers and Rural Entrepreneurs : 13 July 2007
- Symposium on Trade Networking : 14 July 2007

The main objective of the Trade Symposium was to encourage and motivate co-operatives in the region to establish business alliances with overseas co-operatives as a win-win strategy in the market oriented economy.



Mr. Shil Kwan Lee and Ms. Maria-Elena Chavez and others at the inauguration of the International Trade Fair in Bali.

Mr. Rajiv I.D. Mehta, Director (Development), ICA-AP, coordinated and anchored the above events along with Mr. Yuzri Suhud, Secretary General, DEKOPIN.

IFFCO - ICA-AP Workshop for Senior Executives of Co-operatives

To share the business experiences of successful cooperatives for enhancing competitiveness of cooperative enterprises in the globalize market, the ICA AP in collaboration with IFFCO organized a workshop of senior executives from identified co-operatives in the Asia Pacific region from 27 to 29 November 2007 at Wellington in New Zealand.

The workshop was inaugurated by Hon Lianne Dalziel, Minister of Commerce, Small Business & Women's Affairs, Government of New Zealand. The Regional Director of ICA Asia-Pacific, Mr Shil Kwan Lee delivered a special address at the inaugural session. The workshop was jointly conducted by Mr Ramsey Margolis, Executive Director of New Zealand Co-operatives Association and Mr Rajiv I.D. Mehta, Director - Development of ICA AP.

Resource persons from Japan, Korea, New Zealand, Singapore, UK and ICA AP made presentations on the theme of the workshop, "The Co-operative Advantage of Doing Business" through case studies of successful business co-operatives in their respective countries. The case studies catalyzed effective participation of the participants in the group discussions on linking co-operative advantage to business and effectively serving the members through co-operatives.

Following co-operative advantages were found extremely relevant in the development of co-operative enterprises:

- The greatest advantage the co-ops enjoy is their strong linkages with the community and civil society at large.
- Co-operatives are democratically controlled organizations controlled by the elected representatives who do have the potential to leverage the political considerations and build good relationship with the governments in promoting the interests of the co-operative institutions.
- The core objective of serving the needs of the co-operative community injects the desired spirits and sense of belongingness among the members and inspires them to be competitive to survive and progress.
- Co-operatives when fully owned and controlled by members acquire enough flexibility in controlling the costs on account of the value based management practices soaked with the modest aspirations of the members.
- Enlightened membership and committed leadership coupled with knowledgeable and experienced professionals/managers can position the co-operatives at enviable position in the market.
- Cooperative values and their ethical business practices address the issue of corporate social responsibility and if publicized well could add value to the co-op brand image attributing to an assured success of the co-operative enterprise in any form of economic system.
- Co-operative solidarity factor if capitalized in trade promotion could swiftly connect the business from local to global level.
- Classic federal character of cooperative institutions is



Mr. Shil Kwan Lee, Regional Director, ICA AP, presenting a memento to Hon. Lianne Dalziel, Minister of Commerce, New Zealand. On the right is Mr. Rajiv Mehta, Director-Development, ICA AP.

a vital aspect in removing the market imperfections.

It was unequivocally agreed to capitalize the above advantages in developing marketing strategy to promote business interests of the co-operatives and following recommendations were made for the co-operatives in the region:

Co-operative enterprises should base their futures on the values that provide them with unique competitive advantage in the market place.

Co-operatives need to pay serious attention to the links between their co-operative & ethical values and the business/commercial success of the co-operative enterprises.

Co-operatives must learn from the experiences of successful co-ops world over.

There is a dire need to repair the image of co-operatives by lobbying well with media, government and public for positive image building of co-operatives so that the co-operative values remain relevant with the change of the economic patterns.

Co-ops need to try hard to positioning them as a reliable brand.

Word of Mouth publicity by the members and users of co-op services being one of the most effective tools in propagating the advantage of co-operative mode of doing businesses should be one of the measures to retain and promote the preferred brand status.

Marketing slogans for co-operatives must convey the fact that makes co-ops what they are and what investor owned corporations never can be.

Professionals inducted to manage the operations of the co-operatives must have the required expertise and needed passion with a desire to embrace the values of co-operatives in shouldering their responsibilities.

Co-operative leadership must groom second line for paving way for the youths to understand the business of co-operative in a business like manner.

Co-operatives need to have a well-focused approach to business, governance and management with clearly defined rules for business and incorporate reasonable and logical concern for community in a feasible and sustainable systemic form.

