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ICA ASIA PACIFIC ANNUAL ACTIVITIES REPORT 2008

Contents

Message from the President, ICA-AP	1	Study Tour to Agricultural Co-operatives in the Republic of Korea	14
Message from the Regional Director, ICA-AP	2	Workshops on University/College Co-operatives	15
ICA-AP Regional Assembly, 2008	3	Enhancing the Role of Women in Cooperative Development, China	16
Statement Issued at the 2008 Regional Assembly	4	Management Capacity Building of Women for Gender Integration and Cooperative Development	17
ICA Extraordinary General Assembly 2008 and Special Meeting of ICA-AP Standing Committee held in Rome	5	Regional Youth Conference and 2nd Meeting of ICA-AP Youth Committee, Hanoi	17
ICA-AP Cooperative Forum 2008 held in Hanoi	6	5th Regional Women's Forum and Meeting of ICA Regional Women's Committee, Hanoi	18
Co-operative-Government Dialogue held in Abu Dhabi, UAE	7	Meeting of ICA Committee on Agriculture, Hanoi	19
Recommendations at the end of the Dialogue	8	Seminar on Networking of Coop Training Institutions & HRD Committee Meeting, Hanoi	20
ICA Conference on Co-operative Development in South Pacific held in Fiji	9	Meeting of Regional Coop Banking Association	20
ICA International Conference on Co-operative Tourism held in India	10	Meeting of ICA-AP Consumer Committee	21
2nd Training Course on Enhancement of Farmers' Income and Poverty Reduction through Co-ops	11	ICA-AP Standing Committee Meeting in Philippines	21
3rd Training Course on Promotion of Sustainable Enterprises for Rural Women	12	Project on Promotion of Sustainable Model of Agricultural Co-ops for Poverty Alleviation of Farmers	22
Training Project on Capacity Building for Marketing	12	ICA's Intervention in Mapping the Scope of Co-operatives in the Economy of Maldives	23
ICA Training Program for Managers of Consumer Co-ops held in Japan	13	ICA/IFFCO/NCC Pilot Project on Empowerment of Youth and Women through Co-ops in Sri Lanka	23
ICA Committee on Co-operative Research in Asia Pacific	13	ICA Headquarter visits ICA-AP office in New Delhi	24
Regional Workshop for Managers on Management of Consumer Co-operatives	14	ICA-AP welcomes New Members from the Region	24



Message from the President, ICA-AP

ICA, a global networking organization, is a worldwide representative of co-operative organizations of all kinds. ICA is also the custodian of cooperative values and principles and its principal role is to provide forum for the exchange of ideas, experiences, concerns and trade among co-operatives.

ICA over the years has been lobbying with the governments for the creation of favorable policy environment for the development of cooperatives and advising necessary improvements in the cooperative legislation for better regulation of the cooperatives.

Cooperatives are now significant economic and social actors with a membership of approximately 800 million people throughout the world. The primary benefit of cooperatives as we all know lies in their instrumentality in enabling people with limited individual resources in a market economy to pool their resources to acquire the economies of scale usually only attainable by larger, well-financed market players.

Cooperative enterprises are uniquely characterized by the qualities and processes such as member-owned; democratic management; driven by a balance between profit motives and the interests of their membership and the community. As such, **cooperatives are idealistic form of corporate structures and it is never easy to follow the path of idealism due to self-interests that often become more dominating than the common interests.** But the successes of co-operatives in different parts of the world prove the feasibility and effectiveness of value based economic enterprises.

The world, as we all know, is facing a major crisis that is economic, social and cultural but is also a **clear crisis of values and ethics.** The global recession, that began only a few months ago, has spread with a speed that we have not experienced since the Great Depression of the 1930's and it is becoming increasingly worse, with strongly-felt repercussions, not only on our standards of living, but also on perspectives for medium to long term development.

At this critical hour, several avenues of approach need to be considered seriously both by the Governments and the Co-operatives.

They include:

1. Reaffirming and deepening our commitment to ethical and co-operative values and renewed emphasis on their relevance to business activities.
2. Strengthening cooperation between cooperatives at all levels – national, regional and international.
3. Strengthening and expanding knowledge networking, education, training and research at national, regional and global level.
4. Strengthen cooperatives as effective businesses, able to compete equally with the other business frameworks, particularly in this time of crisis.
5. Recognition by Governments about the important and special role, which cooperatives can play in the face of today's crisis.

Time has come when we need to reassess the importance of cooperatives in balancing the national, regional and global economy after the global economic meltdown. Companies that make significant profits but don't share the bounty with customers will find it tough to survive. The seismic shift with interventions ranging from nationalization to salary capping are enough to prove that THE CHANGE IS DESTINED and any company that could be perceived to be acting against the public good will fall in the line of fire and the mandates rather than voluntary measures will become the norm because in an interconnected world we stand or fall together.

I strongly feel that the time is most opportune to garner policy support of the Governments in the Asia Pacific region for promoting co-operatives as an ethical alternative of significance. I am glad to lead the region where co-operatives are emerging as a force to reckon with and the governments are overwhelmingly supporting the idea of inclusive growth through cooperatives.

The year 2008 witnessed a series of meaningful interventions facilitated by the dynamic team of ICA-AP under the leadership of Mr. Shil Kwan Lee, Regional Director of ICA-AP. I am happy to lead the region and present the 2008 report card of ICA-AP for your kind perusal and remarks.

– Li Chungsheng



Message from the Regional Director, ICA-AP

It gives me enormous pleasure to present the 2008 Activity Report of the ICA Asia Pacific.

ICA-AP was actively engaged in several cross-sector initiatives that carry great potential in terms of creating wider understanding of the co-op business model and stimulating development of cooperative initiatives as solution to the current challenges being faced by the world.

Some of the significant activities towards achieving this were, Government – Co-operative Dialogue held in Abu Dhabi in June 2008 to execute the Declaration of 8th Ministers' Conference on Cooperative Legislation and Policy held in Kuala Lumpur in March 2007, 5th Asia Pacific Cooperative Forum to understand cooperative advantages in the Global Economic Crises, Draw strategy for Co-operative Development and Legislation in Cambodia, Workshop on setting up University/Campus Co-operatives in Iran, and International Conference on Co-operative Tourism.

Besides, ICA-AP continued to update information and knowledge on Cooperative management practices through various interventions like training programs, seminars and other capacity development interventions in collaborations with member organizations in cooperatively advanced nations.

In the current global scenario future of Cooperative is filled with both challenges and opportunities. It's inevitable in the current economic situation to think in isolation about the country's economic struggles. We in the co-operative community need to assert and recognize the important role co-operatives can – and should – play in the regeneration of the economy.

As the governments and community at large search for affordable and trust-worthy solutions for daily living in these difficult economic times, co-ops should be posed for a period of expansion. *The challenge, as always, is to increase public understanding of the benefits of co-op membership and to motivate people to become members.* The Co-operatives too on their part have to make considerable efforts in this dynamic and changing economic environment to become a more relevant, responsive, and results oriented development partners.

The Asia and Pacific region, with a combined population of over three billion, has had three decades of strong economic growth. Yet, the region is still home to nearly 900 million poor people, or two-thirds of the world's poor. Alleviating the plight of the poor is of paramount importance for sustained development of the region. To achieve this, hunger, malnutrition and deprivation need to be eliminated. The poor need to have access to opportunities and be empowered to shape their own destiny for present and future generations. All this will require cooperation and the shared vision of both developed and developing cooperative in this region.

Economic cooperation is vital for the development process. Integrated regional and sub regional cooperation not only enables countries to enjoy greater complementarities and economies of scale, but also contributes substantively in building synergy and networking, an important precondition for sustainable economic development and prosperity.

ICA-AP is all committed to advocate the role of Cooperatives in attaining inclusive growth of economy and to provide effective networking forum for the exchange of knowledge, experience and business interests among members of ICA-AP.

The Extraordinary General Assembly of ICA in 2008 was a step towards recognizing the strength of membership base of the cooperative so as to signify the role of large membership based co-operatives in the global cooperative movement.

I take this opportunity to formally thank all the members of the ICA from Asia Pacific region for their very cooperative response, kind understanding coupled with unstinted cooperation and generosity towards the cause of ICA.

I do look forward to serving the interests of millions of cooperators in the region during 2009 together with the team of ICA-AP through of course the kind cooperation of all esteemed members of ICA in the region.

– Shil Kwan Lee

ICA-AP Regional Assembly, 2008

Cooperative Advantage in the Global Economic Crisis

The 8th ICA-AP Regional Assembly was held at Melia Hotel in Hanoi, Vietnam on 5th December 2008. The meeting of the Regional Assembly was chaired by Mr. Li Chungsheng, Chairman of the Regional Assembly. 195 participants from 24 countries and three international organizations attended the meeting. The joint opening ceremony of 2008 Regional Assembly and Co-op Forum was held at My Dinh National Convention Center on 3rd December which was attended by more than 900 people.

The inaugural address was delivered by H.E. Nguyen Phu Trong, Chairman, National Assembly of Socialist Republic of Vietnam. ICA-AP revised its rules according to the new rules of ICA approved by the Special General Assembly at Rome on 6th June 2007.



Mr. Li Chungsheng addressing the delegates of the Regional Assembly



Mr. Shil Kwan Lee presenting the Report before the Regional Assembly

The Regional Assembly unanimously approved the new rules of ICA-AP. The Regional Assembly also approved the constitution of the ICA-AP Committees on Cooperative Research and University/Campus Co-operatives.

The Regional Director, Mr. Shil Kwan Lee, presented the account of the ICA-AP activities carried out from January to November 2008 and also presented the financial report for the period January to September 2008. The Regional Director placed before the house the ICA-AP Strategic Plan/Multi-Annual Budget for 2009-2012 and the Work Plan for 2009 which was unanimously approved.

The proposal of All China Federation of Supply and Marketing Co-operatives (ACFSMC) to host the next meeting of ICA-AP Regional Assembly in China in 2010 was accepted by the house.



A cultural show presented at the Regional Assembly



Members casting their vote to elect new Members of the Regional Board in Hanoi

Statement Issued at the 2008 Regional Assembly

Cooperative Advantage in the Global Economic Crisis

International Co-operative Alliance (ICA) that represents the global co-operative community, since 1895, and presently consisting of more than 800 million individual members has issued an open **letter to the Governments of the G8 expressing the shock and serious concern on the Global Economic Crisis** triggered by the melting down of some of the giant global financial structures.

It is a fact that vast amounts of taxpayers' money has been committed by many Governments to control the impact of **economic crisis created on account of predatory speculative practices of corporate giants**. The chain reaction of the financial disorder has started seriously impacting the regional economy of Asia Pacific in the form of business losses, retrenchments, liquidity crunch etc. thereby making weaker segments of the society more vulnerable and fragile than before.

Considering the deterioration of the situation day by day, WE, the representatives of ICA member co-operatives from the Asia Pacific region, apprehend that the crisis may engulf our region also and accordingly take the note of **negative growth of economy with likely serious repercussions on the stability of the global economy**.

Co-operatives being the value-based **enterprises with unique blend of economic and social responsibilities soaked with a different ethos that employ 100 million people across the world** need to be considered as a preferred option to **stimulate the economic growth**.

Co-operatives worldwide have been known as secure, stable and sustainable models of business

enterprises owned and controlled by the people who in pursuit of their common economic need pool their resources for common good.

Co-operatives being different form of business models as compared to the capital-intensive corporate structures are not linked with stock markets because they rely on members' funds for a realistic value; and are not subject to manipulation and greed since the members of their communities control them.

Co-operatives are the businesses where the profits are not just distributed to their shareholders, but are returned to those active members who transact with the business of the co-operative, thus keeping the wealth generated by local businesses in the local community for the good of the local environment and families.

Co-operatives do have the inherent features of being modest and realistic in planning the growth of the business with **manageable control on costs and aspirations** giving them a greater power of resilience.

In order to contain ill effects of the global economic recession, WE the representatives of co-operatives from the Asia Pacific region strongly recommend that significant role of **co-operatives in the process of economic recovery should be given due recognition by the policy makers at global and national level and therefore urge upon the governments to establish good partnership with co-operatives to protect economically vulnerable population so as to minimize the impact of global economic meltdown at the ground level**.

Present Economic Crisis is the
Moral Crisis of Capitalism ...

– Ivano Barberini
President, ICA

ICA Extraordinary General Assembly 2008 and Special Meeting of the ICA-AP Standing Committee held in Rome

An extraordinary General Assembly of the ICA was held at Salone delle Fontane, Italy, Rome on 5-6 June 2008 in order to seek the approval of amended ICA Rules and ICA Bye-Laws by the General Body of ICA. More than 200 delegates from close to 70 countries attended the meeting.

A special informal meeting of the ICA Asia Pacific Standing Committee was also held in Rome on 4 June 2008, a day before the General Assembly.

All the members except from Nepal and Philippines attended the meeting. Mr. Li Chungsheng, President, ICA Asia-Pacific in his opening remarks appreciated the role of ICA-AP for

pushing the agenda of Revised ICA Subscription Formula in the larger interest of the ICA Asia Pacific members.

Mr. Lee presented the salient features of improved subscription formula and pointed out that the number of primary members is the basis of new subscription formula. Mr. Iain Macdonald, Director-General of ICA addressed the members of the ICA Asia Pacific Standing Committee and said that the new system in long run would definitely increase the membership base of ICA and eventually make co-operatives appreciate about the merits of active user members in the development of co-operatives.



Delegates at the Extraordinary General Assembly 2008, Rome

The New ICA Membership subscription formula was adopted with a thumping majority at the Extraordinary General Assembly of ICA in Rome, Italy on 5th June 2008



ICA-AP Board members at the special meeting of Standing Committee

The Strategic Objectives of ICA in the light of globalization and increased competition to survive in the market were unequivocally accepted at the Rome General Assembly of ICA

ICA-AP Co-operative Forum 2008 held in Hanoi

The joint opening of ICA Asia Pacific Regional Assembly and Coop Forum was done by H.E. Mr Nguyen Phu Trong, Hon'ble Chairman of the National Assembly of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam on 3rd December, 2008 at My Dinh National Convention Centre, Hanoi, Vietnam.

Mr. Ian Macdonald, Director General of ICA and Mr. Chan Tee Seng, Chairman of Singapore National Cooperative Federation of Singapore presented their papers on "Cooperative Advantage in the Global Economic Crisis". Mr. Paul Hazen, CEO and President of NCBA, USA and Dr. Sanjiv Chopra, Secretary of Agriculture, Government of West Bengal, India presented their papers on "Enhancing Management Capacity of Co-operatives", while Mr. Bruno Roelants, Secretary General, CICOPA and Mr. Chan-Ho-Choi, General Manager, International Department, NACF, Korea presented their papers on "Co-operative Advantages in Ensuring Inclusive Growth of Economy". Mr. Jito Ito, Manager, International Relations at the JCCU, Tokyo, Japan made his presentation on "Business Networking to position Co-operatives as a Preferred Brand".

The Forum turned to leaders of the world and asked them to recognize the important and special role, which cooperatives can play in the face of today's crisis. This is particularly true with regard to the general masses of the population, which will of course be hit hardest by the results of today's crisis. The Forum called on them to ensure that a level playing field exists for co-operatives as for all other formations. As Asia Pacific region grows in global significance, so do we, the cooperatives can play a significant role.

The Forum also felt that there is an urgent need to increase business efficiency, through proper education and training and emphasize and re-emphasize cooperative reality as businesses with values, as economics with a human face.

We must indeed be and become more, much more, widely known as a "Global Alternative of Significance" remarked by Dr. Yehudah Paz, who synthesized the presentation at the forum.

*Mr. Ian Macdonald
Director General ICA*



*Dr. Sanjiv Chopra,
Secretary of Agriculture,
Government of West
Bengal, India*

*Mr. Chan Tee Seng,
Chairman of Singapore
National Cooperative
Federation*



*Mr. Bruno Roelants,
Secretary General,
CICOPA*

*Mr. Paul Hazen, CEO and
President of NCBA, USA*



*Mr. Jito Ito, Manager,
International Relations
JCCU, Tokyo, Japan*

Co-operative–Government Dialogue held in Abu Dhabi, UAE

A “Government-Cooperative Dialogue” in conjunction with 2nd Cooperative Forum of GCC countries was jointly organized by ICA-AP and the Ministry of Social Affairs, Government of UAE at the Abu Dhabi National Exhibition Center from June 1-3, 2008 under the patronage of H.E. General Shaikh Mohammed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Abu Dhabi Crown Prince and Deputy Supreme Commander of the UAE Armed Forces, to finalize the framework for the implementation of the Declaration of 8th Ministers’ Conference on Cooperative Legislation and Policy, held in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia in March 2007.

Ms. Mariam Al Roumi, Hon’ble Minister of Social Affairs, Government of UAE inaugurated the event on 1st June 2008. Mr. Ivano Barberini, President of ICA together with the Secretary General of Gulf Cooperation Council presided over the Opening Ceremony.

The Minister of Social Affairs, Ms Mariam Al Roumi said that the government promotes co-operatives as an alternative to the investor-owned private sector and that both are integral to the foundation of economic growth and development in a country. She further stressed that co-operatives should play an important role in the

diverse and innovative sectors such as construction, health, education, tourism, insurance and others. Mr. Ivano Barberini, President ICA, referred to the advantages of co-operatives in carrying out the task of micro-economic development with a strong flavor of social responsibility, emphasized on the harmonious relations between co-operatives and called upon the delegates to discuss in depth the role of co-operatives in tiding over the crisis of natural disasters, food insecurity and the threats emerging from global warming.

The Secretary-General of GCC expressed the need of enacting uniform legislation for co-operatives in the GCC nations and appreciated the role of ICA in this task.

Papers were presented at the workshop on Governance in Co-operatives by Mr. Sanjiv Chopra; Social Responsibility of the Co-operatives by Mr. Zulkifli Mohammad; Food Security through co-operatives by Mr. T. Haque; and Multi-functionality of Co-operatives by Mr. Won-Byung Choi, President of NACF, Korea.

There were more than 110 delegates from 25 countries participated in this special event hosted by the Ministry of Social Affairs, Government of UAE.



Mr. Ivano Barberini, ICA President, speaking at the Government Co-op Dialogue



Ms. Mariam Al Roumi, Hon'ble Minister of Social Affairs, Government of UAE speaking at the Government Co-op Dialogue

Recommendations at the end of the Dialogue in Abu Dhabi

The Dialogue between Governments and Cooperatives from 26 countries in the Asia Pacific region concluded with the following set of guidelines to implement the Declaration of 8th Ministers' Conference on Co-operative Policy and Legislation:

- Government should recognize cooperatives as institutions playing important role in national economy,
- There should be a consistent national policy on cooperatives to facilitate inclusive growth of economy for attaining more holistic and balanced socio economic growth of a country,
- Appropriate support measures for co-operatives, both legislative and fiscal, should be introduced and carried forward in general and also in innovative sectors like infrastructure building, service industry, formal schooling, education, health care, women and youth empowerment, disaster mitigation and preparedness, food crisis and climate protection,
- The text of the cooperative policy and law should be in clear and simple terms for better appreciation and understanding of the members of cooperatives,
- Pre-registration audit for cooperatives, need for approval before registration, need to meet certain minimum standards must be in accordance with the viability norms required in local context,
- Legislation on cooperatives must protect democratic control of cooperatives and insist on professional management of cooperatives by clearly setting out who decides the policy and who executes the policy,
- The promoters and regulators of cooperatives must be adequately **trained and groomed** for their work with special service conditions to remain motivated for their difficult and challenging task,
- Institutional characteristics of cooperatives should be made visible by ensuring practices of effective governance, greater responsibility towards community and society and multiple functioning of cooperatives,
- Cooperatives should reassess their strengths, core competence and comparative advantages in emerging market economy,
- Cooperatives must staying away from party politics so that co-operatives could not be used for pursuit of political careers and become the instruments for implementation of political programs,
- Cooperatives need to aggressively **market the cooperative advantages** that evidently distinguish them with other corporate structures,
- Cooperation among cooperatives at local, national and global level must be explored by using ICT and providing online information on trading of commodities and services and maintaining a knowledge bank to bring harmony in the co-operative laws of different countries.



Mr. Abdulla Alsuwaidi, Dy. Minister, Social Affairs, Govt. of UAE summing up the recommendation



A view of the dignitaries at the inauguration of the Dialogue



Mr. S.K. Jakhar, Chairman IFFCO cum Global Board Member of ICA at the concluding session

ICA Conference on Co-operative Development in South Pacific held in Fiji

The ICA-AP, in collaboration with the Government of Fiji, the Fiji Cooperative Union and the Integrated Human Resource Development Programme (IHRDP) of the ILO in Fiji, organized a Regional Conference on Co-operative Development for South Pacific islands. The Conference was inaugurated by Mr. Tom Rickett, Minister for Information, Trade, Tourism and Communication. Mr. Rickett in his speech emphasized the importance of co-operative development for overall economic development of the country. Mr. Sevanaia Bilivalu, Acting Registrar of Co-operatives, Fiji and Mr. Shil Kwan Lee, ICA Regional Director, welcomed the delegates to the Conference.