Employment generation through co-operatives must be showcased to broad base the scope of co-operatives in the economic development of a country and involvement of government through enabling policy environment.

Co-operatives being business organizations with a difference ought to be market focused but member driven with a Kaleidoscope thinking to reach out to any market and serve any community poor or affluent.

Co-operatives need to have participatory process of decision



Co-operative Advantage discussions being facilitated by Mr. Rajiv Mehta.

making with simpler and more transparent systems.

There is a need have attitudinal change in the mind set of co-operative members and leaders who always treat co-operatives as the institutions needing preferential treatment and support.

Co-ops should think big and keep their pace with the changes happening in the markets as well as societies.

National Conference on Co-operative Development in India

The ICA in Asia-Pacific and ICA Domus Trust, in collaboration with the National Co-operative Union of India and National Co-operative Development Corporation organised a National Conference on Co-operative Development in India on 18 and 19 December, 2007, at the Grand Hotel, Vasant Kunj, New Delhi.

The objective of the Conference was to deliberate on the scope and potential of co-operatives in providing assured livelihood to agriculturists, weavers, artisans and self employed youths in rural areas; to correlate the priorities of the central governments with that of the local self rule institutions; to suggest alternative approaches for development through co-operatives to complement the role of local governments in the development of rural areas and to provide gainful occupation to millions of informal on-farm and off-farm workers through co-op business networking in globalized set up.

Thirty delegates representing national level co-operative federations in India, registrars of co-operatives, secretaries of industries, specialists in rural development organizations, managing directors and chief executives of specialized co-operatives, apart from selected resource persons, participated at the Conference and had discussions on various aspects of co-operative development in India.

Mr. Hans Dahlberg, former Chief Executive of ICMIF, narrated the development of co-operatives in Europe and also on the ICA initiative of Global 300 in line with Fortune 500 of the commercial sector. Dr. Jin-Kook Kim from ICA, Geneva explained the impact of WTO negotiations on cooperatives and small producers and drew possible course of action for the co-operatives. Mr. Sanjeev Chopra, Secretary-Agriculture with the Government of West Bengal explained about the national and global scenario on co-operatives and what lies ahead for them.

The delegates had elaborative group discussions and came out with possible points which the co-operatives, the various

ministries and the government of India, should consider.

The two-day Conference was inaugurated by Mr. G.H.Amin, President of National Co-operative Union of India. Mr. Shil Kwan Lee, ICA Regional Director spoke on the need of co-operatives in India in overcoming the competition from the private sector. He mentioned that the co-operatives should convert the disadvantages into strengths. Mr. Bhagwati Prasad, Chief Executive of National Co-operative Union of India, made a presentation on the Global HRD network. Prof. Arvind Gupta of IRMA, India and Mr. PVA Rama Rao



Mr. P. Uma Shankar, Mr. Shil Kwan Lee, Mr. G.H. Amin and Mr. Rajiv Mehta at the National Conference.

from National Institute of Rural Development and former Managing Director of NABARD presented very well researched papers on the Indian co-operative situation.

Mr. S.M. Jharwal, Additional Secretary in the Ministry of Agriculture and Co-operation gave the valedictory address on the closing day.

Mr. P. Uma Shankar, Managing Director of NCDC, New Delhi, was instrumental in organizing this Conference and spoke on various crucial aspects of the Indian co-operatives.

Mr. Rajiv Mehta, Director-Development, assisted by P. Nair and Mr. Suresh Babu coordinated the Conference, with the support of the staff of ICA Asia-Pacific.

ICA-AP signs MoU with Union of Consumer Co-operative Societies, Kuwait

The ICA-AP signed a MoU with Union of Consumer Co-operative Societies, Kuwait, for co-operative development efforts in the Arab region.

Mr. Shil Kwan Lee, ICA Regional Director and Mr. Rajiv Mehta, Development Director, visited the Union of Consumer Co-operative Societies, Kuwait at the invitation of the Kuwaiti Consumer Co-operative movement to discuss with them co-operative development efforts in the Middle East countries.

A Memorandum of Understanding has been signed by the Union of Consumer Societies, whereby the Kuwaiti consumer co-operative union would provide financial support to the ICA-AP in organizing a series of conferences in all countries of the Gulf region, culminating in the setting up of a Co-operative Development Centre in Kuwait. Initially it is proposed to have these Conferences in Kuwait, UAE, Qatar, Oman, Saudi Arabia and Bahrain, with a Regional Conference in Kuwait again. The MoU was

signed by Mr. Shil Kwan Lee on behalf of the ICA and Mr. Mohd. Amer Al-Mutairi, Chairman of the Union. Senior members of the staff of UCCS and board members were present.

Strategies and support for the setting up of Co-operative Development Centre and other future activities will be finalized later.



Mr. Shil Kwan Lee, Regional Director, ICA-AP signing a Memorandum of Understanding with Mr. Mohd. Amer Al-Mutairi, Chairman of Kuwait Consumer Co-operatives' Union.



Mr. Shil Kwan Lee, Regional Director, ICA-AP and Mr Rajiv I.D. Mehta, Development - Director, ICA AP with Mr. Mohd. Amer Al-Mutairi, Chairman of Kuwait Consumer Co-operatives' Union and other board members.

1st ICA-Japan Training Course

On the basis of the achievements of the ICA-Japan Training Course on "Strengthening Management of Agricultural Cooperatives in Asia" for 20 years, a new Training Project on "Enhancement of Farmers' Income and Poverty Reduction Through Cooperatives" was developed and agreed upon for implementation through the ICA, with a focus on the strengthening of farm guidance method, joint collection, marketing, safety and improvement of quality of farm products. The training programme was implemented by the ICA-AP with the collaboration of IFFCO/FMDI, Gurgaon, Institute of Rural Management (IRMA), Anand (Gujarat), India, IDACA, Tokyo (Japan) and ICA's member-organizations in India, Thailand and Japan.

Under this Project, the First ICA-Japan Training Course on "Enhancement of Farmers' Income and Poverty Reduction through Cooperatives" was held in India, Thailand and Japan from December 15, 2006 to April 22, 2007. The course was formally inaugurated by Mr. D.K. Bhatt, Marketing Director, IFFCO, on 11 January 2007 at the IFFCO's Fertiliser Marketing Development Institute [FMDI], Gurgaon. Mr. Shil-Kwan Lee, ICA Regional Director (Asia-Pacific), Mr. H. Sakata, First Secretary in the Embassy of Japan, Mr. Ikuo Ashikari, General Manager, IDACA, Tokyo, Mr. Bhagwati Prasad, Chief Executive of National Cooperative Union of India (NCUI), and Mr. Prem Kumar, Project Adviser, ICA-AP, addressed the participants. Dr. R.N. Kundu, Deputy General Manager (Trg), FMDI, welcomed the participants, while Dr. D. Bhattacharya,

General Manager (PA&HRD), IFFCO, proposed a vote of thanks.

There were 12 participants from Cambodia, China, India, Indonesia, Laos, Myanmar, Nepal, Philippines, Sri Lanka, Thailand and Vietnam. The participants moved to the Institute of Rural Management (IRMA), Anand, on 25 January and attended the IRMA segment of the course until 24 February 2007.

The comparative field study visits in Thailand took place during 27 February-08 March 2007, and then the Part-III of the programme was held at IDACA, Tokyo (Japan) from 9 March-21 April 2007.



Participants of the 1st ICA Japan Training Course with Mr. D.K. Bhatt, Shil Kwan Lee and others at Fertilizer Marketing Development Institute, Gurgaon.

After completing the IDACA part of the training programme, the participants left Japan on 22 April 2007 for their home countries.

Training Project for “Capacity Building for Marketing – 2007”

The 2nd Training Project for “Capacity Building for Marketing-2007” was formally inaugurated on 6th February 2007 in the Conference Hall of IDACA by Mr. Kazuo Tsukada, Executive Director, IDACA. Mr. A.K. Taneja, Program Officer, ICA-AP also addressed the Inaugural Session.

The programme is funded by the Government of Japan in the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (MAFF).

The main objectives of the training project were as follows:

- 1) To study marketing methods for farm products by theory and case study;
- 2) To study the methods for the rural development.

24 participants from 9 ASEAN countries – 1 from Malaysia, 2 each from Cambodia and Myanmar, 3 each from Brunei, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Philippines and Vietnam, and 4 from Thailand attended the Training Programme. The IDACA had developed a training curriculum, which included classroom lectures on various aspects, handled by the IDACA faculty members and specially-invited guest lecturers, organised field study visits and arranged direct communication with farmers and leaders of agricultural cooperatives.