Technical presentations were made by Mr. Bilivalu on the Present Policy of the Government of Fiji on Co-operative Development; Co-op Policies, Legislation and Potential of Co-operatives in globalized economy by Mr. Are Wakowako; The Overall Situation of Co-operative Development in the Asia Pacific Region by Mr. Shil Kwan

Lee, ICA Regional Director. Dr. Chan Ho Choi of National Agricultural Co-operative Federation of Korea on Agricultural Co-operative situation in Korea, Dr. Bhagwati Prasad, Chief Executive of National Co-operative Union of India and Chair of the ICA Global Committee on HRD, spoke on the Co-operative Development Situation in India and

also on Networking of HRD institutions globally, including the global HRD portal. Mr. Jiro Ito, Manager, International Department of Japanese Consumers Co-operative Union and Chair of the ICA Committee on Consumer Cooperation for Asia-Pacific, talked about Consumer Co-operatives and Micro-insurance initiatives of consumer co-operatives in Japan.

Mr. Ramsey Margolis, Chief Executive of New Zealand Co-operatives Association spoke on Dairy Co-operatives in New Zealand and the Co-operative Competitiveness in

Market Economy. Mrs. Savitri Singh, Gender Programme Advisor, ICA-AP, spoke on Gender Issues in the Region, while Mr. P. Nair of ICA-AP spoke on Youth and University Co-operative Development in the Region and the ICA's efforts in this direction. Ms. Banuvune Kanmaitoia, Permanent Secretary to the Ministry of Industry, Tourism, Information and Trade of the Government of Fiji, Mr. Agnideo Singh, Chair of the Fiji Teachers' Union



ICA Conference on Co-operative Development in South Pacific

Thrift and Credit Co-operative Society and Dr. Ropate Qalo of the University of South Pacific, Suva, also spoke at the Conference. The Conference was attended by 85 delegates from all parts of Fiji, Papua New Guinea and resource persons from Korea, India, Japan, New Zealand and ICA-AP.

"Co-operation, by definition, is an undertaking together and on equal terms – a choice bringing together business and solidarity and therefore, useful and effective in our present situation, as was also the case at the beginning of the last century. Often all this has been achieved contrary to the dominant economic culture and globalization processes, mainly characterized by a sort of "escape from responsibility".

– Ivano Barberini, ICA President, Oslo General Assembly

ICA International Conference on Co-operative Tourism held in India

An International Conference on Cooperative Tourism was jointly organized by ICA Asia Pacific and RICEM, Jaipur on the 14th & 15th of October 2008 at Hotel Ramada. The event was mainly sponsored by IFFCO. *The theme of the Conference was "Friendly Tourism through Co-operatives"*. The Conference was inaugurated by Dr. N.S. Gurjar, Minister of Co-operatives, Government of Rajasthan, and presided over by Mr. Rajiv Agrawal, Managing Director of NCDC.

Secretaries of Co-operatives to the Governments of Rajasthan and West Bengal, Registrars of Co-operatives and Directors of Tourism from Rajasthan, Goa, Jharkhand, Kerala and Himachal Pradesh attended the Conference. Besides, there were representatives from the National Co-op Federations and tourism related coops from New Delhi, Goa and Mangalore.

Presentation outlining the concept and integral components of Coop Tourism and Tourism with Conviviality was made by Mr. Rajiv I.D. Mehta, Director

Development ICA-AP. Paper on New Trends in Tourism Sector was presented by Mr. Benjamin Carey and Mr.

Christopher Imbsen of Dunira Strategy, UK. Policy & Strategy – to overcome challenges before tourism industry – Focus on SAARC Region was presented by Mr. Sanjeev Chopra.

Case Studies on tourism related activities of co-operatives in Japan, Korea, Malaysia, Sri Lanka, Iran and India were presented by delegates. Networking solutions to position Tourism Co-op as a reliable and responsible brand was jointly addressed by Dunira Strategy and TICA. Open House Discussions on "co-operative forte in thematic tourism" and "networking among co-operatives for the promotion of tourism business" were held to yield recommen-

dations of the Conference. Mr. Tushar Pandey, Head of Strategic Initiatives and Advisory, Yes Bank, New Delhi made a presentation on Public Private Partnership (PPP) in tourism sector.

The closing session was addressed by the Registrar of Co-operatives, Government of Rajasthan, Registrar of Kerala and TICA Chairperson.

The Conference was attended by more than 70 delegates from India and 9 other

countries namely Iran, Italy, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, Maldives, Norway, Sri Lanka and UK.



Panelists at the concluding session of the Conference

Recommendations on Co-operative Tourism

- A vision and goal statement in the policy of the Governments and Cooperatives for promoting tourism through cooperatives is fundamental
- Incorporation of the options to institutionalize (networks and structures) tourism development through cooperatives is mandatory
- Setting the standards (domestic and international) on demand and supply for the tourism initiatives taken by cooperatives is essential
- Guidelines, certification procedures for tourism through cooperatives are important
- Strategic choices to carve out coop tourism market niche and mainstreaming the brand are prerequisites in finding a place in the market
- Model projects to illustrate best practices are valuable demonstrative tools.

2nd Training Course on Enhancement of Farmers' Income and Poverty Reduction through Co-ops

The 2nd ICA/Japan Training Course was held from 19th December 2007 to 19th April, 2008 under the training Project on "Enhancing Farmers' Income and Poverty Reduction through Co-operatives". Twelve participants from ten countries, namely, Cambodia, China, India, Indonesia, Iran, Laos, Myanmar, Nepal, Thailand and Vietnam attended the course. The course was formally inaugurated by Mr. D.K. Bhatt, Marketing Director, IFFCO, at the Fertilizer Marketing Development Institute (FMDI) of IFFCO on January 11, 2008.

The inaugural session was attended by Mr. Shil-Kwan Lee, ICA Regional Director (Asia-Pacific), Mr. Bhagwati Prasad, Chief Executive of National Co-operative Union of India (NCUI), Mr. M. Sato, Manager (General Affairs Department), IDACA, Tokyo (Japan), Mr. D. Bhattacharya, General Manager (PA&HRD), IFFCO, Dr. R.N. Kundu, Deputy General Manager (Trg.), FMDI and Mr. Prem Kumar, Consultant from ICA Asia-Pacific. Inaugurating the course, Mr. Bhatt drew the attention of everyone to the fact

that agricultural co-operatives represent the most down-trodden and under-privileged section of the society and their success would be counted on the basis of helping the members rather than making profits.

Mr. Shil Kwan Lee, ICA Regional Director (Asia-Pacific), welcomed all the participants and appreciated the Government of Japan for its continued support for the development of agricultural co-operatives in the region through ICA/Japan Training Courses. He said that this course is playing an important role for the development of co-operatives in this region.

Mr. Bhagwati Prasad, Chief Executive, NCUI, welcomed

the participants and said that the participants will find various opportunities which will enhance their knowledge. Mr. M. Sato, Manager (General Affairs Dept.), IDACA, Tokyo (Japan) expressed his happiness that the present series of ICA-Japan Training Course is proving an important tool in helping the co-operatives in Asia-Pacific region in introducing the project, its objectives, countries of participants etc. Mr. D. Bhattacharaya, General Manager (PA & HRD), IFFCO, at the end of the programme extended a vote of thanks to the dignitaries for their valuable presence in the opening session.

The participants, after completing the FMDI segment were at IRMA, Anand, where they were given classroom sessions and also contained some study visits to co-operatives. The participants then proceeded to Thailand, where they were exposed to the working of various co-operatives.

As the final leg of the course, the participants arrived in Japan and had classroom sessions at IDACA, Japan. They were also taken on field visits to various

agricultural and agriculture-related co-operatives and facilities both of JA and Zennoh in various provinces Nagano, Fukuoka, Hiroshima, etc. After useful classroom sessions and field visits, the participants were requested to prepare projects for their respective countries, which were very exhaustive. They also had an end-of-the-course evaluation session, wherein the participants came out with their views on the effectiveness of the course, etc.

Course certificates were issued to them at the concluding session, which was attended by Mr. Kasuo Tsukada, Executive Director, IDACA and Mr. Shil Kwan Lee, ICA Regional Director.



Participants of Training Course at the FMDI, Gurgaon, India

3rd 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 Co-operatives of Japan] and the Institute for the Development of Agricultural Cooperation in Asia [IDACA] carried the 3rd Training Course on "Promotion of Sustainable Enterprises for Rural Women" from 15th August to 20th September 2008 in the Philippines and Japan. The financial assistance was provided by the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries [MAFF] of the Government of Japan to conduct this program.

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

The Part-I of the Program – Comparative Study Visits – was held in the Philippines from 15th to 24th August in collaboration with the National Confederation of Co-

operatives [NATCCO], a member organization of ICA.

The Program held at IDACA from 25th August to 20th September 2008 included extensive classroom work and study visits to agricultural co-operatives in Gifu 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.

The concluding session was attended by Mr. Toshiya Yamaguchi, Section Chief, Int'l Cooperation Division, International Affairs Department,

Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (MAFF); Mr. Kenjiro Miyazaki, Managing Director of IDACA; Mr. K. Sethu Madhavan, Planning Officer/Program Coordinator, ICA-AP; and other senior officers of IDACA. Twelve women participants – two each from China, Indonesia, Malaysia, Nepal, Philippines and Thailand attended the Training Course. An end-of-the Course Evaluation was conducted at the conclusion of the Training Course.



Participants of the Training Course at IDACA

Training Project on Capacity Building for Marketing

The 1st Training Project for "Capacity Building for Marketing- 2008" was formally inaugurated on 24th July 2008 at IDACA, Japan by Mr. Yamaguchi Toshiya, Section Chief, Int'l Cooperation Division, International Affairs, Dept., Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries, Government of Japan. Mr. Kazuo Tsukada, Executive Director, IDACA and Mr. A.K. Taneja, Program Officer, ICA-AP addressed the Inaugural Session.

The Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (MAFF) of the Government of Japan funded the programme. The main objectives of the training project were as follows:

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

Nineteen participants – two each from Brunei, Cambodia, Laos, Malaysia, the Philippines and Vietnam and three from Indonesia and four from Thailand attended the

Training Programme.

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

At the Valedictory Session, Mr. Miyatake Fuminori, Assistant Director, Int'l Affairs Department, Minister's Secretariat, (MAFF), Government of Japan, Mr. Yasuyuki Kobayashi, Assistant Manager, WTO/EPA Office, Agricultural Policy Department, Central Union of Agricultural Co-operatives (JA-Zenchu), addressed the participants. The participants also held country-wise group discussions and prepared brief reports on the experiences gained by them. An end-of-the-Course Evaluation session was also held.

The 2nd ICA Japan Training Project for Capacity Building for Marketing was also held in Japan during 05-30 November, 2008. There were 20 participants from 9 ASEAN countries.

ICA Training Program for Managers of Consumer Co-ops held in Japan

The ICA Training program for “Managers of Consumer Co-ops” is being organized since 2001. Twenty-four managers who work for consumer co-operatives applied for the program in Japan.

Three participants from Vietnam, two each from India and Singapore, one each from the Philippines and Thailand had the opportunity to learn about the history of consumer cooperatives in Japan, Japan’s retail industry, store operation, joint-purchasing system, home delivery system,

merchandizing policy, sales promotion, development of PB products, quality assurance, members’ participation. They also visited co-op stores and competitors, fresh food processing centers, and sorting centers for home delivery.

All the trainees made presentations on the post training action plans in their own country, and also pledged to bring the knowledge and skills into practice in their respective consumer cooperative.

ICA Committee on Co-operative Research in Asia Pacific

The Third ICA Regional Research Conference was held at the Melia Hotel, Hanoi on 2nd December, 2008. Several researchers from India, Indonesia, Japan, Malaysia, Sri Lanka and Vietnam participated in this Conference.

Six researchers from India and one from the Philippines were awarded scholarships of US\$500 each by the Consumer Cooperative Institute of Japan. Prof. Vrij Lal Sapowadia of IIM Ahmedabad; Dr. T. Pranjoti, Secretary, NCTT, New Delhi; Dr. Rajendran of Periyar University, Salem; Dr. G.N. Saxena, Director, Cooperative Development, IFFCO, India; Mr. B.D. Sharma, Consultant, ICA Asia-Pacific; Dr. Nguyen Tac Tang, Vice-Chairman of Vietnam Cooperative Alliance; and Mr. Rajiv I.D.Mehta, Director Development, ICA-AP presented papers at the Conference.

Dr. G.N. Saxena of IFFCO was unanimously elected as the Chairman of the Research Committee for a period of four years. Mr. Kurimoto was unanimously elected as Vice-Chairman of the Committee also for a period of four years.

Mr. Kurimoto congratulated Dr. Saxena on his election and expressed his confidence that Mr. Saxena would be able to guide the committee to higher level cooperative research and that IFFCO, India would offer support to the Committees’ activities in future.

Dr. Saxena thanked Mr. Kurimoto and other researchers for electing him as the Chairman of the Committee and requested for their support on cooperative

research in the Region and the activities of the Committee.



Dr. G.N. Saxena, the newly elected Chairman of Regional Research Committee presenting the report before the Regional Assembly.

Regional Workshop for Managers on Management of Consumer Co-operatives

The 8th ICA Regional Workshop for Managers on "Management of Consumer Co-operatives in Asia-Pacific" was held on 12th-14th August 2008 at Costa Sands Resort (Downtown East) in Singapore.

The workshop was hosted by the Singapore National Cooperative Federation (SNCF) and supported by the NTUC FairPrice. Eighteen managers/members of consumer co-operatives from six countries (Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, Sri Lanka, Thailand and Vietnam) actively participated in the three-day workshop.

The workshop commenced with the welcome address by Mr. Zulkifli Mohammed, Chief Executive of the SNCF, followed by the presentation on NTUC FairPrice by Ms. Juliana Tan, Manager of the NTUC Fair Price Training Institute. Mr. Naoki Yokozawa, general manager of store

operation division of Co-op Sapporo, the second biggest consumer co-op in Japan, was invited as a resource person this year. He made a presentation on "Raising Competitiveness through Customer Service and HRD".

The main lectures from NTUC FairPrice covered four important areas of store management:

- Store Management
- Staff Training and Development
- Visual Merchandizing
- Basic Category Management.

The participants visited a hypermarket and two supermarkets of NTUC FairPrice and its competitors' stores on the second day. They learnt about practical techniques for store operation such as merchandise assortment,

display and pricing. On the last day of the workshop, the participants shared action plans for achieving their own target after the workshop.



Delegates visit a FairPrice Co-op supermarket

Study Tour to Agricultural Co-operatives in the Republic of Korea

A Joint Workshop on Agricultural Co-operatives was organized by the ICA-AP in collaboration with the National Agricultural Cooperative Federation (NACF) from 8-13 September 2008 in Seoul, Korea.

Mr. Jae Keun Park, Executive Vice-President, NACF, Korea; Mr. Shil Kwan Lee, Regional Director, ICA-AP and Dr. Chan Ho Choi spoke at the Opening Session of the workshop.

The objectives of the Workshop were to familiarize the participants from Asia-Pacific region, to the well



developed agricultural cooperative system (Agri-marketing, Banking) and role of cooperatives in the Korean economy.

A study visit was also organized to show practical farm experience in Korean villages and understand the functioning of Co-operatives. Nine participants from six countries, i.e. Cambodia, Indonesia, India, Malaysia, Myanmar, and

Philippines attended the programme. The programme was coordinated by Mr. Gwangseog Hong from NACF, Korea and Mr. Kulbushan Kukreja, Finance Officer of ICA-AP.

Workshops on University/College Co-operatives – Iran/Indonesia/India

A workshop was organized in Tehran, Iran, for setting up University/Campus co-operatives in the Islamic Republic of Iran from 5-6 May, 2008 by the Iran Central Chamber of Co-operatives with the support of other ICA member organizations in Iran and the Ministries of Co-operatives and Higher Education.

The Minister for Co-operatives inaugurated the Conference in the presence of the Deputy Ministers of Co-operatives, Deputy Minister for Higher Education, and faculty of various universities.

Dr. Y. Dongre, Prof. of Economics and Commerce, University of Mysore, India; Mr. Rajiv ID Mehta, Director-Development, ICA-AP; Mr. P. Nair, Communication & Programme Officer, ICA-AP; Mr. Mohd. Reza Ramezani, Secretary General of Iran Central Chamber of Co-operatives, Eng. Alavi; Dr. Hosseini Nia, Dr. Samari, Mr. Babak

Lalfarm, Dr. Yahoo Ghadledgi and Dr. Azizollah Tajiv Esmal'eeli, presented papers at the workshop. Dr. T. Pranjothi, Secretary General of National Council for Cooperative Training, India, sent a presentation, which was circulated amongst the delegates.

A report from the National Federation of University Co-operative Associations of Japan was also circulated and a video presentation was made. A message from Dr. Kokichi Shoji, Chairperson of the ICA Consumer Sub-Committee on University/Campus co-operatives, was read out by P. Nair on his behalf. Both Mr. Mehta and Mr. Nair mentioned that Mr. Shil Kwan Lee, the ICA Regional Director for Asia-Pacific was keen about the developments in Iran and sends his best wishes for the endeavor.

The workshop was attended by a total of 186 delegates, students, cooperative leaders from all the 31 provinces of Iran and representatives from the Ministries of Co-operatives and Higher Education. The Ministry confirmed and promised that at least four university co-operatives will be set up in each of the 26 provinces in Iran and that the Ministry and the universities will provide support in terms

of infrastructure, allocating time of the professors, etc. The workshop was concluded with the emphasis on the offer of the government and also detailed discussion on the future course of action.

Another seminar-cum-workshop was organized at Purwokerto, Indonesia hosted by the University Co-operative of Jenderal Soedirman in collaboration with the Institute of Co-operative Development Studies of Indonesia (LSP2I). There was complete support from the Ministry of

State Co-operative and Indonesian Small and Medium Enterprises. The National Federation of University Co-operative Associations (NFUCA) collaborated and participated at the event. 19 student representatives, lecturers and some co-operative academics participated, apart from representatives from Japan, Malaysia, Philippines and India. Prof. Kokichi Shoji,

Chair of the ICA Sub-Committee on University/Campus Co-operatives participated and spoke to the gathering. Mr. Yoshimitsu Nakamura of ICA and Mr. Tosaiki Wada, CEO of NFUCA participated at the conference. The conference was convened and organized by Mr. Suroto, Director of the Institute for Co-operative Study and Development.

A third workshop was organized at the Kerala Agricultural University in Thrissur, Kerala (India). Dr. T. Paranjothi, a member of the sub-committee and Secretary to the National Centre for Co-operative Training in India coordinated the workshop.

Mr. Bhagwati Prasad, Chief Executive of National Co-operative Union of India, Mr. E. Narayanan, Chairman of the Kerala State Co-operative Union, the Vice Chancellor of Kerala Agricultural University, Mr. P. Nair, representing ICA in Asia-Pacific all presented and welcomed the delegates and actively participated at the workshop. Dr. Y. Dongre of Mysore University and other academic leaders and students from Kerala, Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, etc. participated at the workshop.

The workshop was attended by almost 90 participants.



A view of the Workshop on University/College Co-operatives, Iran

Enhancing the Role of Women in Cooperative Development, China

A Seminar on “Enhancing Women’s in Role Co-operative Business” was organized by ICA-AP in Beijing, China from 23-25 September, 2008.

Exchange of information took place on day one, followed by visits to various co-operatives and related institutions on the second and the third. Mr. Li Chun Sheng, Mr. Shil Kwan Lee and co-coordinator of the programme, Mrs. Savitri Singh who gave a brief introduction of the background of the programme were the opening speakers.

The Regional Director of ICA-AP spoke of ICA’s concerns on women empowerment and gender integration in co-operatives and about problems faced by women, with “one member-one family” norm being the biggest constraint, which could only be mitigated by encouraging joint membership of husband and wife. He particularly mentioned 30 % reservation of seats for women at all levels of co-operatives in Asia Pacific region (Tagaytay Conference-2006).

Mr. Li Chungsheng, President, ICA-AP and Vice-President of ACFSMC, delivered the opening address on behalf of the ACFSMC expressing his concern on the low women participation in co-operatives, particularly China but in brief.

Dr. G.N. Saxena, Director of Cooperative Development

Division of IFFCO was there on a special mission, representing Shri S. K. Jakhar, the Chairman of IFFCO and Board of Director of ICA, and announced on his behalf that IFFCO would contribute US\$ 25000 each to China and Myanmar for the rehabilitation of earthquake affected co-operatives and presented the letter of announcement to Mr. Lichun Sheng and Mr. Lee.

During the business session the following programme was conducted:

- Presentations on “Enhancing Women’s Role in Cooperative Business”, including best practices in China by ACFSMC
- Gender integration and situation of women in co-operatives in Asia Pacific by Mrs. Savitri Singh.
- Success case/best practices presentation and information sharing by total of 15 persons, 12 cooperative leaders (11 women and 1 man) from 5 countries viz. India, Nepal, Vietnam, Philippines and Malaysia and 3 women co-operators from China.

The participants also visited the Duck Cooperative and Poultry Cooperative in Zhuozhou, Hebei Province. The programme was hosted

by All China Federation of Supply and Marketing co-operatives.



Women delegates and others pose for a group photo in Beijing



IFFCO contributed US\$ 50,000 for the reconstruction of disaster affected cooperatives in China and Myanmar

Management Capacity Building of Women for Gender Integration and Cooperative Development

The ICA Training Programme on Management Capacity Building of Women for Gender Integration and Co-operative Development was held from 7-11 January 2008 at CLT Training Centre, Bangkok. Twenty-eight women co-operative leaders and managers from all over the country attended 4 day programme.

The second Training Programme was held in Kathmandu from 28th April-3rd May 2008, in collaboration with Nepal Cooperative Federation. Dr. Suvedi, a Member of Parliament from Nepal, Mr. Deepak Baskota, Chairman of National Cooperative Federation of Nepal (NCF) and Ms. Bui Thi Lan, Country Representative, FAO, Nepal and Mrs. Savitri Singh from ICA-AP were the speakers at the opening. Ms. Archana Singh, ILO Programme Officer, Aruna Thapa, UNIFEM, Nepal, Smita Premchander from

Sampark, India and Savitri Singh from ICA-AP were the main resource persons.

These training workshops were organized with the objective of raising awareness of women and men leaders and members of cooperatives on gender issues, on the manifestations of gender bias (against women) in cooperatives, and on the effects of gender discrimination on the personal and interpersonal growth of its leaders and members as well as on the organizational development of cooperatives. It also aimed on building up the capacity of current and potential women leaders of cooperatives by equipping them with knowledge and skills on nature of co-operatives, effective and gender responsive leadership, co-operative enterprise management, coping with challenges and personal development.



Organizers of the Training Programme in Nepal

Regional Youth Conference and Second Meeting of the ICA-AP Youth Committee, Hanoi

The ICA AP organized a Youth Conference at Melia Hotel, Hanoi on 1st December, 2008, in conjunction with the Regional Assembly. The Conference was inaugurated by Dr. Nguyen Tien Quan, President of Vietnam Co-operative Alliance. More than 60 delegates from India, Indonesia, Japan, Malaysia, Philippines, Singapore, Sri Lanka and Vietnam participated. Many youth delegates from the College of Technology and Management, College of Vocational Training, Technical and Fine Art and other affiliated units of VCA also participated.

The theme of the Conference was Co-operatives and Youth Entrepreneurship. Mr. Shil Kwah Lee, Regional Director, welcomed the delegates on behalf of ICA-AP. Dr. T. Paranjothi, Secretary, NCCT, New Delhi and Dr. A. Fronda from the Philippines, Mr. Rajiv Mehta, Director Development, ICA-AP and Mr.

Teo Say Hong, Chairperson of the ICA Youth Committee for Asia and the Pacific made presentations on youth aspects and their employment. Mr. K. Limzon from the Philippines and the VCA representative acted as MCs at the Conference. The VCA also organized a cultural show for the participants.

After the Conference, the second meeting of the Youth Committee for the region was held. The meeting discussed the activities held since the last meeting in Singapore and the action plan for the coming year.

Mr. Teo Say Hong was re-elected as Chairperson of the

Committee, while Ms. Nguuyen Thi Thu Hao of VCA and Mr. Ilham Nassai from Kopindo, Indonesia were elected as Vice Chairs. Mr. Teo Say Hong also suggested that the Chairperson of the Regional Youth Committee represent the proposed global Youth Committee.



Delegates at the Regional Youth Conference

5th Regional Women's Forum and Meeting of ICA Regional Women's Committee, Hanoi

The 5th Cooperative Regional Women Forum was held on 2nd December 2008 at Melia Hotel, Hanoi, Vietnam. The theme of the Forum was "Advantage of Gender Integration in the Economy of Co-operatives in Asia Pacific". About fifty delegates (both women and men) from eight Asian countries participated at the Forum.

The Chairperson of the ICA Regional Women's Committee, Ms. Hitomi Tanaka welcomed the guests and participants of the forum and thanked them for their presence.

Dr. Nguyen Tien Quan, the President of Vietnam Cooperative Alliance delivered the opening address and declared the forum open. Mr. Shil Kwan Lee, Regional Director of ICA-AP and Mr. Ivano Barberini, the President, ICA also addressed the forum and reaffirmed their commitment for achieving total gender integration in co-operatives. The keynote speech on the theme "Advantage of

Gender Integration in the Economy of Co-operatives in Asia Pacific" was delivered by the speaker, Ms. Bui Thi Lan, Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) Representative from Nepal. She talked about the significant contribution of women as food provider for the family as well as the community.

Ms. Maria Elena Chavez Hertig, Deputy Director General of ICA and Secretary of the Gender Equality Committee read out the paper on Women's Entrepreneurship Development for Economic Growth by Ms. Marcone.



Delegates at the Regional Women's Forum

The ILO Country Director from Vietnam spoke on 'Equity and equality in co-operatives for economic development'. Ms. Fukushima from Japan and Ms. Armi Zainuddin from Malaysia presented on 'country perspective and best practices'.

The regional perspective was presented by Ms. Sally Ganibe, Executive Director of AWCF, Philippines.

The Forum concluded with the following observations:

- The Declaration of the 8th Minister's Conferences (i.e.) 4th-8th Declaration must be acted upon urgently;
- All the ICA member co-operatives, associate members, and partners must amend their respective cooperative law to accept dual membership of spouse in all type of co-operatives and especially in agri-culture co-operatives;
- Women's participation be ensured as minimum 30% in membership, management and leadership position of the co-operatives;
- All co-operatives should collect and provide information on best practices in respect of cooperative legislation;
- Capacity-building of women through various media forms be ensured by co-operatives;
- Strengthen partnership with men towards gender equality and women empowerment;
- Training programmes of co-operatives should include gender awareness and family enrichment sessions;
- The ICA should ensure a time line for the compliance of recommendations by the members in the region.

Meeting of ICA Committee on Agriculture, Hanoi

The 38th Meeting of the ICA Asia Pacific Agriculture Committee was held on 2nd December, 2008 at Melia Hotel soon after the ICAO Conference on "Protection of Small Family Farmers through Co-operatives". The Theme was: *Quality Production – Quality Food and Quality Trade through Co-operatives*. The ICAO President welcomed the participants at the inauguration. The ICAO Secretary General, addressed the delegates, followed by the keynote address by the Chairman NACF.

Case studies on best practices in 'promoting the interests of small family farmers' were presented by Mr. Ma Qi, Director of Technology Extension Centre, ACFSMC, China; Dr G.N. Saxena, Director – Cooperative Relations, IFFCO, India; Mr. Chan – Ho Choi, Korea; the Secretary General ICAO and by Dr Yehuda Paz, Chairman, NISPED, Israel. Mr. Sanjiv Chopra, Secretary Agriculture, Government of West Bengal, India, gave a presentation on 'Indian e-marketing Case Study – Safal Exchange Model'. Thirty delegates from India, Indonesia, Israel, Japan, Kuwait, Korea, Sri Lanka and Vietnam attended the Conference and the 38th ICA-AP Agriculture Committee meeting.

The Chairman of the ICA Asia Pacific Agriculture Committee, Mr. Chan-Ho- Choi steered the meeting as per the agenda and following decisions were made:

- UCCS Kuwait would be inducted as a new member of the Committee.
- A Conference would be held in early 2009 to assess the "Impact of Global Economic Meltdown on Food Security and Agricultural Co-operatives". The Conference would be a joint sponsorship of IFFCO, UCCS Kuwait and ICAO.
- Mr. Chan-Ho-Choi while relinquishing his charge of the Chairman, ICA Asia Pacific Committee on Agriculture proposed the name of Mr. N.P. Patel, Vice Chairman of IFFCO, India. All the members unequivocally

supported the proposal and Mr. Patel was elected as Chairman of ICA AP Agriculture Committee for a period of four years. Mr. Sunil Silva, General Manager, NCC, Sri Lanka was also unanimously elected as the Vice Chair of the Committee for a term of four years.

• Mr. Rajiv I.D. Mehta was asked to continue as the Secretary General of the Committee.

The meeting ended with remarks from newly elected Chairman of the committee,

Mr. N. P. Patel, who thanked Mr. Chan-Ho-Choi, Secretary General ICAO for hosting the 38th Meeting of the ICA Asia Pacific Agriculture Committee and also thanked the participants and resource persons for making impressive and thought provoking presentations.



Mr. N.P. Patel (with muffler) elected as the Chair of the ICA Regional Agriculture Committee seen with Mr. Barberini, President ICA and other colleagues.

A Special Conference on the Enhanced Role of Cooperatives in Post Economic Crisis was agreed in the first half of 2009.

Seminar on Networking of Coop Training Institutions & HRD Committee Meeting, Hanoi

The seminar on 'New Dimensions of Cooperative HRD Institutions in the Globalised Environment' and the 21st Meeting of ICA Committee on Human Resource Development (HRD) for Asia and Pacific was held on 3rd December 2008 at Melia Hotel, Hanoi. The opening session was attended by Mr. Nguyen Van Bien, Vice-President of VCA; Mr. Shil Kwan Lee, Regional Director of ICA-AP; and Mr. Bhagwati Prasad, Chief Executive of NCUI.

The following four presentations were made at the seminar:

- 'Global HRD Networking Centre' by Mr. Bhagwati Prasad, Chief Executive of NCUI, India.
- 'Networking among Cooperative HRD Institutions – Significance and Challenges' by Mr. Yuzri Suhud, Secretary General of DEKOPIN, Indonesia.
- 'Strategies for Networking' by Ms. Julia Bee Bte Ramjan, Deputy Director, Cooperative College of Malaysia.
- 'Role of HRD Institutions in Capacity Building for Good Governance and Professionalization' by Mr.

Zulkifli Mohammed, Chief Executive, SNCF, Singapore.

The seminar was followed by the 21st meeting of HRD Committee which was presided over by Mr. Bhagwati Prasad, Chairman of the Committee who welcomed the members. He stressed on the importance of Global HRD Networking (www.hrd.coop), developed and maintained

jointly by National Cooperative Union of India and Vaikunth Mehta National Institute of Cooperative Management in collaboration with the ICA. He said that the HRD portal was restructured in 11 languages and registration of experts of co-operatives also got included in the new portal. The meeting decided to continue the trend of seminars on HRD Best Practices in the 2009 also. Country reports on initiatives on HRD were presented by members from India, Israel, Malaysia and Sri Lanka. The theme of the seminar in 2009 would be "Role of HRD Institutions in Changing Economic Scenario".

Thirty seven participants from 10 countries; India, Indonesia, Israel, Korea, Kuwait, Malaysia, Pakistan, Singapore, Sri Lanka and Vietnam attended the seminar/meeting.



Mr. Shil Kwan Lee addressing the HRD committee meeting



Mr. Bhagwati Prasad addressing the HRD committee meeting

Meeting of Regional Coop Banking Association

The 10th Meeting of the Regional Cooperative Banking Association (RCBA) was held in Hanoi on 1st December, 2008.

Mr. Nguyen Xuan Hien welcomed all the members to Hanoi. In his opening speech, he said, "Although in Vietnam there has not been any cooperative banking association, we hope that in this meeting we can share valuable experience and accumulate useful information to establish a cooperative bank in the future".

In the absence of Mr. Vishwanathan, the Chairman of the committee, Mr. B.D. Sharma, Sr. Consultant with ICA-

AP read out his speech. Mr. Vishwanathan had reiterated the need for cooperation among cooperative banks at local, regional, national and global level in view of the global economic crisis.

Mr. B. Subrahmanyam, member from India, highlighted on the issues such as need for networking among cooperative banks and the need for appreciating the concept, importance in identifying the indicators and implementing corporate social responsibility.

The meeting was attended by representatives of India, Korea, Sri Lanka and Vietnam.

Meeting of ICA-AP Consumer Committee

The 42nd meeting of the ICA Committee on 'Consumer Cooperation for Asia Pacific' was held on 3rd December 2008, in conjunction with 8th Regional Assembly and 5th Cooperative Forum at Hanoi.

Fifteen participants from India, Indonesia, Japan, Singapore, Sri Lanka and Vietnam attended the meeting. Mr. Nguyen Cuu Quoc, Vice President of Vietnam Cooperative Alliance delivered the welcome speech and Mr. Jiro Ito, Chairperson of the

Committee presided over the meeting.

A special presentation on Store Development on "Saigon Co-op: The way to become Vietnam's leading retailer" was presented by Ms. Tran Thi Kim Quyen.

Another special presentation was made by Mr. Poh Leong Sim, Vice Chair of the Committee and Group Company Secretary & Director (Legal) of NTUC Fair Price, Singapore on "How NTUC Fair Price help consumers cope with the cost of living in Singapore".



Delegates at the Consumer Committee meeting

ICA-AP Standing Committee Meeting in Philippines

The meeting of ICA-AP Standing Committee (Regional Board) was held at Manila Hotel on 27th March 2008. The meeting was chaired by Mr. Li Chungsheng, ICA Vice-President and Chairman of the Standing Committee. Twenty-three persons including members, observers and ICA Officers attended the meeting.

Mr. Li Chungsheng said that this meeting was very important since it would be discussing the new Subscription Formula. Mr. Guillermo P. Cua welcomed all the Standing Committee members on behalf of NATCCO and the Cooperative Movement of the Philippines. Mr. Shil Kwan Lee presented the financial report of ICA-AP for the period January to December 2007.

Mr. Shil Kwan Lee explained in detail the proposed subscription formula and the amount to be paid by each organization. He said that the main concern of the region was the

subscription formula which is at present based on business turnover and the proposal of the Restructuring Working Group (RWG) is based on total membership. So the

subscription formula ought to be worked out very carefully. He further said that the new ICA Subscription Formula would be applicable from January 2009 onwards. The year 2008 would be a transition period.

The Standing Committee discussed various aspects of the new Membership Subscription Formula and agreed to send a Recommendation to ICA Board for its consideration. Mr. Shil Kwan Lee also informed the meeting that the current "Strategy and Priorities of ICA-AP" would be over by end of 2008 and new Strategies and Priorities for the year 2009-2012 have to be prepared.

Mr. Rajiv Mehta, Development Director of ICA-AP, presented the Strategic Plan of ICA Geneva for the year 2009-2012.



Standing committee members at the meeting in Philippines



Mr. Gill P. Cua, speaking at the Standing Committee meeting

Project on Promotion of Sustainable Model of Agricultural Co-ops for Poverty Alleviation of Farmers

The project, which is supported by AGRITERRA of Netherland, was scheduled to be operational in Afghanistan, Cambodia and Laos. However, due to procedural delays at the level of respective governments in Afghanistan and Laos, the project could be operational only in Cambodia. The principal objective of the project is to evolve a workable sustainable model of Agriculture Cooperatives by sensitizing the policy makers and farmers in selected areas of the country.

The important activities undertaken by the project in Cambodia included:

Income generating activities in target cooperatives:

Income generating activities with particular focus on women self help groups were initiated in target cooperatives to enhance the economic potential of the economy. On the basis of their understanding of the business concepts and assessing the local market potential,

these co-operatives started grocery shops selling petrol, animal feed, insecticides, pesticides etc. The total beneficiaries of this activity were 223 males and 82 females.

Entrepreneurship development programme: The project conducted entrepreneurship development programmes, as a result of which three cooperatives, viz. Somroung Premprey, Chivapheap Rong Reung Kimrieng and Bankong Angkor took initiative to start the economic activities e.g. dress making, processing paddy for consumption, rice marketing businesses, vegetable pickle making,

and rice milling businesses. The project granted 400 Euros to each co-operative as capital support. The profit earned by the target co-operatives is shared among all members.

Besides this, other prominent activities included, comprehensive capacity building programmes for co-operative leaders, Board members and members of Agricultural co-operatives in the areas of Financial Management, Marketing and Micro-finance activities



Mr. Shil Kwan Lee speaking at the National Workshop, Cambodia

Strategy for Co-operative Development and Legislation in Cambodia:

In order to evolve a National Co-operative policy and a comprehensive framework of co-operative legislation for Cambodian agricultural cooperative, a national level workshop was convened as an important intervention of the project. After extensive deliberations of two days, the

workshop produced important recommendation on:

1. National Strategy of cooperative development.
2. Suitable Framework of Cooperative legislation for Cambodia.
3. Supportive steps required to catalyze the process of cooperative development in Cambodia.

These recommendations will be helpful to the Government of Cambodia to map out future strategies for the promotion of cooperatives as an instrument of economic development.

"The Cooperative Movement is one of the largest organised segments of civil society, and plays a crucial role across a wide spectrum of human aspiration and need. Cooperatives provide vital health, housing and banking services; they promote education and gender equality; they protect the environment and workers' rights ... As models of self-help and solidarity, cooperatives understand better than most that ... progress does not happen by itself, but rather through sustained individual and collective action."

– Kofi Annan, Secretary-General,
United Nations:1997-2006

ICA's Intervention in Mapping the Scope of Co-operatives in the Economy of Maldives

In order to draw a framework for the involvement of co-operatives in conventional and innovative sectors through a set of strategic initiatives in Maldives, ICA Asia Pacific held two days brainstorming session with the officials of the Ministry of Economic Development & Trade, Ministry of Atolls and officials of co-operatives and Island Development Committees on 10th & 11th September 2008.

Maldives has recorded remarkable economic growth over the past two decades, especially compared with the rest of the South Asian countries and is on the threshold of graduating from a Less Developed Country (LDC) status to the middle income group.

Maldives economy is dominated by two sectors; tourism and fisheries generating an estimated 31 percent of GDP but with an increasing regional disparity between northern and southern atolls. Consequently, the country is experiencing rising unemployment (14%) especially among the youth (33%).

Although there is still great scope for tourism market

development, the country's product line appears vulnerable. Therefore, the concept of cooperative tourism is of great relevance.

The Director Development ICA-AP made a presentation on new perspective on co-operatives, co-op legislation and policy in the region and shared examples of a few successful co-operatives in the region. Discussions were held on "Role of Co-operatives in Economy of Maldives". The following conclusions were drawn after the discussions :

- ICA would provide technical input in rewording the law for the co-operatives.
- ICA would provide a framework for the setting up of a National Cooperative Development Centre in Male.
- ICA would provide technical support in the development of cooperative ventures of various kinds in Maldives.

The Government of Maldives will involve ICA-AP as the technical resource agency for the development of co-operatives in Maldives.

ICA/IFFCO/NCC Pilot Project on Empowerment of Youth and Women through Co-ops in Sri Lanka

The ICA-AP/IFFCO/NCC together started a Pilot Project on 'Empowerment of Youth and Women through Co-operatives' in Sri Lanka for a period of 1 Year i.e. October 2008 to September 2009.

In order to implement the project the following would be carried out as has been outlined; a Pilot district would be identified in Sri Lanka, and thereafter a format would be developed to conduct base line survey of the target groups so as to assess their needs and constraints. Once it is finalized, the coordinators and volunteers would be inducted to conduct the base line survey made by the Director Development, ICA-AP and General Manager, NCC. Following this, there would be compilation and analysis of the survey findings which has to be done by the end of December 2008. As a next step there would be thematic workshop to empower the youths and women through group based small enterprises funded by local Rural Banks which is to be done by as early as January 2009, and

finalization and appraisal of the proposals at the end of the workshop. The schedule for implementation of the proposals – would be from Feb. 2009 to Sept. 2009 and simultaneously there would be monitoring of the implementation and facilitation for the desired outcome. As the last step of the exercise, there would be workshop on the lessons learnt and strategic policy initiatives for the replication of the interventions by October 2009.

NCC has agreed to contribute local cost by providing its training premises for the induction, review and thematic workshops and local communication and transport cost for the meetings. ICA will provide technical support in the form of designing the survey formats, benchmarking, curriculum and manual for the training of trainers and members of the community and networking at international level.

IFFCO has agreed to provide the financial support to the extent of 80% of the total cost of the project.

ICA Headquarter visits ICA-AP office in New Delhi

Mr. Ivano Barberini, ICA President and Mr. Iain Macdonald, Director General, visited the ICA-AP offices in New Delhi, during the 15th Congress of the Indian Co-operative Movement, from 21 -22 January, 2008.