The field study visits were arranged to agricultural co-operatives in Shizuoka Prefecture and it included the JA Shizuoka Prefectural Union; JA

Shizuoka Prefectural Economic Federation and its facilities; JA Mikabi and its facilities; JA Shizuoka-shi and observation of Farmers’ Market run by it. The participants also visited the headquarters of MAFF, ASEAN Rural Community Plaza in Tokyo and JA Zennoh Distribution Center, including a A-Coop Store run by JA on retail business in Kanagawa prefecture.

The participants also held group discussions and prepared brief reports on the experiences gained by them. An end-of-the-Course Evaluation session was also held.

The emphasis during the Training Project was on the methods and techniques adopted by various organisations and JA group in distribution of agricultural products and marketing business in Japan. The training course emphasised on practical studies and learning. Basic aspects

of Japanese agriculture, agricultural cooperative system, detailed introductions to organisation and functioning of agricultural cooperatives in Japan were given. Special topics of interest to the participants like “Marketing methods for farm products by theory and case study” and “Strategy for Marketing of Agricultural Products”, for future development were presented.

During the study visits programme to agricultural cooperatives in Shizuoka Prefecture the participants interacted with farmer leaders and to observe their various activities as carried out by the JAs.

The training course was designed in such a way that the participants, after returning to their respective countries,



Participants of the training project for Capacity Building for Marketing at IDACA.

are able to help organise and strengthen the marketing activities of their respective Primary Co-operatives and other similar groups and make use of experiences of Agricultural Cooperatives in Japan.

At the valedictory session, Mr. Kazunari Sakai, Assistant Director, International Economic Affairs, International Affairs Dept., Minister’s Secretariat, Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (MAFF), addressed the participants. Besides, Mr. K. Tsukada, Executive Director, IDACA and Mr. A.K. Taneja, Program Officer, ICA-AP, also addressed the participants and congratulated them for their cooperation in successful completion of the programme.

This year another course, prior to the one mentioned above, on Marketing was held between 22 August and 16 September on the same theme.

2nd Training Course on “Promotion of Sustainable Enterprises For Rural Women”

The International Cooperative Alliance-Asia and Pacific [ICA-AP] in collaboration with the JA-ZENCHU [Central Union of Agricultural Cooperatives of Japan] and the Institute for the Development of Agricultural Cooperation in Asia [IDACA] held the 2nd Training Course on “Promotion of Sustainable Enterprises for Rural Women” from 13th July to 18th August 2007 in the Philippines and Japan. The generous financial assistance was provided by the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries [MAFF] of the Government of Japan to conduct this program.

Twelve women participants – two each from China, India, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines and Vietnam attended the Training Course.

The main objectives of the Training Course were (a) to learn methods of enterprise development by rural women through case studies; (b) to study management methods of micro-enterprises by rural women; and (c) to learn methods of encouraging women to be involved in rural communities’ development.

Part-I of the program, Comparative Study Visits, was held in the Philippines from 13th to 22nd July in collaboration with the National Confederation of Cooperatives [NATCCO], a member-organization of ICA.

Part-II of the program held at IDACA from 23rd July to 18th August included extensive classroom work and study visits to agricultural cooperatives in Shimane Prefecture of Japan. Lecture-cum-practical field study visits assignments were combined to impart necessary knowledge to the participants on the working of women’s associations and the general activities of agricultural cooperatives in

Japan. In view of the experience gained by the participants through class room lectures, field study visits in the Philippines and Japan, the participants were able to develop brief outlines of their Action Plans which they would be recommending to their respective organizations on return to their home countries.

An end-of-the Course Evaluation was conducted at the conclusion of the Training Course. A Certificate of Participation was awarded to each participant at the concluding session held at the IDACA in Tokyo on 17th August.

The concluding session was attended by Mr. Kosei Banura, Section Chief, International Cooperation Division, Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries [MAFF]; Mr. Kazuo Tsukada, Executive Director of IDACA; and Mr. K. Sethu Madhavan, Planning Officer of ICA-AP.



The women’s group at Philippines. Mr. K. Sethumadhavan along with the delegates.

Training Program for Managers of Consumer Co-operatives in Japan

A Training program for managers of consumer co-operatives is organized every year since 2001 by ICA-AP in collaboration with Japanese Consumer Co-operative Union (JCCU). The main purpose of this training program is to expose participants to Japanese Consumer Co-operative System for enrichments in the areas of store operation and management, democratic HAN formation, observe various members' activities including committee meetings as well as to see all the facilities that Japanese consumer co-operatives offer to its members.