There were discussions on the ICA's regional activities for the year 2008. There were also discussions on the ICA's membership subscription strategy and related issues. Mr. Shil Kwan Lee, ICA Regional Director, ably supported by the staff, stressed upon the need to re-work the

membership subscription formulae, in view of the large number of small member organizations affected in the region.

Mr. Guy Malacrida, Finance Director and Mr. Jan-Eirik Imbsen, Director-Development of ICA visited ICA-AP during 15-17 January, 2008. The activity plans for the region for the year 2008 were discussed at the meeting with the Regional Director and his staff.



Mr. Ivano Barberini ICA President, Mr. Iain Macdonald, Director-General, and Mr. Hubert Thibault from DiD, Canada at the ICA-AP Office, New Delhi.



Shil Kwan Lee, RD, ICA AP, Mr. Jan-Eirik Imbsen, Director Development of ICA and Mr. Guy Malacrida, Finance Director of ICA at the planning session at ICA-AP

ICA-AP welcomes New Members from the Region to ICA

1. Fiji Co-operative Union

Vanua Houe, 5th floor
PO Box 235, Government Buildings,
Suva, Fiji
Chairman: Mr. Ilaita Uuniyam Yawa
Secretary & Registrar: Mr. Sevania Bilivalu
Tel: +679-314359
E-mail: logavakarau@yahoo.com

2. Sharjah Co-operative Society

PO Box 5435
Sharjah, United Arab Emirates
Tel: +6-5665644
E-mail: ashraft.hr@hotmail.com
HR and Admin Manager : Mr. Ashraf A. Mossaed

3. Indian Farm Forestry Development Cooperation

401-402, Laxmi Bhawan,
72, Nehru Place
New Delhi-110 019
Tel: 91-11-26481606, 26446415
E-mail: iffdc@iffco.nic.in
Chief Executive : Dr. K.G. Wankhede

We feel happy to welcome our new members and hope to work with them on co-operative development efforts in their respective countries. We are certain that the ICA will get strengthened with the association of these new members.

ICA Member Organisations in Asia and the Pacific

1. Capricorn Society Ltd., Western Australia
 2. Bangladesh Jatiya Samabaya Union (BJSU), Dhaka, Bangladesh.
 3. All China Federation of Supply and Marketing Co-operatives (ACFSMC), Beijing, China.
 4. Fiji Co-operative Union Limited, Fiji
 5. National Co-operative Union of India, New Delhi, India.
 6. National Co-operative Consumers' Federation (NCCF), New Delhi, India.
 7. Indian Farmers' Fertiliser Co-operative Ltd, (IFFCO), New Delhi, India.
 8. Indian Farm Forestry Development Coop Ltd. (IFFDC), New Delhi India.
 9. National Agricultural Co-operative Marketing Federation (NAFED), New Delhi, India.
 10. National Co-operative Agriculture and Rural Development Banks' Federation, Mumbai, India.
 11. National Federation of State Co-operative Banks Ltd., Mumbai, India.
 12. Krishak Bharati Co-operative Ltd. (KRIBHCO), Noida, Uttar Pradesh, India.
 13. National Federation of Urban Co-operative Banks and Credit Societies, New Delhi, India.
 14. Dewan Koperasi Indonesia (DEKOPIN), Jakarta, Indonesia
 15. Central Organisation for Rural Co-operatives of Iran, Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran.
 16. Central Union of Rural Agricultural Co-operatives of Iran, Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran.
 17. Iran Chamber of Co-operatives (ICC), Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran.
 18. Mollah Al-Movhedin Credit Co-operative (MAMCC) Ltd., Iran
 19. Central Union of Co-operative Societies in Israel, Tel Aviv, Israel.
 20. Co-op Israel, Jerusalem, Israel
 21. The Kibuutz Movement, Tel Aviv, Israel
 22. Central Union of Agricultural Co-operatives, (JA-ZENCHU), Tokyo, Japan.
 23. Japanese Consumers Co-operative Union (JCCU), Tokyo, Japan.
 24. National Federation of Fisheries' Co-operatives, Associations (Zengyoren), Tokyo, Japan.
 25. National Federation of Forest Owners' Co-operative, Associations (Zenmori-ren), Tokyo Japan.
 26. The Norinchukin Bank (Central Co-op Bank for Agriculture & Forestry), Tokyo, Japan.
 27. National Federation of Agricultural Co-op. Associations (Zen-Noh), Tokyo, Japan.
 28. IE-NO-HIKARI Association (Association for Education & Publications on Agricultural Co-ops), Tokyo, Japan.
 29. National Mutual Insurance Federation of Agricultural Cooperatives (ZENKYOREN), Tokyo, Japan.
 30. The Japan Agricultural News, Tokyo, Japan.
 31. Japanese Workers' Co-operative Union (JIGYODAN), Tokyo, Japan.
 32. The National Federation of University Co-operative Associations (NAFUCA) Tokyo, Japan.
 33. National Federation of Workers and Consumers Insurance Co-operatives (ZENROSAI), Tokyo, Japan.
 34. Union of Consumer Societies, Almaty, Kazakhstan.
 35. iCOOP Solidarity of Consumer Coops, Gyeonggi-do, Republic of Korea.
 36. National Agricultural Co-operative Federation, Seoul, Republic of Korea.
 37. National Federation of Fisheries Co-operative Associations, Seoul, Republic of Korea.
 38. Korean Federation of Community Credit Co-operatives (KFCCC), Seoul, Republic of Korea.
 39. National Credit Union Federation of Korea, (NACUFOK), Seoul, Republic of Korea
 40. National Forestry Co-operatives Federation (NFCF) Seoul, Republic of Korea.
 41. Union of Consumer Co-operative Societies, Safat, Kuwait.
 42. National Co-operative Organisation of Malaysia, (ANGKASA), Petaling Jaya, Malaysia.
 43. National Land Finance Co-operative Society Ltd., Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.
 44. Central Co-operative Society, Yangon, Myanmar.
 45. National Co-operative Federation of Nepal Ltd. (NCF) Kathmandu, Nepal.
 46. New Zealand Co-operatives Association, Inc., Wellington, New Zealand.
 47. National Confederation of Co-operatives Inc. (NATCCO)
 48. The Karachi Co-operative Housing Societies Union Ltd., Karachi, Pakistan
 49. Singapore National Co-op Federation Ltd., Singapore
 50. National Co-operative Council of Sri Lanka, Colombo, Sri Lanka.
 51. Federation of Thrift & Credit Co-op Societies Ltd. (SANASA), Colombo, Sri Lanka.
 52. Consumer Co-operative Societies' Federation (Sri Lanka), Colombo, Sri Lanka.
 53. National Institute of Co-operative Development, Polgolla, Kandy, Sri Lanka.
 54. Co-operative League of Thailand, Bangkok, Thailand.
 55. Sharjah Co-operative Society, Sharjah, United Arab Emirates.
 56. Vietnam Co-operatives Alliance (VCA), Hanoi, Vietnam.
- ## ASSOCIATE MEMBERS
1. National Co-operative Development Corporation (NCDC), New Delhi, India.
 2. Institute for Indonesian Co-operative Development, Studies (LSP 21), Jakarta, Indonesia.
 3. Co-operative College of Malaysia, Petaling Jaya, Selangor Darul Ehsan, Malaysia
- ## INTERNATIONAL MEMBER ORGANISATIONS
1. Association of Asian Confederation of Credit Unions, (ACCU), Bangkok, Thailand.



Co-operative History The Rochdale Pioneers

Co-operatives started out as small grassroots organisations in Western Europe, North America and Japan in the middle of the last century, however, it is the Rochdale Pioneers that is regarded as the prototype of the modern co-operative society and the founders of the Co-operative Movement.

In 1844 a group of 28 artisans working in the cotton mills in the town of Rochdale, in the north of England established the first modern co-operative business, the Rochdale Equitable Pioneers Society (photo). The weavers faced miserable working conditions and low wages, and they could not afford the high prices of food and household goods. They decided that by pooling their scarce resources and working together they could access basic goods at a lower price. Initially, there were only four items for sale: flour, oatmeal, sugar and butter.

The Pioneers decided it was time shoppers were treated with honesty, openness and respect, that they should be able to share in the profits that their customer contributed to and that they should have a democratic right to have a say in the business. Every customer of the shop became a member and so had a true stake in the business. At first the co-op was open for only two nights a week, but within three months, business had grown so much that it was open five days a week.

The principles that underpinned their way of doing business are still accepted today as the foundations upon which all co-operatives operate. These principles have been revised and updated, but remain essentially the same as those practiced in 1844.

ICA ASIA-PACIFIC: ANNUAL ACTIVITIES REPORT 2008

Published by the ICA Asia-Pacific (April 2009)

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ICA Asia Pacific Coop News

A NEWS BULLETIN OF THE INTERNATIONAL CO-OPERATIVE ALLIANCE - ASIA & PACIFIC
(For Private Circulation only) ISSN : 0971-7013 Vol. 15, No. 1, Jan. - March, 2008

2nd ICA-Japan Training Course on “Enhancing Farmers’ Income and Poverty Reduction through Cooperatives”

Under the training Project on “Enhancing Farmers’ Income and Poverty Reduction through Cooperatives”, the 2nd ICA/Japan Training Course was held from 19th December 2007 to 19th April, 2008. Twelve participants from ten countries, namely, Cambodia, China, India, Indonesia, Iran, Laos, Myanmar, Nepal, Thailand and Vietnam attended the course. The course was formally inaugurated by Mr. D.K. Bhatt, Marketing Director, IFFCO, at the Fertilizer Marketing Development Institute (FMDI) of IFFCO on January 11, 2008. The inaugural session was attended by Mr. Shil-Kwan Lee, ICA Regional Director (Asia-Pacific), Mr. Bhagwati Prasad, Chief Executive of



The participants posed for a photo at the Co-operative Audit Department, Bangkok



Participants of the training course at the ICA-AP office in New Delhi

CONTENTS

2nd ICA-Japan Training Course concludes ..	1
ICA-AP Standing Committee Meeting	2
Management capacity building of women for Gender Integration & Coop Dev.	4
International Women’s Day celebrated	4
15th Indian Co-op Congress organised	5
Science-based Agril. Transformation towards Alleviation of Hunger and Poverty in SAARC countries	6
ICA President and DG visit ICA-AP	7
ICA Geneva team visits ICA-AP	7
Researcher from DU visits ICA-AP library ...	7
Students of Co-op Banking and Management visit ICA-AP	7
5th National Fisheries Co-op Congress	8



The participants during their visit to a primary dairy co-op in Anand.

National Co-operative Union of India (NCUI), Mr. M. Sato, Manager (General Affairs Department), IDACA, Tokyo (Japan), Mr. D. Bhattacharya, General Manager (PA&HRD), IFFCO, Dr. R.N. Kundu, Deputy General Manager (Trg.), FMDI and Mr. Prem Kumar, Consultant from ICA Asia-Pacific.

Inaugurating the Course, Mr. Bhatt drew the attention of everyone to the fact that agricultural co-operatives belong to the most down-trodden and

under-privileged section of the society and their success would be counted on the basis of helping the members rather than making profits.

Mr. Shil Kwan Lee, ICA Regional Director (Asia-Pacific), welcoming all the participants appreciated the Government of Japan for its continued support for the development of agricultural co-operatives in the region through ICA/Japan Training Course. He said that this course is playing an important

role for the development of co-operatives in this region.

Mr. Bhagwati Prasad, Chief Executive, NCUI, welcoming the participants on behalf of the NCUI and the Indian Co-operative Movement said that the participants will find various opportunities which will enhance their knowledge.

Mr. M. Sato, Manager (General Affairs Department), IDACA, Tokyo (Japan) expressed his happiness that the present series of ICA-Japan Training Course is proving an important tool in helping the co-operatives in Asia-Pacific region.

Introducing the project, its objectives, countries of participants etc., Mr. Prem Kumar, Consultant, ICA-Japan Training Course, welcomed all the distinguished guests, participants and other dignitaries. He also informed about some basic disciplines to be maintained throughout the training course.

Mr. D. Bhattacharaya, General Manager (PA & HRD), IFFCO, at the end of the programme extended a vote of thanks to the dignitaries for their valuable presence in the opening session.

He also thanked all concerned organisations for their cooperation.

– Prem Kumar

ICA-AP Standing Committee Meeting held

The meeting of ICA-AP Standing Committee (Regional Board) was held at Manila Hotel on 27th March 2008. The meeting was chaired by Mr. Li Chunsheng, ICA Vice-President and Chairman of the Standing Committee.

Twenty-three persons including members, observers and ICA Officers attended the meeting.

Mr. Li Chunsheng said that this meeting was very important since it would be discussing the new Subscription Formula.

Mr. Guillermo P Cua welcomed all the

Standing Committee members on behalf of NATCCO and the Co-operative Movement of the Philippines.

Mr. Shil Kwan Lee presented the financial report of ICA-AP for the period January to December 2007. The members noted that there was a surplus of CHF 1,771 in Delhi office for the year 2007. He presented the activities of the ICA-AP carried out during October to March 2008 and planned activities for the period April to December 2008.

He also presented the budget of ICA-AP for the year 2008. He informed

the house that ICA-AP was expecting a surplus of CHF 5,416 for 2008 also.

Mr. Shil Kwan Lee explained to the meeting in detail the proposed subscription formula and the amount each organization has to be paid.

He said that the main concern of our region was the subscription formula which was at present based on business turnover and the proposal of the Restructuring Working Group (RWG) was based on total membership. So the subscription formula ought to be worked out very carefully.



Standing Committee members at the meeting in Philippines

He further said that the new ICA Subscription Formula would be applicable from January 2009 onwards. The year 2008 would be a transition period.

The Standing Committee discussed various aspects of the new Membership Subscription Formula and agreed to send a Recommendation to ICA Board for its consideration.

Mr. Shil Kwan Lee informed the meeting that the current "Strategy and Priorities of ICA-AP" would be over by end of 2008 and we have to prepare our new Strategy and Priorities for the year 2009-2012.

Mr. Rajiv Mehta, Development Director of ICA-AP, presented the Strategic Plan of ICA Geneva for the year 2009-2012.

Mr. Lee informed the meeting that it was only the initial stage of the preparation and the improved draft of ICA-AP Priorities would be presented at the next Standing Committee meeting.

Mr. Shil Kwan Lee informed the meeting that pursuant to the last RA, the 8th Meeting of ICA Regional Assembly and Cooperative Forum

would be held in Hanoi, Vietnam, from 1st to 6th December 2008. All the events in Hanoi would be organized by the ICA-AP in collaboration with the Vietnam Co-operative Alliance (VCA).

The Theme of the Co-operative Forum would be "The Coop Advantage in the Economy of Asia and Pacific".

He further said that majority of the meetings would be held in Melia Hotel and the President of Vietnam is expected to inaugurate the joint opening of 8th Regional Assembly and the Co-operative Forum on 3rd December 2008.

- K. Sethumadhavan



Mr. Gill P. Cua, speaking at the Standing Committee meeting. Mr. Shil Kwan Lee, Regional Director, ICA-AP, Mr. Li Chunsheng, ICA President for Asia-Pacific also seen next to him.

We request our readers to send us news and articles relating to Co-operatives in their Regions accompanied by suitable photographs.

The articles and pictures may be kindly sent via email at :

*nair@icaroap.coop
archna@icaroap.coop*

- Editor

Management Capacity Building of Women for Gender Integration and Cooperative Development



Participants of the National Trainers Training Programme at Bangkok

The ICA AP-CLT National Trainers Training Programme for “Management Capacity Building of Women for Gender Integration and Co-operative Development” was held from 7-11 January 2008 at CLT Training Centre in Bangkok.

Twenty-eight women co-operative leaders and managers from all over

the country attended 4 days programme. Mrs. Savitri Singh, Adviser Gender Programme of ICA-AP was the main resource person and conducted training on gender mainstreaming issue in cooperatives and entrepreneurship and leadership development of women.

This training workshop aims to assist

cooperative leaders/trainers of Asia Pacific to:

1. Raise the awareness of women and men leaders and members of cooperatives on gender issues, on the manifestations of gender bias (against women) in cooperatives, and on the effects of gender discrimination on the personal and interpersonal growth of its leaders and members as well as on the organizational development of cooperatives.
2. Build up the capacity of current and potential women leaders of cooperatives by equipping them with knowledge and skills on the following:

- ♦ Nature of Cooperatives
- ♦ Effective and gender responsive leadership
- ♦ Cooperative Enterprise Management
- ♦ Coping with challenges; and
- ♦ Personal Development

– Mrs. Savitri Singh

International Women’s Day celebrated

The Gujarat State Co-operative Union in India had organized a Conference to observe the International Women’s Day on 8th March, 2008 in the state capital Gandhi Nagar. More than 900 women cooperative members and leaders from all over Gujarat participated at the Conference.

Shri Dilipbhai Sanghani, Minister of Agriculture and Co-operation of Gujarat State was the Chief Guest and he inaugurated the Conference. Mr. G.H. Amin, Chairman of NCUI and Gujarat State Co-operative Union presided over the Conference. The participants thanked Mr. Amin for his initiatives in organizing the conference. The speakers, in general, emphasized upon importance of



Mrs. Savitri Singh speaking at the Conference

women participation in cooperatives and appealed to women to actively participate in the business of their cooperatives. Mrs. Savitri Singh, Adviser,

Gender Program of ICA, invited as Guest of Honour to deliver keynote speech on the topic “Empowerment of Women through Cooperatives”

She read out the ICA President's message on the occasion. The theme of the message was "Investing in Women for Co-operative Success". She spoke about need of positive discrimination by the government and stake holders.

If there are enabling policies and legal provisions in place, it will automatically create enabling environment for empowering women. The provision of 33% reservation for

women in local government in India is one of the best examples to quote. In the context of ICA efforts and resolutions of Tagaytay-2006, she emphasized that there should be 33% reservation for women at all levels of co-operatives especially at leadership level. Several states in India have already introduced certain percentage of reservation for women at leadership level but Gujarat State has not introduced any such provision as

yet. The participants impressed upon the Agriculture and Co-operation Minister for reservations. He promised to look into the matter and help.

The Conference provided opportunity to many village and small town women to travel to the capital city and meet many co-operative women from other parts of the state. It was a great platform for sharing and networking.

– Mrs. Savitri Singh

15th Indian Co-operative Congress organised



H.E. Smt. Pratibha Devi Patil, President of India inaugurating the 15th Co-operative Congress.

On the occasion of Valedictory Function of 15th Indian Co-operative Congress organised by National Co-operative Union of India, Narendra Modi, Chief Minister, Gujarat said that globalisation does not pose a threat but presents a good opportunity for Co-operatives to show their strength. "The Co-operatives should work with the real spirit like Gujarat where Co-operative movement is flourishing", he said. Modi further emphasised on the need for Co-operatives to come up in the field of water management because of their participatory character. In this respect, he announced that Government of Gujarat has decided to give rights to Co-operatives to manage and distribute the water of Sardar

Sarobar Dam. He further asked Co-operatives to diversify in new areas. "As service sector has potentiality of 40% growth in future, Co-operatives should show their dominance in this field", he said. Modi also asked the Co-operatives to use their property and assets multi-utilities use so that they can generate income and enhance their best image. The Chief Minister further said that hundred year old Co-operative movement have its own intrinsic strength to compete with the corporate sector. He cited example of dairy co-operatives and informed that dairy in Gujarat is very successful and gives jitters to its competitors in the market. He said that due to participatory nature of the Co-operatives they can be more in the service

sector and they have to look the ways and means to participate in venture in new areas of businesses. He urged that the application of technology will increase efficiency and transparency in the sector and apex organization should work as a facilitator in the sector.

Speaking on the occasion Mr. Balram Jakhar, Governor of Madhya Pradesh eliminated that people do not have faith in Co-operatives, and there is little participation of people in Co-operatives. "Co-operatives must introspect, identify their weaknesses and work hard to compete in the market economy", he said. He also opined that there should be less interference in the functioning of Co-operatives.

Mr. G.H. Amin, President, National Co-operative Union of India speaking on the occasion said that Income Tax concession to the Co-operatives should be given. He also said that the Co-ops must be given concessions or privileges necessary for their growth, and in this respect they should not be discriminated like private sector.

On the occasion awards were given to best Regional Institutes of Co-operative Management. The first Prize went to Regional Institute of Co-operative Management, Bangalore, second Prize went to Regional Institute of Co-operative Management, Lucknow and third Prize went to ICM, Nagpur.