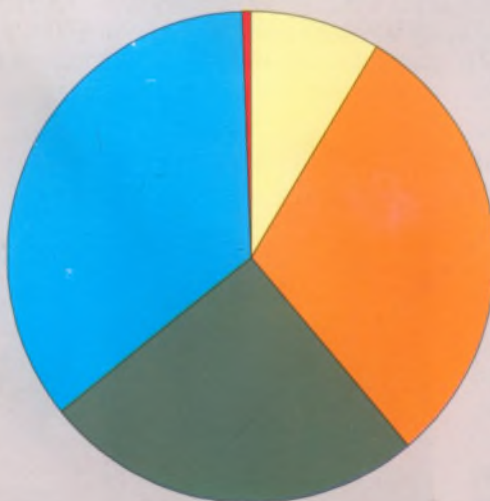
In 2007 three training programs have been organized in Co-op Tokyo, Miyagi Co-op and Co-op Kobe respectively. The duration

of each training program was about two weeks. Participants were selected after having met the requirements of the interview conducted by the ICA-AP secretary to the Consumer Committee. After arriving in Japan, trainees were given orientation at JCCU in Tokyo for four days before proceeding to the training centers for the actual program.

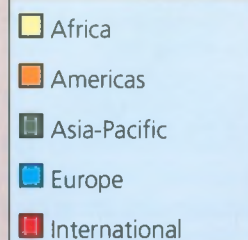


The trainee managers at the Han group delivery point of Coop Tokyo.

ICA Membership 2007



REGION	Total
Africa	19
Americas	68
Asia-Pacific	57
Europe	79
International	1



Workshop for Enhancing Role of Women in Co-operative Development

The ICA-AP in collaboration with the Department of Co-operatives of Bangladesh organized a workshop on 'Enhancing Role of Women in Co-operative Development' in Dhaka, Bangladesh, 22-23 August, 2007.

The Chief Guest, Mr. Mohd. Anwarul Iqbal, Hon'ble Advisor in-charge of the Ministries of Local Government, Rural Development and Co-operatives and the Ministry of Labour and Employment inaugurated the workshop, which was attended by Mr. Shil Kwan Lee, ICA Regional Director, Mr. Mohammad Nazrul Islam and Mrs. Savitri Singh, Gender Program Advisor of ICA-AP.

The workshop was attended by 30 delegates from Bangladesh, including re-

source persons from ICA-AP, UNAIDs, Bangladesh, UNIFEM Office for South Asia and FAO, Dhaka.

The workshop discussed issues like Understanding Co-operative Movement in Bangladesh and ICA, Gender Integration and Women Empowerment, HIV/AIDS Awareness and Co-operatives.



Women Co-operative leaders at a group photo

Study Visit cum Training Program of Co-operative Leaders and Government officials

A study visit-cum-training programme of co-operative leaders from Afghanistan, Bhutan, Maldives and Pakistan was organized by the ICA-AP in collaboration with the National Co-operative Union of India, from 21-26 May, 2007.

The programme was inaugurated by the President of NCUI Mr. G.H. Amin in the presence of Mr. Bhagwati Prasad, Chief Executive of NCUI and Mr. B.D. Sharma, Sr. Consultant, ICA Domus Trust on 21st May 2007 at Vaikunth Mehta National Institute of Co-operative Management, Pune (VAMNICOM).

Six participants (3 from Bhutan, 2 from Maldives and 1 from Pakistan) attended the programme.

SAARC Co-operative leaders with Mr. B.D. Sharma, Senior Consultant, ICA-DT, Mr. G.H. Amin, President, NCUI and Mr. Bhagwati Prasad, Chief Executive of NCUI.

Mr. S. Bhosale, Associate Professor at VAMNICOM was the main co-ordinator of the programme, which concluded successfully. The training programme was very beneficial to the participants of these countries.



International Workshop on “Strengthening of HRD and Networking of Co-operative HRD Institutions for Asia-Pacific”

Co-operative HRD Institutions in Asia-Pacific Region are conducting Training & Education Programmes for personnel in Co-operatives in their respective countries. These institutions are following many innovative methods of training and education, using different types of training materials and their faculty is having different experience and exposure to co-operatives in their fields. Due to some commonalities in the co-operative movement in the region of Asia-Pacific there is an urgent need to share HRD practices followed by countries in the region. The Movement would be further strengthened if these practices are shared either personally or through a network. The National Co-operative Union of India (NCUI) in collaboration with Vaikunth Mehta National Institute of Co-operative Management (VAMNICOM), Pune, India, and active support from International Co-operative Alliance and Co-operative Learning Centre of British Columbia Institute of Co-operative Studies, has launched a Global HRD Network portal for Co-operative Institutions with the objective to address information regarding HRD Institutions around the Globe in the field of Co-operatives.