– Mohan Mishra,
Director (PR), NCUI

Science-based Agricultural Transformation towards Alleviation of Hunger and Poverty in SAARC countries

An international Conference "Science-based Agricultural Transformation towards Alleviation of Hunger and Poverty in SAARC Countries" was successfully organized jointly by the Ministry of Agriculture and Co-operation, the Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR), IFFCO (Indian Farmers Fertiliser Co-operative Limited) and IFFCO Foundation during March 5 to 7, 2008 at New Delhi. Hon'ble Minister of Agriculture, Shri Sharad Pawar inaugurated the Conference and Dr. M.S.Swaminathan delivered the Presidential Address. The Conference was attended by eminent policy makers, agriculture scientists, opinion leaders and farmers from the eight south Asian countries, besides Hon'ble Minister/Secretary of Agriculture from Afghanistan, India, Sri Lanka and Bhutan. The Conference aimed at analyzing the regional agrarian situation, encompassing food insecurity and poverty, generation, sharing and use of new knowledge and technologies, including biotechnology and Information and Communication Technology and sustainable



Hon'ble Ministers of SAARC countries at the opening of the Conference

management of natural resources and to come up with implementable action plans to be operationalised nationally and regionally.

The Conference recognized the need for an institutional arrangement at the regional level to facilitate and enhance support in achieving the set goals of sustainable agriculture. It was resolved that "South Asian Agriculture and Farmers Forum" be established

soon. The Forum should include all stakeholders, namely, farmers, private, public sectors, civil society, professional organizations and academia etc. Such forums should be allowed to make own arrangements for financial viability. The Forum should also develop an "Agri-Information Network" and collectively work on coping climate changes.

The Conference also felt a strong need of having common specifications and standards for agro-inputs and produce to promote trade among the south Asian countries.

This was for the first time that an initiative of this nature was undertaken in the region, which had so much in common in terms of natural resources, traditional wisdom and socio-economic and cultural heritage. A souvenir was also released on the occasion by Shri Sharad Pawar, Hon'ble Minister of Agriculture.

The Conference provided a platform to share the valuable experiences from scientific community and farmers of these countries.

*– Dr. G.C. Shrotriya,
Advisor, IFFCO Foundation*



Prof. R.B.Singh presenting the souvenir to Shri Sharad Pawar, Hon'ble Minister of Agriculture, Govt. of India. Also seen are Dr. G.C.Shrotriya, Advisor, IFFCO Foundation and Mr. S.K.Jakhar, Chairman, IFFCO and ICA Board member.

ICA President and Director General visit ICA-AP

During the 15th Congress of the Indian Co-operative Movement, Mr. Ivano Barberini, ICA President and Mr. Iain Macdonald, Director General, visited the ICA-AP offices in New Delhi, during 21-22 January, 2008.

Discussions were held on the ICA's regional activities for the year 2008.

There were also discussions on the ICA's membership subscription strategy and related issues.

Mr. Shil Kwan Lee, ICA Regional Director, ably supported by the staff, stressed upon the need to re-work the membership subscription formulae, in view of the large number of smaller member organisations affected in the region.

– Ms. Archana Gupta



Mr. Ivano Barberini, ICA President and Mr. Iain Macdonald, Director-General, and Mr. Hubert Thibault from DiD, Canada at the ICA-AP office.

ICA Geneva team visits ICA-AP for Planning Sessions



Mr. Shil Kwan Lee, RD, ICA-AP, Mr. Jan-Eirik Imbsen, Director-Development of ICA and Mr. Guy Malacrida, Finance Director of ICA at the Planning Session at ICA-AP.

Mr. Guy Malacrida, Finance Director and Mr. Jan-Eirik Imbsen, Director - Development of ICA visited ICA-AP during 15-17 January, 2008.

The activity plans for the region for

the year 2008 were discussed at the meeting with the Regional Director and his staff.

– Ms. Archana Gupta

Researcher from Delhi University visits ICA-AP Library

Mrs. Mallika Kumar, Lecturer, Department of Commerce, University of Delhi, visited the ICA-AP Library.

She is doing research on the subject of Co-operative Banking. A regular visitor to the library for some time, she has collected a good amount of references from the library which would be useful for her research.

– Ms. Archana Gupta

Students of Co-op Banking & Management visit ICA-AP

A team of 37 persons (34 students and 3 faculty members) from the College of Co-operation, Banking and Management, Thrissur, visited the ICA-AP Library.

Dr. Vinay Kumar led the team with a view to expose students in the co-operative field.

– Ms. Archana Gupta

Fifth National Fisheries Co-operative Congress



Hon. Mr. Sharad Pawar, Minister for Agriculture, Govt. of India (3rd from left) with Mr. G.H. Amin, Mr. Pakarathi Krishna and Mr. Tariq Anwar at the opening.

The Fifth National Fisheries Co-operative Congress was organized by the National Federation of Fishermen's Co-operatives Ltd. (FISHCOPFED) on 12 February 2008 at Jawahar Lal Nehru Auditorium of NCUI, at Siri Institutional Area, New Delhi. The theme of the Congress was "Structure and Role of Fishery Co-operative Movement in the 21st Century".

The Congress was inaugurated by Shri Sharad Pawar, Hon'ble Union Minister of Agriculture, Government of India. Inaugurating the Congress, the Hon'ble Agriculture Minister congratulated FISHCOPFED for

covering over 18 lakh fishermen under the Central Sponsored Group Accident Insurance Scheme for Active Fishermen. He urged the FISHCOPFED to chalk out a road map to cover all active fishermen and women under the said scheme within a particular time frame. He asked fishermen's co-operatives to expand their role by getting more of their community insured. He also promised necessary help to the Federation for taking up more programmes for the development of fishers in the country.

Mr. Kaparathi Krishna, President of FISHCOPFED presided over the function. Mr. Krishna appreciated the

support the Government of India is offering financially and on policy matters. Mr. B.K. Mishra, Managing Director, welcomed the distinguished guests and delegates. In his speech, he highlighted the achievements of FISHCOPFED and explained the future plans for the Federation.

Mr. Tariq Anwar, Hon'ble Minister of Parliament, Mr. V. Hanumantha Rao, Hon'ble Minister of Parliament, Mr. Atul Kumar Anjan, Member, National Commission on Farmers, Mr. G.H. Amin, President, National Co-operative Union of India, Dr. Pradeep Kumar, IAS, Secretary (AHD & F), Government of India, and Mr. Devi Singh, General Manager, Oriental Insurance Company Limited, also spoke at the Congress. Mr. B.K. Mishra, Managing Director proposed a Vote of Thanks.

On this occasion, "Fishermen's Friend Awards" were given to the Oriental Insurance Co. Ltd. and the National Fisheries Development Board. Insurance awards were given to Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh and Orissa for their excellent work and contribution in the implementation of the Group Accident Insurance Scheme.

More than 600 delegates from all over the country participated at the deliberations. The congress was attended by senior officials of the Government of India, NCDC, ICA, NCUI, NABARD, NFDV, Oriental Insurance Company, member organizations and delegates from the co-operative sector.

— B.K. Mishra



A view of the Conference delegates in attendance

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Typeset & printed at Diamond Offset, HS-14,
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ICA Asia Pacific Coop News

A NEWS BULLETIN OF THE INTERNATIONAL CO-OPERATIVE ALLIANCE - ASIA & PACIFIC
(For Private Circulation only) ISSN : 0971-7013 Vol. 15, No. 2, April - June, 2008

Government – Cooperative Dialogue held in Abu Dhabi

Under the patronage of H.E. General Shaikh Mohammed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Abu Dhabi Crown Prince and Deputy Supreme Commander of the UAE Armed Forces, a "Government-Cooperative Dialogue" in conjunction with 2nd Cooperative Forum of GCC countries was jointly organized by ICA-AP and the Ministry of Social Affairs, Government of UAE at the Abu Dhabi National Exhibition Center from June 1st to 3rd, 2008 to finalize the framework for the implementation of the Declaration of 8th Ministers' Conference on Cooperative Legislation and Policy, held in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia in March 2007.

Ms. Mariam Al Roumi, Hon'ble Minister of Social Affairs, Government of UAE inaugurated the above event on 1st June 2008. Mr. Ivano Barberini, President of ICA together with the Secretary General of Gulf Co-operation Council presided over the Opening Ceremony.

The Minister of Social Affairs, Ms Mariam Al Roumi said that the government promotes co-operatives as



Mr. Ivano Barberini, ICA President, speaking at the Government-Cooperative Dialogue.

an alternative to the investor owned private sector because of the unique characteristics of the cooperatives. She said that both are integral to the foundation of economic growth and development in a country.

Madam Mariam further stressed that cooperatives should play an important role in the diverse and innovative sectors such as construction, health, education, tourism, insurance and others.

President ICA, Mr. Ivano Barberini emphasized on the harmonious relations between co-operatives and Governments and reiterated the importance of co-operatives in attaining inclusive growth of economy. Mr. Barberini referred to the advantages of co-operatives in carrying out the task of micro-

economic development with a strong flavor of social responsibility. He called upon the delegates to discuss in depth the role of co-operatives in tiding over the crisis of natural disasters, food insecurity and the



Mr. Shil Kwan Lee, Regional Director, ICA-AP, speaking at the Dialogue

CONTENTS

Government – Cooperative Dialogue held in Abu Dhabi	1
Workshop for setting up University/ Campus Co-operatives held in Iran	2
Extraordinary GA & Special Meeting of ICA-AP Standing Committee meeting	3
Won Beong Choi elected as ICA Board Member	3
Nepal Women's Training Programme	4
New President of ACFSMC	4
8th ICA Regional Assembly to be held in Vietnam	4



The Secretary General of GCC speaking at the Dialogue

threats emerging from global warming.

The Secretary-General of GCC expressed the need of enacting uniform legislation for co-operatives in the GCC nations and appreciated the role of ICA in this task.

The opening ceremony was followed by a special workshop synchronizing with the theme of the second co-operatives forum. The following four working papers were presented at the workshop:

1. Governance in Co-operatives by Mr. Sanjiv Chopra
2. Social Responsibility of the Co-operatives by Mr. Zulkifli Mohammad
3. Food Security through co-operatives by Mr. T. Haque, and
4. Multifunctionality of Co-operatives by Mr. Won-Byung Choi.

More than 110 delegates from 25 countries participated in this special event hosted by the Ministry of Social Affairs, Government of UAE.

– Rajiv I.D. Mehta.

Workshop for setting up University/Campus Co-operatives held in Tehran, Iran

A workshop was organized in Tehran, Iran, for setting up University/Campus co-operatives in the Islamic Republic of Iran on 5-6 May, 2008.

A total of 186 delegates, students, co-operative leaders from all the 31 provinces of Iran and representatives from the Ministries of Co-operatives and Higher Education, attended the workshop. The Minister for Co-operatives inaugurated the Conference, with Deputy Ministers of Co-operatives, Deputy Minister for Higher Education, and faculty of various universities.

Dr. Y. Dongre, Prof. of Economics and Commerce, of the University of Mysore, India; Mr. Rajiv ID Mehta, Director-Development, ICA-AP; Mr. P. Nair, Communication & Programme Officer, ICA-AP; Mr. Mohd. Reza Ramezani, Secretary General of Iran Central Chamber of Co-operatives, Eng. Alavi; Dr. Hosseini Nia, Dr. Samari, Mr. Babak Lalfarm, Dr. Yahoo Ghadledgi and Dr. Azizollah Tajiv Esmal'eeli, presented papers at the workshop. Dr. T. Pranjothi, Secretary General of National Council for Co-operative Training, India, had also sent a presentation, which was circulated amongst the delegates.

A report from the National Federation of University Co-operative Associations of Japan was also



Delegates at the workshop in progress

circulated and a video presentation was made. A message from Dr. Kokichi Shoji, Chairperson of the ICA Consumer Sub-Committee on University/Campus co-operatives, was read out by P Nair on his behalf. Both Mr. Mehta and Mr. Nair mentioned that Mr. Shil Kwan Lee, the ICA Regional Director for Asia-Pacific was keen about the developments in Iran and sends his best wishes for the endeavour.

While Dr. Dongre explained the practical aspects of setting up university/campus co-operatives and the ways to overcome difficulties, Mr. Nair explained about what the ICA-AP has been doing in promoting

university/campus co-ops in the region. He also explained about the situation of university co-operatives in various countries of the Region. The delegates paid great attention to the deliberations and there was very good interaction between the presenters and the delegates.

The Ministry, in their presentation, envisaged that at least 4 university co-operatives will be set up in each of the 31 provinces of Iran, totaling to 124 university co-operatives, within the year. The Ministry also mentioned the road-map to achieve this target. The Ministry has offered to provide seed money, through ministerial support and through loans from

banks, infrastructure facilities, like free space and other facilities, by the universities concerned and also offered to consider reducing the working hours of the faculty involved so that they can devote more time to the work of the university co-operatives. It was proposed that at least 2/3rd of the members of the co-operatives will be students, and giving them proper representation in the board of management. The university/campus co-operatives could conduct consumer activities, service facilities and social services to the society also.

After the workshop, the ICA team also

interacted with leaders of the various sectors of co-operatives, who were very positive in supporting university co-operative activities in Iran. The current leadership, the government and others feel that this would be an ideal way to cultivate future co-operative leaders in Iran. The students will get ample opportunity to excel in entrepreneurship and management of co-operative organizations, while studying the business operations on the basis of the seven ICA approved co-operative values.

The workshop concluded with emphasis on the offer of the government and also detailed

discussion on the future course of action. The workshop was a grand success and we at the ICA hope that this would pave way to setting up university co-operatives in several universities in all provinces of Iran.

The workshop was organized by the Iran Central Chamber of Co-operatives with the support of other ICA member organizations in Iran and the Ministries of Co-operatives and Higher Education. Mr. Mohd. Reza Ramezani and Mr. Mohd. Geramipour were involved deeply in the organization of this event.

- P. Nair

ICA Extraordinary General Assembly 2008 and Special Meeting of the ICA-AP Standing Committee held in Rome



Mr. Iain Macdonald, Director-General of ICA speaking at the General Assembly

In order to seek the approval of amended ICA Rules and ICA Bye-Laws by the General Body of ICA, an extraordinary General Assembly was held at Salone delle Fontane, Italy, Rome on 5 & 6, June 2008. More than 200 delegates from close to 70 countries attended the meeting.

A special informal meeting of the ICA Asia Pacific Standing Committee was held in Rome on 4 June 2008 a day before the General Assembly. All the members except from Nepal and Philippines attended the meeting.

Mr Li Chungsheng, President, ICA Asia Pacific in his opening remarks appreciated the role of ICA AP for pushing the agenda of Revised ICA Subscription Formula in the larger interest of the ICA Asia Pacific members.

Mr Lee presented the salient features of improved subscription formula and also explained the positive aspects of the formula. Referring to the number of primary members as the basis of new subscription formula, he elucidated the criteria and accordingly

answered questions from the members.

Mr Iain Macdonald, Director-General of ICA addressed the members of the ICA Asia Pacific Standing Committee and said that the new system in long run would definitely increase the membership base of ICA and eventually make co-operatives appreciate about the merits of active user members in the development of co-operatives.

- Rajiv I.D. Mehta.

Won Beong Choi elected as ICA Board member and Member of the Regional Board

Mr. Won Beong Choi, Chairman of National Agricultural Co-operative Federation has been elected as a Member of the ICA Regional Standing Committee (ICA Regional Board for Asia-Pacific). He has also been elected as a member of the ICA Global Board of Directors.

We wish all the very best to Mr. Choi and we hope his election to the Regional and Global Boards of ICA would enhance co-operative development efforts of ICA in our Region.

Nepal Women's Training Programme

The ICA Training Programme on Management Capacity Building of Women for Gender Integration and Co-operative Development was held in Kathmandu from 28 April – 3 May 2008 in collaboration with Nepal Co-operative Federation.

The Dr. Suvedi, a member of Parliament from Nepal, Mr. Deepak Baskota, Chairman of National Co-operative Federation of Nepal (NCF) and Ms. Bui Thi Lan, Country Representative, FAO, Nepal and Savitri Singh from ICA-AP were the speakers at the opening.

Mr. Juku Ozawa, former ICA staff and JICA volunteer was also present. Archana Singh, ILO Programme Officer, Aruna Thapa, UNIFEM, Nepal, Smita Premchander from Sampark, India and Savitri Singh from ICA-AP were the main resource persons. This training workshop aims to assist co-operative leaders/trainers of Asia Pacific to:

1. Raise the awareness of women and men leaders and members of co-operatives on gender issues, on the



Delegates of the Training Programme posed for a photograph with Mrs. Savitri Singh.

2. Build up the capacity of current and potential women leaders of cooperatives by equipping them with manifestations of gender bias (against women) in co-operatives, and on the effects of gender discrimination on the personal and interpersonal growth of its leaders and members as well as on the organizational development of co-operatives.

2. Build up the capacity of current and potential women leaders of cooperatives by equipping them with

knowledge and skills on the following:

- ◆ Nature of Co-operatives
- ◆ Effective and gender responsive leadership
- ◆ Co-operative Enterprise Management
- ◆ Coping with challenges; and
- ◆ Personal Development

– Mrs. Savitri Singh

8th ICA Regional Assembly to be held in Vietnam

The 8th ICA Asia Pacific Regional Assembly will be held in Hanoi, Vietnam in the first week of December 2008. The theme will be "Co-operative Advantage in the Economy of Asia & the Pacific."

The Regional Assembly, as we all know, deals with the development of co-operatives and detailing of operations of ICA in the region and formulates policies on major issues beneficial and relevant to the ICA and the co-operative movement in the Region. The Regional Assembly also brings together the interests of 530 million co-operators through their representatives from 60 member organizations in 22 countries.

As per the precedence, a meeting of the Co-operative Forum for Asia Pacific will also be held in conjunction with the Regional Assembly and in commensuration thereof.

– P. Nair

New President of All China Federation of Supply & Marketing Cooperatives

Mr. Li Chengyu had been elected the new President of ACFSMC. Mr. Li Chengyu had been the Governor of Henan Province in the central part of China, with extensive experiences of co-operative governance and agricultural economy development. He was also awarded many times for his contribution to the rural development program and agricultural industry progress.

Like his predecessor, Mr. Li Chengyu highly values international co-operation and co-operative collaboration activities. We are looking forward to strengthen our mutual support and co-operation in the future.

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ICA Asia Pacific Coop News

A NEWS BULLETIN OF THE INTERNATIONAL CO-OPERATIVE ALLIANCE - ASIA & PACIFIC
(For Private Circulation only) ISSN : 0971-7013 Vol. 15, No. 3, July - Sept., 2008

ICA-Japan Training Project for Capacity Building for Marketing – 2008

The 1st Training Project for "Capacity Building for Marketing-2008" was formally inaugurated on 24th July 2008 in the Conference Hall of IDACA by Mr. Yamaguchi Toshiya, Section Chief, International Cooperation Division, International Affairs, Dept., Minister's Secretariat, Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries, Government of Japan. Mr. 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). 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.

Nineteen participants – two each from Brunëi, Cambodia, Laos, Malaysia, Philippines and Vietnam and three from Indonesia and 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



Participants of the Marketing Course at IDACA, Japan

agricultural cooperatives.

Field study visits were arranged to agricultural co-operatives in Chiba Prefecture of Japan. In Chiba Prefecture, it included the Chiba Prefecture Union and JA Zen-Noh Chiba Headquarters, Observation of facilities run by JA Tomisato-shi, JA – Chiba Mirai/Briefing on organization and business activities and discussions with farmers and also observation of farmers' market run by JA-Chiba Mirai.

The participants also held group discussions (country-wise) 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

CONTENTS

ICA-Japan Training Project for Capacity Building for Marketing-2008	1
3rd Training Course on Promotion of Sustainable Enterprises for Rural Women	2
Regional Conference on Co-operative Development for South Pacific	3
Seminar/Workshop on University Coops	4
61st Coop Day in Indonesia	5
National Strategy on Coop. Development and Legislation in Cambodia	6
Seminar on Enhancing Women's Role in Co-op Business	7
ICA-AP/NACF Joint Workshop on Agricultural Cooperatives	8
8th ICA Regional Workshop for Managers on Management of Consumer Coops. in Asia-Pacific	9
ICA's Intervention in Mapping the Scope of Coops. in the Economy of Maldives	10
ICA/IFFCO/NCC Pilot Project	11
ICA-AP welcomes New Members	11

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 "Organization and Business Activities of Agricultural Cooperatives – 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 Chiba 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 Cooperatives in Japan.

At the Valedictory Session, Mr. Miyatake Fuminori, Assistant Director,

International Affairs Department, Minister's Secretariat, Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (MAFF), Government of Japan, Mr. Yasuyuki Kobayashi, Assistant Manager, WTO/EPA Office, Agricultural Policy Department, Central Union of Agricultural Cooperatives (JA-Zenchu), addressed the participants.

Besides, Mr. K. Tsukada, Executive Director, IDACA, Mr. A.K. Taneja, Program Officer, ICA-AP, also addressed the participants and congratulated them for their cooperation in successful completion of the programme. Mr. Yousuke Ota from WTO/EPA Office, JA-Zenchu also attended the concluding session.

- AK Taneja

3rd 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 3rd Training Course on "Promotion of Sustainable Enterprises for Rural Women" from 15th August to 20th September 2008 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, Indonesia, Malaysia, Nepal, Philippines and Thailand 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.

The Part-I of the Program – Comparative Study Visits - was held in the Philippines from 15th to 24th August in collaboration with the National Confederation of Cooperatives [NATCCO], a member-organization of ICA.

The Part-II of the Program held at IDACA from 25th August to 20th September 2008 included extensive classroom work and study visits to agricultural cooperatives in Gifu Prefecture of Japan.

Lecture-cum-practical field study visits assignments were combined to impart necessary knowledge to the



Women participants of the course at IDACA, Japan



Women participants at a study visit with Mr. Sethumadhavan, Programme Co-ordinator

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 19th September 2008.

The concluding session was attended by Mr. Toshiya Yamaguchi, Section Chief, International Cooperation Division, International Affairs Department, Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (MAFF); Mr. Kenjiro Miyazaki, Managing Director of IDACA; Mr. K. Sethu Madhavan, Planning Officer/Program Co-ordinator, ICA-Asia Pacific; and other senior officers of IDACA.

– K. Sethu Madhavan

ICA-AP organises Regional Conference on Co-operative Development for South Pacific

The ICA-AP, in collaboration with the Government of Fiji, the Fiji Co-operative Union and the Integrated Human Resource Development Programme (IHRDP) of the ILO in Fiji, organised a Regional Conference on Co-operative Development for South Pacific islands.

The Conference was attended by 85 delegates from all parts of Fiji, Papua New Guinea and resource persons from Korea, India, Japan, New Zealand and ICA-AP

The Conference was inaugurated by Mr. Tom Rickett, Minister for Information, Trade, Tourism and Communication, who is also the nodal Minister for Co-operatives. Mr. Rickett in his speech emphasized the importance of co-operative development for overall economic development of the country.

Mr. Sevanaia Bilivalu, Acting Registrar



An Yaqona ceremony in progress. The participants of the Regional Conference visited the Lavia Co-operative where the ceremony took place.

of Co-operatives, Fiji and Mr. Shil Kwan Lee, ICA Regional Director, welcomed the delegates to the Conference.

Technical presentations were made by

Mr. Bilivalu on Present Policy of the Government of Fiji on Co-operative Development; Co-op Policies, Legislation and Potential of Co-operatives in globalize economy by

Mr. Are Wakowako; Overall Situation of Co-operative Development in the Region by Mr. Shil Kwan Lee, ICA Regional Director. Mr. Lee also explained on the Recommendations of the 8th Ministers' Conference.

Mr. Jiro Ito, Manager, International Department of Japanese Consumers Co-operative Union and Chair of the ICA Committee on Consumer Co-operation for Asia-Pacific, talked about Consumer Co-operatives and Micro-insurance initiatives of consumer co-operatives in Japan.

Dr. Chan Ho Choi of National Agricultural Co-operative Federation, Korea on Agricultural Co-operative situation in Korea, Dr. Bhagwati Prasad, Chief Executive of National Co-operative Union of India and Chair of the ICA Global Committee on HRD, spoke on the Co-operative

Development Situation in India and also on Networking of HRD institutions globally, including the global HRD portal.

Mr. Ramsey Margolis, Chief Executive of New Zealand Co-operatives Association spoke on Dairy Co-operatives in New Zealand and the Co-operative Competitiveness in Market Economy. Mrs. Savitri Singh, Gender Programme Advisor, ICA-AP, spoke on Gender Issues in the Region, while Mr. P Nair of ICA-AP spoke on Youth and University Co-operative Development in the Region and the ICA's efforts in this direction.

Ms. Banuvane Kanmaitotoya, Permanent Secretary to the Ministry of Industry, Tourism, Information and Trade of the Government of Fiji, Mr. Agnideo Singh, Chair of the Fiji Teachers' Union Thrift and Credit Co-

operative Society and Dr. Ropate Qalo of the University of South Pacific, Suva, spoke at the Conference.

On the second day, there was panel discussions on Role of Governments in Co-operative Development and Role of Co-operative in National Economy, which was actively participated by all delegates.

At the end of the conference, Dr. Qalo has made a summary presentation of the discussions of the two days, while Mr. Are Wakowako gave a summary communiqué on the Conference.

On the 3rd day, the participants were taken on a study visit to various co-operatives (the Fiji Teachers' Union Thrift and Credit Co-operative Society, MTW Contractors' Co-operative Society and Lovia Co-operative Society Ltd.

- P. Nair

Seminar-cum-Workshop on University Co-operatives

A Seminar was organised 7-8 July, 2008, at the Queen Garden Hotel, Purwokerto, Central Java, Indonesia. A meeting of the office bearers of the ICA Sub-Committee on University/Campus Co-operatives for Asia-Pacific was also organised at the same venue.

The activities were hosted by the University Co-operative of Jenderal Soedirman (KopKUN), in collaboration with the Institute of Co-operative Development Studies of Indonesia (LSP2i), the Youth Co-operative of Indonesia (KOPINDO) and ICA Regional Office for Asia and Pacific with support from the Ministry of State Co-operative and Indonesian Small and Medium Enterprises and National Federation of University Co-operative Associations (NFUCA) of Japan.

The Seminar was attended by university co-operatives from all over Indonesia and representation from several organizations.

About 19 students of University Co-



Delegates at the University Seminar/Workshop in Purwokerto

op (Kopma's), 4 Lecturers/Employees of Co-op (Kopdos's/Kopkar's), and 2 Co-operative of Academics (KOSIKA) from Indonesia and representatives from other countries like Japan, Malaysia, Philippine and India. The Seminar was inaugurated by M. Arsad Dalimunthe, Head of University

Co-operative of Unsoed (KopKUN). Mr. Ilham Nasai, Head of Kopindo, Prof. Nurul Anwar, Vice-Rector of Jenderal Soedirman University (Unsoed), Drs. Didik Dwiyanto, Assistant I of Banyumas Regent, Prof. Kokichi Shoji, Chairperson of the ICA-AP Consumer Sub-Committee on



Mr. Shil Kwan Lee with the President of Indonesia and his wife

University/College Co-operatives.

Mr. Yoshimitsu Nakamura, Adviser, ICA-AP and Dr. M. Taufik, Expert, Co-operative and Small Medium Enterprises Ministry of Indonesia also spoke at the opening session.

In his speech, Prof. Kokichi Shoji hoped that the seminar will be a good opportunity to create awareness on the concept of University Co-operatives. He also hoped that university co-operatives in Indonesia can give support and assistance to the development of university co-operatives in other parts of Asia. Mr. Yoshimitsu Nakamura read out a message from the Regional Director of ICA-AP.

The main speaker for the first day was Drs. Djabarudin Djohan, Head of LSP2i (Institute for the Study on and Indonesian Co-operative Development), who explained the strategy for university co-operative development.

Mr. Thosiaki Wada, CEO of National Federation of University Co-op Associations (NFUCA) Japan, spoke about university co-operative development in Japan.

Drs. Ashafagani, Deputy Assistant on Human Resources of State Co-operative Ministry and Small Medium Enterprises of Indonesia, spoke about the strategy and development policy of KOSICA.

On the second day, M. Arsad Dalimunthe SE, Chairman of KopKUN

and Agus S Chairman of Gajah Mada Student University Co-operative, Jogja spoke at the seminar.

The Seminar closed with the summing up by Mr. Suroto, Director of

Institute for Co-operative Study and Development (LePPeK).

Mr. Suroto explained the history of Indonesia University co-operative for the last 30 years or so.

He hoped that after attending this seminar, the students associated with the University co-operatives in Indonesia will have good knowledge about the organising and working of university co-operatives.

- Suroto

61st Cooperative Day Celebration in Indonesia



Mr. Shil Kwan Lee, Mr. Rajiv Mehta, Prof. Ali Hassan, and Dr. Ali Baharum at the Co-operative Day celebrations

Dewan Koperasi Indonesia (DEKOPIN) the National Cooperative Council of Indonesia celebrated 61st Cooperative Day on 12 July 2008 coinciding with the birth anniversary of the foster father of cooperatives in Indonesia Dr Mohammad Hatta. The DEKOPIN has 56 cooperative federations and 33 state cooperative councils as its primary members who represent the entire cooperative movement of the country. The main function was held at the National Stadium in Jakarta where more than 30,000 cooperators from all over the country had assembled to listen to the historic

speech of the President of Republic of Indonesia. The celebration was marked by the presence of Minister Incharge for the development of cooperatives in the Republic of Indonesia. More than 200 performers presented patriotic, cultural and adventurous show. The celebration was also marked by a Special Conference on Consumer Cooperatives, Youth Cooperatives and a National Trade Exhibition. Regional Director, ICA-AP, Mr Shil Kwan Lee alongwith the Director of Development in the Region, Mr Rajiv Mehta attended the celebrations.

- Rajiv I.D. Mehta

National Workshop on Strategy for Cooperative Development and Legislation in Cambodia



Participants of the workshop pose for a group photo

The workshop was organized on 21-22 August, 2008 by the Department of Agricultural Extension (DAE), Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (MAFF) and supported by ICA-AP, AGRITERRA and Singapore National Cooperative Federation (SNCF). The important aspect of this workshop was that it was organized as a part of ICA-AP project interventions for promoting and strengthening a sustainable model of agricultural cooperatives for last three years in Cambodia.

The Workshop was inaugurated by H.E. Permanent Secretary of State (MAFF) on behalf of H.E. Chan Sarun, Minister of MAFF. Inaugurating the workshop, the Permanent Secretary of MAFF observed that, promotion of cooperatives being one of the priorities of the Government, this workshop would help in providing impetus to the cooperative development process. Mr. SO Khan Rithykun, Director, DAE, in his welcome address highlighted the importance of workshop for promotion of agricultural cooperatives and appreciated the support of ICA-AP in the region, which would form bases of future cooperative

strategy. Mr. Shil Kwan Lee, Regional Director, in his remarks, expressed appreciation of DAE support to the ICA-AP project, which will go a long way in promoting cooperatives as an integral part of Cambodian economy particularly in the sphere of agricultural development.

The main objective of workshop was to evolve a suitable framework of cooperative development and



Mr. Shil Kwan Lee speaking at the National Workshop in Cambodia

legislation in Cambodia. Nearly seventy participants from various Ministries of Government of Cambodia, NGOs, Agricultural Cooperatives, Academicians and Researchers participated in the workshop.

The workshop deliberations were facilitated by Mr. B.D. Sharma, Sr. Consultant, and Ms. Archana Gupta, Librarian, ICA-AP. Inputs to the workshop were given by experts from six countries, namely, Mr. Matsuda Masahiro, General Manager, JA Zenchu, Japan, Mr. Pun Shyh Gang, Member Executive Council, SNCF, Singapore, Dr. Vu Van Dzong, Director General (IR), VCA, Vietnam, Mr. Guil Cua, Member of National Congress, Philippines, Mr. Chan-Ho Choi, General Manager, NACF, South Korea and Mrs. Anita Manchanda, Executive Director, NCU, India.

Based on their country experiences, the theme of the presentations by international experts was important parameters of strategy of cooperative development and broad framework of cooperative legislation for Cambodia.

After extensive deliberations of two days, the workshop produced important recommendation on:

1. National strategy of cooperative development
2. Suitable framework of cooperative legislation for Cambodia
3. Supportive steps required to catalyze the process of cooperative development in Cambodia

These recommendations will be helpful to the Government of Cambodia to map out future strategies for the promotion of cooperatives as an instrument of economic development.

– Ms. Archana Gupta

Seminar on Enhancing Women's Role in Co-op Business



Women delegates and others posed for a group photo in Beijing

The ICA-AP Seminar on "Enhancing Women's Role in Co-operative Business" was held in Beijing, China from 23-25 September, 2008. The programme was hosted by All China Federation of Supply and Marketing co-operatives. A total of 15 persons, 12 cooperative leaders (11 women and 1 man) from 5 countries namely-India, Nepal, Vietnam, Philippines and Malaysia and 3 women co-operators from China attended the programme.

The objective of this program was to provide a common meeting ground to Asian cooperative 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 duration of the programme was 3 days. One day was devoted to a seminar on exchange of information and 2 days for visits to co-operatives and related institutions.

The speakers at the opening were Mr. Li Chun Sheng, Mr. Shil Kwan Lee and Mrs. Savitri Singh. At the out set, Mrs.

Savitri Singh, co-coordinator of the programme gave a brief introduction of the back ground of the programme and the activities of next 3 days.

The Regional Director of ICA-AP welcomed the participants and



Dignitaries at the Seminar in Beijing. Mr. Lichun Sheng, Mr. Shil Kwan Lee, Dr. G.N. Saxena, Mrs. Savitri Singh, etc.

briefed them about ICA's concerns on women empowerment and gender integration in co-operatives. He also talked about problems faced by women and possible measures taken by ICA-AP to address and remove such problems. He particularly mentioned about legal provision of

"one member-one family" norm which is the biggest constrain faced by women. He expressed that this issue should be addressed and joint membership of husband and wife should be encouraged to enhance women's participation, especially in agricultural co-operatives. He also informed the participants about various capacity building activities of ICA-AP and particularly talked about Tagaytay Conference-2006 and its recommendations for 30% reservation of seats for women at all levels of co-operatives in Asia Pacific region.

Mr. Li Chunsheng, President, ICA-AP and Vice-President of ACFSMC welcomed the participants and delivered the opening address on behalf of the ACFSMC. He expressed his concern on the low participation of women in co-operatives and said that ICA will take appropriate measures to encourage gender integration in co-operatives in the

region. He also briefly talked about the lower participation of women in co-operatives in China and mentioned that he is aware of the benefits which women can derive from co-operative business.

Dr. G.N. Saxena, Director of Co-operative Development Division of

IFFCO was also present at the occasion. He was there on a special mission, representing Shri Surinder Kumar Jakhar, the Chairman of IFFCO and Board of Director of ICA. IFFCO wished to contribute to the rehabilitation of earthquake effected cooperatives in China and Myanmar. Dr. Saxena delivered message of Mr. Jakhar and announced that IFFCO will contribute US\$ 25000 to each country. He presented the letter of announcement to Mr. Lichun Sheng and Mr. Lee.

During the business session the following programme was conducted:

- Presentation on the theme: Enhancing Women's Role in Co-

operative Business, including best practices in China by ACFSMC

- Gender integration and situation of women in co-operatives in Asia Pacific by Mrs. Savitri Singh
- Success case/best practices presentation and information sharing by participants from following countries: India, Nepal, Vietnam, Philippines, Malaysia.

A panel discussion was held on the theme and participants interacted with each other for exchange of information.

The participants visited the Duck Cooperative in Zhuozhou, Hebei Province and a Poultry Cooperative in

Zhuozhou, Hebei Province. The women farmers were quite active in these co-operatives as the business of the co-operative is women centric. Generally, most of the cattle rearing and duck and chicken rearing work is done by women. The Cooperative in Zhuozhou, Hebei Province is headed by a women Chairperson, Ms. Wang. The Vice-Chairperson of the Hebei Province Supply and Marketing Co-operative is also a woman, Ms. Peng. The group had good interaction with the women and men leaders of these cooperatives and exchanged business information.

– Mrs. Savitri Singh

ICA-AP/NACF Joint Workshop on Agricultural Cooperatives



Participants of the workshop at a photo op in Seoul, Korea.

A Joint Workshop on Agricultural Cooperatives in Korea was organized by the ICA-AP in collaboration with National Agricultural Cooperative Federation (NACF) from 8-13 September 2008 in Seoul, Korea.

Mr. Jae Keun Park, Executive Vice-President, NACF Korea, Mr. Shil Kwan Lee, Regional Director, ICA-AP and Dr. Chan Ho Choi spoke at the Opening Session.

The objectives of the Workshop were to familiarize the participants from Asia-Pacific region, to the well developed agricultural cooperative

system (Agri-marketing, Banking) and role of cooperatives in the Korean economy.

A study visit programme was also organized to show real life farm experience in (Won Pyeong village) Korean villages and understand the functioning of Cooperatives. Nine participants from six countries, i.e. Cambodia, Indonesia, India Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines attended the programme. The programme was coordinated by Mr. Gwangseog Hong from NACF, Korea and Mr. Kulbhushan Kukreja, Programme Coordinator of ICA-AP

– Kulbhushan Kukreja



Participants of the workshop at a study visit in Seoul, Korea.

8th ICA Regional Workshop for Managers on Management of Consumer Co-operatives in Asia-Pacific in Singapore

The 8th ICA Regional Workshop for Managers on "Management of Consumer Co-operatives in Asia-Pacific" was held on 12-14 August 2008 at Costa Sands Resort (Downtown East) in Singapore. Hosted by Singapore National Co-operative Federation (SNCF) and supported by NTUC FairPrice.

Eighteen managers/members of consumer co-operatives from six countries (Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, Sri Lanka, Thailand and Vietnam) actively participated in the three-day workshop.

The workshop commenced with the welcome address by Mr. Zulkifli Mohammed, Chief Executive of the SNCF, followed by the presentation on NTUC Fair Price by Ms. Juliana Tan, Manager of the NTUC FairPrice Training Institute.

Mr. Naoki Yokozawa, general manager of store operation division of Co-op Sapporo, the second biggest consumer co-op in Japan, was invited as a resource person this year. He



Participants of the Regional workshop at a photo op.

made a presentation on "Raising Competitiveness through Customer Service and HRD".

All the participants got to experience the difficulty to keep smiling for 60 seconds, when he introduced "60-second smile" training for customer service at Co-op Sapporo.

The main lectures from NTUC FairPrice covered four important areas of store management:

- Store Management
- Staff Training and Development
- Visual Merchandizing
- Basic Category Management.

Ms. Juliana Tan clarified several topics on store operation.

The participants visited a hypermarket and two supermarkets of NTUC FairPrice and its competitors' stores on the second day. They learnt about practical techniques for store operation such as merchandise assortment, display and pricing.

On the last day of the workshop, the participants shared action plans for achieving their own target after the workshop.

Some participants mentioned about improvement in customer service, brand-image management and inventory management, while they also pledged to create "hot spots" at their stores.



Delegates visit a FairPrice Co-op supermarket.

- Yoshimitsu Nakamura

ICA's Intervention in Mapping the Scope of Cooperatives in the Economy of Maldives

In order to draw a framework for the involvement of cooperatives in conventional and innovative sectors through a set of strategic initiatives in Maldives, ICA Asia Pacific held two days brainstorming with the officials of the Ministry of Economic Development & Trade, Ministry of Atolls and officials of co-operatives and Island Development Committees on 10 & 11 September 2008.

Maldives has recorded remarkable economic growth over the past two decades, especially compared with the rest of the South Asian countries and is on the threshold of graduating from a Less Developed Country (LDC) status to the middle income group.

Annual average Gross Domestic Product (GDP) growth has remained 7.9 percent during the last 15 years. This level of growth is all the more impressive given the fact that Maldives lacks the resource endowments, scale of economies, and geographical diversity.

Besides the economic achievements the country has an impressive literacy rate coupled with low maternal and child mortality, declining poverty levels, and constant improvements in service delivery during the past decade. Poverty level has dramatically declined in the Maldives from 23 percent to 8 percent.

Maldives economy is dominated by two sectors; tourism and fisheries generating an estimated 31 percent of GDP but with an increasing regional disparity between northern and southern atolls. Consequently, the country is experiencing rising unemployment (14%) especially among the youth (33%). There are 87 tourist island with about 650,000 visitors annually.

Tourism accounts for 23 percent of GDP owing to serving only high end tourists but the growth and



Mr. Rajiv I.D. Mehta, Development Director, ICA-AP with the Registrar and various officials of the ministries.

development strategy needs to be reviewed to expand the coverage. Although there is still great scope for tourism market development, the country's product line appears vulnerable. Therefore, the concept of cooperative tourism is of great relevance. Fisheries accounts for 8 percent of GDP but with serious apprehensions on possible decline in the fish catch especially that of native yellow fin tuna.

There is a good scope to expand the cooperative base in Maldives particularly in agriculture related activities and non-conventional activities like school, college students' coops, public infrastructure maintenance cooperatives, environment and health management etc.

Most of the domestic agriculture demand is met through imports; the ratio of food imports to domestic food production is 10:1. While some islands contain sufficient soil and water conditions to support increased agricultural production for certain horticultural products, fishing is still seen as the traditional livelihood opportunity.

The Director Development ICA-AP made a presentation on new perspective on cooperatives, co-op legislation and policy in the region and shared examples of a few successful cooperatives in the region.