An International Workshop on Strengthening of HRD and Networking of Co-operative Institutions for Asia-Pacific Region was organized by International Co-operative Alliance-Asia and Pacific (ICA-AP) in collaboration with National Co-operative Union of India (NCUI) and Vaikunth Mehta National Institute of Co-operative Management (VAMNICOM) at Pune (Maharashtra) from 25th to 28th February 2007. The objective of the workshop was to facilitate the delegates to share HRD practices in their respective countries and to seek their suggestions for improving the effectiveness and usefulness of GHRD portal. 32 participants from Malaysia, Sri Lanka, Vietnam and India attended the workshop.

The opening ceremony of the workshop was held at Jubilee Hall of VAMNICOM in the forenoon of 26th February. The workshop was inaugurated by Mr. Iain Macdonald, Director General of ICA Geneva and presided over by Dr.

S.S. Sisodia, President of NCUI. The opening session was also addressed by Mr. Shil Kwan Lee, Regional Director of ICA-AP and Mr. Bhagwati Prasad, Chief Executive of NCUI and Director of VAMNICOM. A vote of thanks was proposed by Professor Paramjit Sharma, Head, Centre for IT, VAMNICOM who was the Coordinator of the workshop.

The GHRD Centre was also inaugurated by Mr. Iain Macdonald, Director General of ICA Geneva. So far 35 institutions have registered with the GHRD Centre (www.hrd.co-op).

Country reports (sharing HRD practices) were presented by the participating countries at the workshop. A case study



Participants of the International Workshop on HRD at Vaikunth Mehta Institute of Co-operative Management. Mr. Bhagwati Prasad, Chairman of the Global HRD Committee, Mr. Iain Macdonald, Director-General, ICA, Late Dr. S.S.Sisodia and Mr. Shil Kwan Lee, Regional Director are seen in the picture.

on “Innovative HRD Practices of IFFCO” was presented by Mr. D. Bhattacharya, General Manager (HRD) of IFFCO.

How to strengthen collaboration among HRD institutions in Asia for training, education, research and publication was also discussed at the workshop. The participants gave many ideas in this regard. Field study visits were arranged to Warnanagar in Kolhapur District on 27th February and the delegates got an opportunity to experience one of the strongest models of co-operative development in India. The participants visited institutions like sugar factory, dairy plant, paper plant, co-operative bank, mahila udyog, consumer store, wired village project and children’s orchestra.

Exposure and Networking Programme for Empowerment of Women Cooperatives

The challenges of globalization and free trade are affecting lives of people unevenly across the world. The co-operatives worldwide are feeling the heat of unequal opportunities and threats created by the free market. As usual, this has intensified the existing inequalities and securities for many poor women. The hightect means of trade and business tend to benefit the rich rather than the poor. Women are most likely to suffer more from the rapid changes societies are undergoing due to globalization and free trade.

In the context of the above challenges and the resolution of the ICA Co-operative Ministers' Conference for exposure of women co-operators to success stories and networking for business development. The ICA Regional Women's Committee has been making attempts to share information with women co-operative leaders and expect to find ways and means to promote women's economic security and empowerment through the co-operatives.

The objective of this programme was to provide a common meeting ground to Asian co-operative women leaders/persons responsible for gender and women development in co-operatives for sharing information and experience about success stories and best practices of their co-operatives and most importantly help women establish a network for mutual co-operation and business interest across the Asia-Pacific region.

The following were the expected outcome:

- ◆ Establish contacts among women leaders/co-operative members and create networks.
- ◆ Collect information on best practices and disseminate.
- ◆ Identify mechanism to overcome factors that limit women's participation as organizers and decision makers.

- ◆ Business information about products and services as well as know-how for women entrepreneurs.
- ◆ Identify areas of mutual interest and collaboration.

Based on the success of the programme, more such programmes will be initiated in future.