Discussions were held on "Role of Cooperatives in Economy of Maldives"

The following conclusions were drawn after the discussions:

1. ICA will provide technical input in rewording the law for the cooperatives.
2. ICA will provide a framework for the setting up of a National Cooperative Development Centre in Male.
3. ICA will provide technical support in the development of cooperative ventures of various kinds in Maldives.
4. Government of Maldives will involve ICA-AP as the technical resource agency for the development of cooperatives in Maldives.

– Rajiv ID Mehta

ICA/IFFCO/NCC Pilot Project on Empowerment of Youth and Women through Cooperatives in Sri Lanka



The ICA/IFFCO/NCC preparatory meeting in progress

The ICA-AP/IFFCO/NCC together have started a Pilot Project on Empowerment of Youth and Women through Cooperatives in Sri Lanka for the duration of 1 Year from October 2008 to September 2009.

The preparatory meeting was held in Colombo at the NCC on 12 & 13 September 2008.

The following steps have been initiated to implement the project:

1. Pilot districts identified in Sri Lanka,
2. Format to conduct base line survey of the target groups to assess their needs and constraints finalized,
3. Induction of survey coordinators and volunteers to conduct the base line survey made by the Director Development, ICA-AP and General Manager, NCC,
4. Compilation and analysis of the survey findings to be done by end of December 2008,
5. Thematic workshop to empower the youths and women through group based small enterprises funded by local Rural Banks –

6. Early January 09, Finalization and appraisal of the proposals at the end of the workshop,
7. Implementation of the proposals – February to September 09,
8. Monitoring of the implementation and facilitation for the desired success,
9. Workshop on the lessons learnt and strategic policy initiatives for the replication of the interventions – October 09.

NCC has agreed to contribute local cost in the form of providing its training premises for the induction, review and thematic workshops and local communication and transport cost for the meetings equivalent.

ICA will provide technical support in the form of designing the survey formats, benchmarking, curriculum and manual for the training of trainers and members of the community and networking at international level.

IFFCO has agreed to provide the financial support to the extent of 80% of the total cost of the project.

– Rajiv I.D. Mehta

ICA-AP welcomes New Members to the ICA

1. Fiji Co-operative Union

Vanua Houe, 5th floor
PO Box 235,
Government Buildings,
Suva, Fiji
Chairman:

Mr. Ilaita Uuniyam Yawa
Secretary & Registrar:
Mr. Sevania Bilivalu
Tel: +679-314359
E-mail: logavakarau@yahoo.com

2. Sharjah Co-operative Society

PO Box 5435
Sharjah, United Arab Emirates
Tel: +6-5665644
E-mail: ashraft.hr@hotmail.com
Mr. Ashraf A. Mossaed,
HR and Admin Manager

We feel happy to welcome our new members and hope to work with them on co-operative development efforts in their respective countries. We are certain that the ICA will be stronger with the association of these new members.

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ICA Asia Pacific Coop News

A NEWS BULLETIN OF THE INTERNATIONAL CO-OPERATIVE ALLIANCE - ASIA & PACIFIC
(For Private Circulation only) ISSN : 0971-7013 Vol. 15, No. 4, Oct. - Dec., 2008

8th ICA Asia Pacific Regional Assembly in Hanoi

The 8th ICA-AP Regional Assembly was held at Melia Hotel in Hanoi, Vietnam on 5th December 2008. The meeting of the Regional Assembly was chaired by Mr. Li Chunsheng, Chairman of Regional Assembly. 195 participants from 24 countries and three international organizations attended the meeting.

The joint opening ceremony of 2008 Regional Assembly and Coop Forum was held at My Dinh National Convention Center on 3rd December which was attended by more than 900 people. The inaugural address was delivered by H.E. Nguyen Phu Trong, Chairman, National Assembly of Socialist Republic of Vietnam.

The minutes of the last meeting held in Colombo, Sri Lanka on 18th August 2006 were confirmed. According to the new rules of ICA approved by the Special General Assembly at Rome on 6th June 2007, ICA-AP also revised its rules. The Regional Assembly unanimously approved the new rules of ICA-AP. The Regional Assembly also approved the constitution of the ICA-AP Committees on Cooperative



Mr. Li Chun Sheng, President ICA-AP presenting a memento to Dr. Nguyen Tien Quan, President VCA



A cultural presentation at the Opening of the Regional Assembly

Research and University/Campus Cooperatives.

The Regional Director, Mr. Shil Kwan Lee, presented the account of the ICA-AP activities carried out from January to November 2008 and also presented the financial report for the period January to September 2008. The Regional Director placed before the house the ICA-AP Strategic Plan/Multi-Annual Budget for 2009-2012 and the Work Plan for 2009 which was unanimously approved.

The proposal of All China Federation of Supply and Marketing Cooperatives (ACFSMC) to host the next meeting of ICA-AP Regional Assembly in China in 2010 was accepted by the house.

Pursuant to the termination of the tenure of ICA-AP erstwhile Standing Committee and now the Regional Board, following were elected to the ICA-AP Board for the period 2009-2012.

CONTENTS

8th ICA Asia Pacific Regional Assembly in Hanoi	1
Brief on the Office Bearers of ICA-AP Regional Board	2
ICA-AP organises 5th Coop. Forum	3
Gratitude	4
5th ICA Regional Women's Forum	5
Regional HRD Committee meeting	6
10th Meeting of the RCBA	6
38th meeting of the ICA-AP Agriculture Committee	7
ICA Regional Youth Conference and 2nd meeting of Regional Youth Committee ...	8
ICA Committee on Coop. Research	8
University/Campus Cooperative Committee meeting	9
ICA Regional Consumer Committee meets	10
ICA Training Program for Managers of Consumer Co-ops in Japan	10
International Conference on Coop Tourism ..	11
Condolences	12
ICA-AP Work Plan for 2009	12

List of Members elected to the ICA-AP Board in Hanoi, Vietnam

Sl.	Name	Country	Title	Position in the Board
1.	Mr. Li Chunsheng	China	Vice President, ACFSMC	Chairperson
2.	Mr. G.H. Amin	India	President, NCUI	Vice Chairperson
3.	Ms. Hitomi Tanaka	Japan	Board of Director, JCCU	Vice Chairperson
4.	Mr. Adi Sasono	Indonesia	President, DEKOPIN	Member
5.	Mr. Won-Byung Choi	Korea	Chairman, NACF	Member
6.	Dr. Mohd. Ali Baharum	Malaysia	Dy. President, ANGKASA	Member
7.	Mr. Guillermo P. Cua	Philippines	Congressman, NATCCO	Member
8.	Mr. Chan Tee Seng	Singapore	Chairman, SNCF	Member
9.	Mr. Bandupala Ranaweka	Sri Lanka	Chairman, NCC	Member
10.	Mr. Mongkalut Pukanut	Thailand	Chairman, CLT	Member
11.	Dr. Nguyen Tien Quan	Vietnam	President, VCA	Member
12.	Mr. Teo Say Hong	Singapore	Youth Representative, SNCF	Member

Brief on the Office Bearers of ICA-AP Regional Board



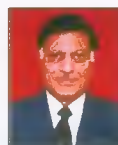
Mr. Li Chunsheng -
China - President

Mr. Li Chunsheng, Vice President of All China Federation of Supply and Marketing Cooperatives (ACFSMC) got elected as the Chairperson of ICA Regional Board of the Asia Pacific region for second term of four years on 6th December 2008 at Hanoi. Prior to joining ACFSMC in 1995, Mr. Li Chunsheng had worked long at the Helihe farm in Heilongjiang Province, Ministry of Forestry and the State Council in China. He was elected as the Vice President of ACFSMC in 2000 and re-elected in 2005.

At present, his responsibilities in ACFSMC include supervision of Cooperative Guidance Department, Department for Science, Technology, Education and Industry, International Cooperation Department and China Chamber of International Commerce SMC Sub-chamber, which means he takes charge of a wide range of cooperative works, inter-alia the reform and growth of affiliated enterprises and primary cooperatives, guild development, industrial planning and guidance, cooperative legislation, scientific research and innovation, training and education, and international relation, cooperation and trade promotion.

Mr. Li Chunsheng expressed his gratitude to all the members of the ICA AP for having reposed full confidence and trust in him by electing him as the President of the ICA Regional Board for

the second term. While committing himself fully for the job he referred to the global economic turmoil that would make his second term more challenging and arduous. He therefore called for greater cooperation among the cooperatives to surmount the insurmountable problems and come out as winner at the end of the ongoing crisis.



Mr. G.H. Amin - India

Mr. G.H. Amin, the President of National Cooperative Union of India became the ICA Regional Board Member for the Second time on 6th December 2008 and got elected as the Vice-Chairperson of the ICA Regional Board. An advocate by profession, Mr. Amin has been associated with the Cooperative Movement for more than 30 years. Presently, he is the President of National Cooperative Union of India (NCUI), which is the apex body of the Indian Cooperative Movement. He is also the Vice-President of the National Federation of State Cooperative Banks, Chairman of Gujarat State Cooperative Union and serving on various State Cooperative Banks, District Cooperative Banks as well as multi-state cooperative institutions.

Mr. Amin who is the Senior Advocate of Gujarat High Court and former President of the Gujarat State Bar Council was awarded Sardar Patel International Award and Vaikunth Mehta International Award in Cooperative Management. He was also felicitated

by International Association of Education for World Peace by UNO and UNESCO. Mr. Amin has authored a book titled "The Gujarat State Cooperative Societies Act 1961 and Civil Procedure Code".

Mr. Amin expressed his happiness on getting elected as member of the Regional Board of ICA for the Asia Pacific region and thanked the members of the Regional Board for electing him as the Vice Chairperson of the Regional Board.



Ms. Hitomi Tanaka -
Japan

Ms. Hitomi Tanaka, Board Member of Japanese Consumers' Cooperative Union (JCCU), got elected for the second term as the Board Member in the ICA Regional Board for Asia and the Pacific and became the Vice-Chairperson of the Regional Board by virtue of being the only woman member in the Regional Board. Ms. Tanaka comes from Saitama Coop; one of the JCCU member coops in Japan and for more than 6 years has served as a member of the board of Saitama Coop, Coop Net Association and JCCU. The JCCU is the national organization of consumer cooperatives in Japan with more than 600 coop societies and 20 million individual members. Ms. Tanaka was elected as JCCU board member in 2007.

Ms. Tanaka expressed her happiness and pledged to serve the members of the ICA AP with full commitment in the times of economic recession.

ICA-AP organises the 5th Cooperative Forum at Hanoi



Delegates at the joint inauguration of the Regional Assembly and Coop. Forum

The joint opening of ICA Asia Pacific Regional Assembly and Coop Forum was done by H.E. Mr Nguyen Phu Trong, Hon'ble Chairman of the National Assembly of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam on 3rd December 2008 at My Dinh National Convention Centre, Hanoi in Vietnam.

The following distinguished experts addressed the forum as under:

1. Mr. Ian Macdonald, Director General of ICA and Mr Chan Tee Seng, Chairman of Singapore National Cooperative Federation of Singapore presented their papers on "Co-operative Advantage in the Global Economic Crisis".
2. Mr. Paul Hazen, CEO and President of NCBA, USA and Dr Sanjiv Chopra, Secretary of Agriculture, Government of West Bengal, India presented their papers on "Enhancing Management Capacity of Cooperatives".
3. Mr. Bruno Roelants, Secretary General, CICOPA and Mr Chan-Ho-Choi, General Manager, International Department, NACF, Korea presented their papers on "Co-operative Advantages in

Ensuring Inclusive Growth of Economy".

4. Mr. Jito Ito, Manager, International Relations at the JCCU, Tokyo, Japan made his presentation on "Business Networking to position Co-operatives as a Preferred Brand".

The panelists at the forum synthesized and discussed the relevance and critical significance of values and ethics for economic life and economic success that were readily apparent to all. It was clear that values could and should be linked with business efficiency and competitive business activity. Equally, social responsibility was clearly recognized as a vital component of all economic activities.

It was felt that the cooperators were facing a challenging reality: on one hand, the cooperatives have always been the businesses with values, ethical systems linked to successful enterprises and on the other, cooperatives have always been the believers that social responsibility is central to all their activities. Cooperative democracy and responsible leadership have always been characteristic of its activities.

The forum also discussed the relevance of cooperative approach, its economic

and institutional activity for the world as a whole, the world beyond our own borders.

Several avenues of approach were presented, which included:

1. Reaffirming and deepening our commitment to our cooperative values and renewed emphasis on their relevance to our business activities.
2. Strengthening our cooperation between cooperatives at all levels – national, regional and international.
3. Strengthening the ICA as our agent and organ of global cooperation and as the guardian and maintainer of our cooperative values and principles.
4. Strengthening and expanding our education, training, research and program development activities – again at national, regional and global level.
5. Equally we must strengthen cooperatives as effective businesses, able to compete equally with the other business frameworks, particularly in this time of crisis.
6. We, the cooperatives turn to the leaders of our regiment of world and ask that they recognize the important and special role, which cooperatives can play in the face of today's crisis. This is particularly true in regard to the great masses of the population, which will of course be hit hardest by the results of today's crisis.
7. We call on them to ensure that a level playing field exists for cooperatives as for all other formations. As Asia Pacific region grows in global significance, so do we, the

cooperatives can play a growing role.

8. Today's crisis constitutes, as noted, a great challenge for the cooperatives – our relevance and importance are now more important than ever. We must strengthen our leadership, we must bring young persons into it, and we must emphasize and expand training, education for all leaders, managers and members. We must increase our business efficiency. Above all, we must emphasize and re-emphasize our cooperative reality as businesses with values, as economics with a human face.

We must indeed be and become more, much more, widely known as a "Global Alternative of Significance" were the concluding remarks by Dr Yehuda Paz, who synthesized the presentation at the forum.

– Rajiv I.D. Mehta

GRATITUDE

ICA-AP overwhelmingly recognizes the support of Member Organizations like Indian Farmers Fertilizer Cooperative (IFFCO), Singapore National Cooperative Federation (SNCF), Japanese Consumer Cooperative Union (JCCU), National Agricultural Cooperative Federation of Korea (NACF), All China Federation of Supply & Marketing Cooperatives (ACFSMC) by showing their commitment for the cause of international cooperative development in the Asia Pacific Region in the form of financial support to ICA-AP during 2008.

ICA-AP appreciates the role of its Member Organizations especially Japanese Consumer Cooperative Union (JCCU), Central Union of Agricultural Cooperatives (JA-Zenchu), National Federation of Workers and Consumers Insurance Cooperatives (ZENROSAI), All China Federation of Supply & Marketing Cooperatives (ACFSMC), Singapore Teachers' Cooperative and Indian Farmers Fertilizer Cooperative (IFFCO) in the reconstruction of disaster affected cooperatives in Myanmar and China by mobilizing generous financial support.

ICA-AP also conveys its gratitude to the Ministry of Fishery & Forestry (MAFF), Government of Japan and AGRITERRA of Netherlands for their development cooperation for the members of ICA in Asia Pacific region.

Finally ICA-AP gratefully acknowledges the support of Vietnam Cooperative Alliance (VCA) in hosting the 2008 Regional Assembly of ICA Asia Pacific, Coop Forum in Asia Pacific and also other related events in Hanoi, Vietnam.



5th ICA Regional Women's Forum held in Vietnam



Delegates at the Women's Forum

The 5th Cooperative Regional Women Forum was held on 2nd December 2008 at Melia Hotel, Hanoi, Vietnam.

The theme of the forum was "Advantage of Gender Integration in the Economy of Cooperatives in Asia Pacific".

A total 50 delegates (both women and men) from 8 Asian countries participated at the Forum.

The Chairperson of the ICA Regional Women's Committee, Ms. Hitomi Tanaka welcomed the guests and participants of the forum and thanked them for their presence.

Dr. Nguyen Tien Quan, the President of Vietnam Cooperative Alliance delivered the opening address and declared the forum open.

Mr. Shil Kwan Lee, Regional Director of ICA-AP and Mr. Ivano Barberini, the President, ICA also addressed the forum and reaffirmed their commitment for achieving total gender integration in cooperatives.

The keynote speech on the theme "Advantage of Gender Integration in the Economy of Cooperatives in Asia Pacific" was delivered by the speaker, Ms. Bui Thi Lan, Food and Agriculture

Organisation (FAO) Representative from Nepal. She talked about the significant contribution of women as food provider for the family as well as the community and focused on various FAO programmes for socio-economic development of women to achieve food security.

Ms. Maria Elena Chavez Hertig, Deputy Director General of ICA and Secretary of the Gender Equality Committee read out the paper on 'Women's entrepreneurship development for economic growth' by Ms. Marcone.

The ILO Country Director from Vietnam spoke on 'Equity and equality in co-operatives for economic development'.

Ms. Fukushiro, Japan and Ms. Armi Zainuddin, Malaysia, presented country perspective and best practices.

The regional perspective was presented by Ms. Sally Ganibe, Executive Director of AWCF, Philippines. The participants also interacted with the speakers on various issues.

The forum concluded with the following observations:

- The Declaration of the 8th Minister's Conferences (4th to 8th)

must be acted upon urgently;

- All the ICA member cooperatives, associate members, and partners must amend their respective cooperative laws to accept dual membership of spouse in all types of cooperatives and especially in agriculture cooperatives;
- Women's share be ensured as minimum 30% in membership, management and leadership position of the cooperatives;
- All cooperatives should collect and provide information on best practices in respect of cooperative legislation;
- Capacity-building of women through various media forms be ensured by cooperatives;
- Strengthen partnership with men towards gender equality and women empowerment;
- Training programmes of cooperatives should include gender awareness and family enrichment sessions;
- The ICA should ensure a time frame for the compliance of recommendations by the members in the region.

– Mrs. Savitri Singh

We wish to inform our readers that our e-mail address has changed.

Kindly note our new e-mail:

<info@icaroap.coop>

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Regional HRD Committee Meeting discusses prospects for the future at Hanoi

The seminar on New Dimensions of Cooperative HRD Institutions in the Globalised Environment and the 21st Meeting of ICA Committee on Human Resource Development (HRD) for Asia and Pacific was held on 3rd December 2008 at Melia Hotel, Hanoi. Thirty-seven participants from ten countries, namely, India, Indonesia, Israel, Korea, Kuwait, Malaysia, Pakistan, Singapore, Sri Lanka and Vietnam attended the seminar/meeting.

The opening session was attended by Mr. Nguyen Van Bien, Vice-President of VCA; Mr. Shil Kwan Lee, Regional Director of ICA-AP; and Mr. Bhagwati Prasad, Chief Executive of NCUI. The following four presentations were made at the seminar:

- ♦ Global HRD Networking Centre by Mr. Bhagwati Prasad, Chief Executive of NCUI, India.
- ♦ Networking among Cooperative HRD Institutions – Significance and Challenges by Mr. Yuzri Suhud, Secretary General of DEKOPIN, Indonesia.
- ♦ Strategies for Networking by Ms. Julia Bee Bte Ramjan, Deputy Director, Cooperative College of Malaysia.
- ♦ Role of HRD Institutions in Capacity Building for Good Governance and Professionalisation by Mr. Zulkifli Mohammed, Chief Executive, SNCF, Singapore.

The seminar was followed by the 21st meeting of HRD Committee which was presided over by Mr. Bhagwati Prasad, Chairman of the Committee. He welcomed the presence of the members and thanked them for coming to the meeting.

He stressed the importance of Global HRD Networking (www.hrd.coop), developed and maintained jointly by National Cooperative Union of India (NCUI) and Vaikunth Mehta National Institute of Cooperative Management (VMNICM) in collaboration with ICA.



Mr Bhagwati Prasad, Chairman, presenting a report on HRD Committee

Country reports on initiatives on HRD were presented by members from India, Israel, Malaysia and Sri Lanka. He said that the HRD portal was restructured in 11 languages and registration of experts of cooperatives also got included in the new portal.

The meeting decided to continue the trend of seminars on HRD Best Practices in the 2009 also. The theme of the seminar in 2009 would be "Role of HRD Institutions in Changing Economic

10th Meeting of the Regional Cooperative Banking Association (RCBA) held in Hanoi

The 10th Meeting of the Regional Cooperative Banking Association [RCBA] was held in Hanoi on 1st December, 2008. The meeting was attended by representatives of India, Korea, Sri Lanka and Vietnam.

Mr. Nguyen Xuan Hien welcomed all the members to Hanoi. He also thanked the members present for attending the 10th meeting. In his opening speech, he said "although in Vietnam there has not been any cooperative banking association, we hope that at this meeting we can share valuable experience, accumulate useful information to establish a cooperative bank in the future".

In the absence of Mr. Vishwanathan, the Chairman of the committee, his speech was read by Mr. B D Sharma, Sr. Consultant with ICA-AP. Mr.