The programme was divided into 3 parts. On the first day, there was the inaugural session and classroom interaction combined with information on best practices in the participants' own countries. A study visit to Lijjat Papad factory was organized on the second day. Though this factory is not registered under the Co-operative Act, the organizing is functioning on co-operative pattern – collective effect



Delegates at the Networking programme posed for a photo

and collective benefits. In the afternoon of the second day the participants also visited a co-operative bank, whose majority of membership is women and the chairperson is also a woman. The participants visited a co-operative village on the third day. The village runs a co-operative sugar factory, a co-operative spinning mill, a dairy and a co-operative consumer store.

Capacity Building Programme for Women Cooperative Leaders of Cambodia

The ICA-AP with the support of AGRITERRA of Netherlands implemented a project on the promotion of sustainable model of Agricultural Co-operatives in Cambodia in collaboration with AGRITERRA. So far 5 co-operatives have been organized in 5 provinces of the country i.e. (i) Svay Rieng (ii) Takeo (iii) Siem Reab (iv), Kampong Cham (v) Batombong.

The ICA-AP has supported in construction of a co-operative building and toilet in each cooperative. The building is equipped with functional furniture, computer, electricity generator set and weighing machine for agricultural inputs.

There is considerable number of women farmers as first time members in these cooperatives. These members needed knowledge and information about cooperative business management and functioning of a co-operative system.

ICA-AP has conducted a 5 days capacity building program for the women co-operative leaders in Phnom Penh. There were 28 women leaders from the five co-operatives and two women staff from the Ministry, out of 30 participants.

The objectives of the training were:

1. Understanding co-operative institution and advantage of co-operative business.
2. Management and leadership capacity building of women co-operative Leaders and members enabling them to manage a cooperative enterprise.

The training was based on "Trainers training manual for leadership development of women in co-operatives" developed by ICA-AP and ILO COOPNET. The topics covered during the training were:

1. Understanding sex and gender
2. Fundamentals of co-operatives
3. Relevance and benefits of co-operative institutions for women
4. Various aspects of co-operative enterprise management and business planning
5. Coping with challenge

In the last part of the training, the participants visited to the Barkong Angkor agricultural co-operative in Siem Reab Province. A half day interactive session was held where the chairperson, directors and other members of the co-opera-



Delegates of the training program at work

tive shared their experience with the participants of 4 other co-operatives.

The participants mentioned that it is a rare opportunity for them to come together and share their experiences and concerns about the co-operative business and activities. The sharing gave them many useful information to tackle the similar issues in their own co-operatives. The participants found the program useful and educative.

ICA-AP organises Global Youth Conference

The ICA Committee on Youth Co-operation for Asia-Pacific, in collaboration with the SNCF Youth Committee organised a Global Youth Conference in Singapore, 14-15 October, 2007.

More than 150 delegates from Italy, Japan, Indonesia, Philippines, United States, Sri Lanka, Russian Federation, Korea, Thailand, Vietnam, Pakistan, Singapore, Romania, Nepal, Myanmar, India, Canada and Colombia participated at the event, which was a huge success.

The youth delegates discussed on the issues pertaining to Youth participation in co-operative activities globally and they have also came up with interesting ideas on how the youth could provide innovative ideas for co-operative development.

Speakers from Singapore, ILO, Colombia gave innovative ideas for youth involvement in co-operative development.

ICA President, Ivano Barberini and Chairman of SNCF, who is also a member of parliament, Seah Kian Peng addressed the delegates. Jan-Eirik Imbsen from ICA, Geneva facilitated the

election of a youth representative to the ICA Board. Mr. Teo Say Hong, Chairperson of the Asia-Pacific Youth Committee has been elected as nominee of youth on the ICA Board.

Tsubasa Nakamura and P. Nair facilitated the Conference on behalf of ICA-AP.



Mr. Teo Say Hong, Youth Representative on the ICA Board, Mr. Ivano Barberini, ICA President and Mr. Seah Kian Peng, Chairman, SNCF at the Youth Conference in Singapore

Surinder Kumar Jakhar elected to the ICA Board



MR. SURINDER KUMAR JAKHAR, Chairman of Indian Farmers' Fertilizer Co-operative Limited (IFFCO) was elected as a member on the ICA Global Board of Directors, at the General Assembly held in Singapore, 18-19 October, 2007.

Mr. Jakhar thanked the members for reposing their faith in the Indian co-operative movement and pledged all co-operation at the global level.

We at the ICA-AP are happy that Mr. Jakhar joined the Board and wish him all success in the future.