Scenario". Mr. K.K. Ravindran, Managing Director of National Cooperative Agriculture and Rural Development Banks Federation, India, offered to host the next seminar and meeting in Mumbai sometime in 2009.

The meeting unanimously accepted the proposal and authorized the ICA-AP to decide about the dates in consultation with Mr. Ravindran. A suggestion was made at the meeting about the management of Cooperative Learning Center by the Asian region of ICA. After discussions, it was decided that a detailed project report should be prepared by the HRD Committee and placed before the next meeting for its approval. If some funds could be raised through HRD institutions, an external consultant would be appointed. Otherwise, the project report will be prepared internally.

The meeting appreciated the excellent arrangements made by the Vietnam Cooperative Alliance and the hospitality provided.

- K Setumadhavan

Vishwanathan had reiterated the cooperation among cooperative banks at local, regional, national and global level in view of the global economic crisis. It was in this context that the theme of this meeting was "Global Networking of Cooperative Banks".

Mr. B. Subrahmanyam, member from India, highlighted on the issues such as need for networking among cooperative banks and the need for appreciating the concept, importance in identifying the indicators and implementing corporate social responsibility. He further emphasized on the need for appropriate management of investment portfolio in view of the ongoing financial crisis in few parts of the world and called for initiatives to leverage the cooperative advantage.

-Prem Kumar

38th Meeting of the ICA Asia Pacific Agriculture Committee held in Hanoi



Mr. N.P. Patel (with muffler) elected as the Chair of the ICA Regional Agriculture Committee seen with Mr. Barberini, President ICA and other colleagues.

The 38th Meeting of the ICA Asia Pacific Agriculture Committee was held on 2nd December 2008 at Melia Hotel soon after the ICAO Conference on "Protection of Small Family Farmers through Co-operatives". The Theme was: Quality Production – Quality Food and Quality Trade through Co-operatives. The VCA President welcomed the participants at the inauguration. The ICAO Secretary General addressed the delegates, followed by the keynote address by the Chairman NACF.

Case studies on best practices in promoting the interests of small family farmers from China were presented by Mr Ma Qi, Director of Technology Extension Centre, ACFSMC; Dr G.N. Saxena, Director – Cooperative Relations, IFFCO, India; Mr Chan – Ho Choi, Korea; the Secretary General ICAO and by Dr Yehuda Paz, Chairman, NISPED, Israel.

Mr Sanjiv Chopra, Secretary Agriculture, Government of West Bengal, India, gave a presentation on Indian e-marketing Case Study – Safal Exchange Model.

Presentation on "Counter measures for family farmers on product management, farm management and sales activities through agricultural co-operatives in Japan" was made by Mr Naoki Higuchi, Manager, Personnel Section (in charge of Int'l Affairs) JA-Zenchu.

Thirty delegates from India, Indonesia, Israel, Japan, Kuwait, Korea, Sri Lanka and Vietnam attended the Conference and the 38th ICA-AP Agriculture Committee meeting.

The Chairman of the ICA Asia Pacific Agriculture Committee, Mr Chan-Ho-Choi steered the meeting as per the



Mr. Won-Byung Choi, ICAO Chairman, Keynote Speaker at the opening

agenda and following decisions were made:

1. UCCS Kuwait would be inducted as a new member of the Committee.
2. A Conference would be held in early 2009 to assess the "Impact of Global Economic Meltdown on Food Security and Agricultural Co-operatives". The Conference would be a joint sponsorship of IFFCO, UCCS Kuwait and ICAO.
3. Mr Chan-Ho-Choi while relinquishing his charge of the Chairman, ICA Asia Pacific Committee on Agriculture proposed the name of Mr N.P. Patel, Vice Chairman of IFFCO, India. All the members unequivocally supported the proposal and Mr Patel was elected as Chairman of ICA AP Agriculture Committee for a period of four years. Mr Sunil Silva, General Manager, NCC, Sri Lanka was also unanimously elected as the Vice Chair of the Committee for a term of four years.
4. Mr. Chan-Ho-Choi thanked the members of the Committee for their support and pledged his support in all the endeavors of the Committee.
5. Mr Rajiv I.D. Mehta was asked to continue as the Secretary General of the Committee.

The meeting ended with remarks from newly elected Chairman of the committee, Mr N. P. Patel who thanked Mr Chan-Ho-Choi, Secretary General ICAO for hosting the 38th Meeting of the ICA Asia Pacific Agriculture Committee and also thanked the participants and resource persons for making impressive and thought provoking presentations.

– Rajiv I.D. Mehta

ICA Regional Youth Conference and 2nd meeting of the Regional Youth Committee held in Hanoi



A view of delegates at the Youth Conference

A Youth Conference was held at Melia Hotel, Hanoi on 1st December, 2008, in conjunction with the Regional Assembly.

More than 60 delegates from India, Indonesia, Japan, Malaysia, Philippines, Singapore, Sri Lanka and Vietnam participated. Many youth delegates from the College of Technology and Management, College of Vocational Training, Technical and Fine Art from the VCA and other affiliated units of VCA also participated. The Conference was inaugurated by

Dr. Nguyen Tien Quan, President of Vietnam Co-operative Alliance. The theme of the Conference was Co-operatives and Youth Entrepreneurship. Mr. Shil Kwan Lee, Regional Director, welcomed the delegates on behalf of the ICA.

Dr. T. Paranjothi, Secretary, NCCT, New Delhi and Dr. A. Fronda from the Philippines, Mr. Rajiv Mehta, Director (Development) and Mr. Teo Say Hong, Chairperson of the ICA Youth Committee for Asia and the Pacific made presentations on youth aspects

and their employment, etc. Mr. K. Limzon from the Philippines and the VCA representative acted as MCs. at the Conference. The Vietnam Co-operative Alliance also organized a cultural show for the participants.

After the Conference the second meeting of the Youth Committee for the region was held. The meeting discussed the activities held since the last meeting in Singapore, the action plan for the coming year, etc. Mr. Teo Say Hong was re-elected as Chairperson of the Committee, while Ms. Nguuyen Thi Thu Hao of VCA and Mr. Ilham Nassai from Kopindo, Indonesia were elected as Vice Chairs. Mr. Teo Say Hong also suggested that the Chairperson of the Regional Youth Committee represent the proposed global Youth Committee. The Regional Youth Committee will help in forming a global committee. This participation of the Chairperson will help in continuity of youth activities globally. The meeting agreed to the suggestion.

The next meeting of the Committee would be held in Singapore during 2009. The next Youth Conference would be held in China in conjunction with the next Regional Assembly.

– P Nair

ICA Committee on Cooperative Research for Asia Pacific

An informal group of researchers have been holding Asia Pacific Research Conferences, in conjunction with ICA Regional Assembly for some years. The third ICA Regional Research Conference was held at the Melia Hotel, Hanoi on 2nd December, 2008, several researchers from India, Indonesia, Japan, Malaysia, Sri Lanka and Vietnam participated in this Conference.

A number of participants could not attend due to the closure of the Bangkok Airport. As in the past, scholarships of US\$ 500 each were awarded by the Consumer Cooperative Institute of

Japan to six researchers from India and one from the Philippines. Some of the recipients of scholarships could not attend the Conference.

Prof. Vrij Lal Sapowadia of IIM Ahmedabad, Dr. T. Pranjoti, Secretary, NCTT, New Delhi, Dr. Rajendran of Periyar, University, Salem, Dr. G.N. Saxena, Director (Cooperative Development) IFFCO, India; Mr B.D. Sharma, Consultant, ICA Asia-Pacific; Dr. Nguyen Dac Tang, Vice-Chairman of Vietnam Cooperative Alliance; and Mr. Rajiv I.D.Mehta, Director (Development), ICA-AP presented papers at the Conference.

Mr. Akira Kurimoto, Director of Consumer Cooperative Institute of Japan presided over the Conference at the first session and Dr. Sapowadia presided the second session.

After the Conference, a Steering Committee meeting was held which was presided over by Mr. Kurimoto.

Dr. G.N. Saxena of IFFCO was unanimously elected as the Chairman of the Research Committee for a period of four years. Mr. Kurimoto was unanimously elected as Vice-Chairman of the Committee. The term of office would be four years.



Dr G.N. Saxena, Director-Cooperative Relations, IFFCO, making a presentation at the Conference.

Both Dr. Saxena and Mr. Kurimoto as Chairman & Vice-Chairman of the Research Committee, Asia-Pacific, are

ex-officio members of the ICA Global Research Committee, therefore, would also be attending the Meetings and

Conferences of the ICA Global Research Committee.

Mr. Kurimoto congratulated Dr. Saxena on his election and hoped that he would be able to guide the committee to higher level cooperative research and that IFFCO, India would offer support to the Committees' activities in future.

Dr. Saxena thanked Mr. Kurimoto and the other researchers for electing him as the Chairman of the Committee and requested for their support on cooperative research in the Region and the activities of the Committee.

While the next Research Conference would possibly be held in conjunction with the next Regional Assembly in China, the office bearers (Chairman, Vice-Chairman and Secretary) of the Committee would have to meet at least once a year.

– P. Nair

University/Campus Cooperative Committee meeting held in Hanoi

The 14th meeting of the ICA Consumer Sub-Committee on University/College Co-operatives for Asia and the Pacific was held on 2nd December 2008, in conjunction with 8th Regional Assembly and 5th Cooperative Forum at Hanoi, Vietnam.

Twelve participants from India, Japan, Indonesia, Singapore, Malaysia, Philippines and Vietnam attended the meeting. In addition to the routine agenda, it was confirmed that Sub-Committee may be upgraded to a full fledged committee, as approved by the Regional Board of ICA-AP and its Constitution was finalized.

Prof. Kokichi Shoji was elected as Chairperson of the full Committee and Prof. Mohd. Ali Hasan and Prof. Zenaida Diola were elected as Vice-Chairpersons of the committee unanimously.

Mr. T. Kuriki of Japan and Dr. Y. Dongre of India were nominated as Co-Secretaries of the Committee. The term of the office-bearers would be for two years (from one Regional Assembly to

another). About the venue and time of the next meeting, it was left to the office bearers to decide and inform the members in due course of time.

Before the meeting of the Sub-Committee, a Regional Workshop on University/Campus Co-operatives was held in the morning at the same venue. In all 35 participants from 8 countries – India, Japan, Indonesia, Singapore, Malaysia, Philippines, Sri Lanka and

Vietnam attended the workshop. Mr. Nguyen Van Bien, First Vice President of Vietnam Cooperative Alliance (VCA) delivered the welcome speech.

Prof. Kokichi Shoji, Chairperson of the Sub-Committee presided. Each country representative presented country report, informing the present status of University/College Co-operatives in their country.

– A.K. Taneja



Delegates of the University/Campus Cooperatives Committee meeting

ICA Regional Consumer Committee meets at Hanoi

The 42nd meeting of the ICA Committee on Consumer Cooperation for Asia Pacific was held on 3rd December 2008, in conjunction with 8th Regional Assembly and 5th Cooperative Forum at Hanoi.

Fifteen participants from India, Japan, Indonesia, Singapore, Sri Lanka and Vietnam attended the meeting.

Mr. Nguyen Cuu Quoc, Vice President of Vietnam Cooperative Alliance delivered the welcome speech and Mr. Jiro Ito, Chairperson of the Committee presided. A special presentation on Store Development on "Saigon Co.op-the way to become Vietnam's leading retailer" was presented by Ms. Tran Thi Kim Quyen.

A special presentation was made by Mr. Poh Leong Sim, Vice Chair of the Committee and Group Company Secretary & Director (Legal) of NTUC



Delegates at the Consumer Committee meeting.

FairPrice, Singapore on "How NTUC FairPrice help consumers cope with the cost of living in Singapore".

It was decided that the next meeting of the committee would be held in India,

Pune in November-December 2009 along with a Regional Workshop or Seminar.

— A.K. Taneja

ICA Training Program for Managers of Consumer Co-ops in Japan

The ICA Training program for Managers of Consumer Co-ops were held since 2001. Twenty-four managers who work for consumer cooperatives applied for the program in Japan. The three training courses have been carried out successfully out of which 9 from 5 countries were selected.



The Training programme in progress

Three participants from Vietnam, 2 each from India and Singapore, 1 each from the Philippines and Thailand learnt a lot about the history of consumer co-ops in Japan, Japan's retail industry, store operation, joint-purchasing system, home delivery system, merchandizing policy, sales promotion, development of PB products, quality assurance, members' participation. They also visited co-op stores and

competitors, fresh food processing centers, and sorting centers for home delivery.

All the trainees made presentations on the post training action plans in their own country, and also pledged to bring the plans into practice in their respective consumer cooperative.

— Yoshi Nakamura



Some of the trainees of Japan consumer coop training programme.



A group of trainees at the consumer coop store in Japan.

International Conference on Cooperative Tourism



A view of delegates at the International Tourism Conference at Jaipur, India

An International Conference on Co-operative Tourism was jointly organized by ICA Asia Pacific & RICEM, Jaipur on the 14th & 15th of October 2008 at Hotel Ramada, Jaipur. The event was mainly sponsored by IFFCO. The theme of the Conference was *"Friendly Tourism through Co-operatives"*.

The Conference was attended by more than 70 delegates from India and 9 other countries namely Iran, Italy, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, Maldives, Norway, Sri Lanka and UK. The Conference was inaugurated by the Co-operative Minister of Government of Rajasthan, Dr. N.S. Gurjar and presided over by Mr. Rajiv Agrawal, Managing Director of NCDC.

Secretaries of Cooperatives to the Governments of Rajasthan and West Bengal, Registrars of Cooperatives and Directors of Tourism from Rajasthan, Goa, Jharkhand, Kerala and Himachal Pradesh attended the Conference. Besides, there were representatives from the National Coop Federations and tourism related coops from New Delhi, Goa and Mangalore.

The Conference was addressed by the following speakers: Welcome by Mr. Sudhansh Pant Registrar Cooperatives,

Government of Rajasthan; Greetings from ICA by Mr. Shil Kwan Lee, Regional Director, ICA-AP; Keynote address by Mr. Davolio, Chairperson, TICA; Special Address by Guest of Honor Mr. Rajiv Agrawal, Managing Director, NCDC; Inaugural address by Dr. Nathu Singh Gurjar, Hon'ble Minister of Cooperatives, Government of Rajasthan.

Presentation outlining the concept & integral components of Coop Tourism & Tourism with Conviviality was made by Mr. Rajiv I.D. Mehta, Director Development ICA-AP.

Paper on New Trends in Tourism Sector was presented by Mr. Benjamin Carey and Mr. Christopher Imbsen of Dunira Strategy, UK.

Policy & Strategy – to overcome challenges before tourism industry – Focus on SAARC Region was presented by Mr. Sanjeev Chopra.

Case Studies on tourism related activities of cooperatives in Japan, Korea, Malaysia, Sri Lanka, Iran and India were presented by delegates.

Networking solutions to position Tourism Coop as a Reliable and Responsible Brand was jointly addressed by Dunira Strategy & TICA

Open House Discussions on "cooperative forte in thematic tourism" and "networking among cooperatives for the promotion of tourism business" were held to yeild recommendations of the Conference.

Mr. Tushar Pandey, Head of Strategic Initiatives and Advisory, Yes Bank, New Delhi made a crisp wisp presentation on PPP in tourism sector.

The closing session was addressed by Registrar of Cooperatives, Government of Rajasthan, Registrar of Kerala and TICA Chairperson

The Conference culminated with a visit to Samod, a Tourism Coop Village and ended with the following main recommendations:

- ♦ A vision and goal statement in the policy of the Governments and Cooperatives for promoting tourism through co-operatives is fundamental
- ♦ Incorporation of the options to institutionalize (networks & structures) tourism development through cooperatives is mandatory
- ♦ Setting the standards (domestic and international) on demand and supply for the tourism initiatives taken by cooperatives is essential
- ♦ Guidelines, certification procedures for tourism through co-operatives are important
- ♦ Strategic choices to carve out coop tourism market niche and mainstreaming the brand are pre-requisites in finding a place in the market
- ♦ Model projects to illustrate best practices are valuable demonstrative tools.

The Conference was coordinated and anchored by Mr. Rajiv I.D. Mehta Director – Development, ICA Asia Pacific.

– Smriti Shah

46 Condolences



We, the staff members of the ICA - Asia and Pacific, New Delhi, are deeply shocked and grieved to have learnt about the sudden and untimely demise of late Mr. Guillermo P. Cua, Congress-man, COOP-NATCCO party list and member of the ICA-AP Board on 17th December 2008. He was one of the greatest serving co-operative leaders in the Philippines.

His sudden demise has left a deep void in the cooperative world. We will always remember his contribution to the cooperatives at large and cherish the fond memories of the association we have had with such a great cooperative leader. We convey our deepest condolences to Mrs. Guil Cua and her family members and pray to God to give them strength to bear this unbearable loss.

May the departed soul may rest in peace.



We, at ICA-Asia Pacific, New Delhi, were deeply shocked and grieved at the sudden and untimely demise of Mr. B. Vijaya Kumar, Chairman, National Federation of Urban Cooperative Banks and Credit Societies Limited (NAFCUB), one of the greatest serving co-operative leaders in India, on 4th November 2008.

Mr. Vijaya Kumar was a very warm, friendly and amiable personality. He was a good friend of the co-operative fraternity and his demise has caused an irreparable loss to the co-operative movement in India.

We convey our deepest condolences to Mrs. Vijaya Kumar and family and pray to God to give them strength to bear this loss may the departed soul rest in peace.



Dr. Shouji Kato, Chairperson of International Health Co-operative Organization (IHCO) and of Asia Pacific Health Cooperative Organization (APHCO) passed away on November 2008. Dr. Kato was instrumental in developing health cooperatives in Japan, Asia Pacific and also globally.

He was born in 1928, graduated from School of Medicine, Nagoya University. He spent great efforts and devoted his entire life to healthcare at Minato Health Co-operative, Nagoya, Japan and always served with co-operative spirits.

He will be greatly missed by us all. We at the ICA-Asia Pacific condole the sudden demise of Dr. Kato and pray to Almighty to give peace to the departed soul and give courage to the family to bear face the loss.

ICA-AP Work Plan for 2009

- 01 3rd Training Course on Enhancement of Farmers' Income and Poverty Reduction through Coops. *India-Iran-Japan*
- 02 Two Training Courses on Capacity Building for Marketing. *Japan*
- 03 4th Training Course on Promotion of Sustainable Enterprises for Rural Women. *Vietnam-Japan*
- 04 Three Training Programs for Managers of Consumer Cooperatives (Miyagi/Tokyo/Kobe). *Japan*
- 05 Regional Workshop for Managers on Management of Consumer Cooperatives. *Singapore*
- 06 Two workshops on Development of Consumer Cooperatives. *Vietnam/India.*
- 07 Workshop on Enhancing the Role of Women in Cooperative Business. *Philippines*
- 08 Management Capacity Building of Women for Cooperative Development. *Malaysia*
- 09 National Workshop on Development of University/Campus Cooperatives. *Thailand*
- 10 Seminar on Role of Cooperatives in Ensuring Food Security. *Indonesia*
- 11 Seminar on Role of HRD Institutions in Changing Economic Scenario. *India*
- 12 Study Tour to Agricultural Cooperatives in the Republic of Korea.
- 13 Meeting of ICA-AP Sectoral/Thematic Committees. *ICA-AP*
- 14 Supply of Cooperative Related Information to ICA Member Organizations.
- 15 Publication of Quarterly Newsletter (ASPACON) and Annual Report.
- 16 Publishing Profile of ICA-Asia and Pacific Member Cooperatives.
- 17 ICA Conference on Cooperative Development. *Brunei*
- 18 ICA Conference on Cooperative Development. *Iran*
- 19 ICA Conference on Cooperative Development. *Bhutan*
- 20 ICA Conference on Cooperative Development. *Maldives*
- 21 ICA Conference on Cooperative Development. *Saudi Arabia*
- 22 ICA Conference on Cooperative Development. *Myanmar*
- 23 3rd G.C.C (Gulf Cooperation Council) Cooperative Forum. *U.A.E*
- 24 Conference on Consumer Cooperative Profile Raising in Sri Lanka.
- 25 Fact Finding Missions to Kazakhstan and Mongolia.
- 26 Seminar on Cooperative Legislation in Laos.
- 27 Conference on Enhanced Role of Cooperatives in the Recovery from Global Economic Crisis. *Thailand*
- 28 Re-construction of cyclone affected cooperatives in Myanmar.
- 29 Project on Women and Youth Empowerment through Cooperatives in Sri Lanka.
- 30 Project on Promotion of Sustainable Model of Agricultural Cooperatives for Poverty Alleviation of Farmers. *Afghanistan, Cambodia and Laos*
- 31 Mainstreaming of HIV Issues in the Education and Training System of Cooperatives. *India*