



**International  
Co-operative  
Alliance**  
Asia and Pacific

## In This Edition

[12<sup>th</sup> Regional Assembly and 9<sup>th</sup> Cooperative Forum, 15-19 November 2016, New Delhi](#)

[ICA-AP elects new Regional Board](#)

[Dr. Mauritz Bonow Young Researcher Award](#)

[Asia Pacific Workshop on University/Campus Co-operatives in SAARC nations](#)

[ICA-AP and ICA-AP Consumer Committee "Sustainable Supply Chain"](#)

[Solidarity with the Japanese co-operative movement](#)

[The Alliance Africa Youth Conference, Kigali, Rwanda](#)

[Knowledge Sharing Workshop on Industrial and Service Co-operatives at the 12th RA 2016](#)

[Up Coming Events](#)

### **12<sup>th</sup> Regional Assembly and 9<sup>th</sup> Cooperative Forum, 15-19 November 2016, New Delhi**

A big thank you to the over 600 cooperators from India and the Asia Pacific region who attended the 12<sup>th</sup> Regional Assembly, 9<sup>th</sup> Cooperative Forum and related events from November 15 to 19, 2016 in New Delhi! The Assembly adopted several resolutions including strategic direction for the region, declaration from the Cooperative Forum, support to Japanese cooperative movement, and co-option of Chair of Women Committee.



The opening ceremony was attended by over 600 delegates from India and the region. Mr. Radha Mohan Singh, Union Minister for Agriculture and Farmers Welfare and Mr. Suresh Prabhu, Union Minister for Railways, Government of India graced the occasion. Mr. Parshottam Rupala, Minister for State for Agriculture and Farmers Welfare addressed the closing

ceremony. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ePt37rXRXR4&feature=youtu.be>

The presentations at the Cooperative Forum showed the significant impact co-operatives in the Asia-Pacific region are having and showcased their Power to Act for a Sustainable Future. This was reflected in, building a co-operative country (Youth Social Coop, Bhutan), greening the country (SANASA, Sri Lanka), and creating the largest cooperative in the world by adhering to cooperative values and principles (IFFCO, India). The role of co-operatives was visible in responding to natural disasters (Nepal co-operative movement's response to earthquake), addressing emerging needs such as aging (SNCF, Singapore), adopting technological innovations (NACF, Korea) and building workers movement (ULCCS, India). The importance of working in partnership with governments to create a broad-based movement was evident in the efforts to transform co-operatives by aligning with national priorities (ANGKASA, Malaysia), policies to enable inclusive growth in co-operatives (CDA, Philippines) and supportive incentives to promote growth of co-operatives (ICC, Iran). The various committee events also showcased the role of cooperatives in achieving sustainable development. The Resolution adopted by the Assembly can be found at: <http://ica-ap.coop/icanews/resolution-9th-ica-ap-co-operative-forum>

We would like to convey our thanks to the National Cooperative Union of India (NCUI) and the Indian co-operative movement for hosting the Regional Assembly and related events. The next Regional Assembly will likely be held in Iran in 2018. We will confer with our members in Iran and keep you informed of the venue and dates.



## ICA-AP elects new Regional Board



The Regional Assembly elected a new board of committed leaders from across the Asia-Pacific region. The leadership consists of Mr. Li Chunsheng, Vice President, All China Federation of Supply & Marketing Co-operatives, China as Chairperson; Dr. Chandra Pal Singh Yadav, President, National Cooperative Union of India, India and Ms. Chitose Arai, Vice President, Japanese Consumers' Cooperative Union, Japan, as Vice Chairpersons. The other members of the Board are Mr. H.A.M. Nurdin Halid, President, DEKOPIN (the Indonesia Co-operative Council), Indonesia; Mr. Alireza Gharagozlou, Vice President of Economic and International Affairs, Iran Chamber of Commerce, Iran; Mr. Byeong Won Kim, Chairman, National Agricultural Cooperative Federation, Korea; Dato Hj. Abdul Fattah Hj. Abdullah, President, Malaysian National Cooperative Movement (ANGKASA), Malaysia; Mr. Keshav Prasad Badal, Chairman, National Cooperative Federation of Nepal; Mr. Adolfo A. Ibanez, Chairman, National Confederation of Cooperatives, Philippines; Mr. Kwek Kok Kwong, Chairman, Singapore National Cooperative Federation, Singapore; and Mr. W. Lalith A. Peiris, President, National Cooperative Council of Sri Lanka. The co-opted members on the Board are Dr. Sukesh Zamwar (from Buldana Urban Cooperative Credit Society), Chairperson, ICA-AP Committee on Youth and Ms. Masako Shimbo (from JCCU), Chairperson, ICA-AP Committee on Women.



## **Dr. Mauritz Bonow Young Researcher Award**

Dr. Mauritz Bonow, President of ICA (1962-1975) was a strong advocate of co-operatives and was responsible for the development of Co-operative Movement throughout the world and particularly in developing countries. Dr. Bonow was a strong advocate of education and believed that the strength of the cooperative movement depended on the existence of a vast and enlightened membership. He urged training institutions, colleges and universities to have co-operative training programs, and called on them to award undergraduate degrees, postgraduate degrees and doctorates. He felt these students would later play important roles in the enlightenment of the average co-operative worker, making them better co-operators and agents for transforming society.

The Dr. Mauritz Bonow Young Researcher Award is a joint initiative of the ICA-AP and the ICA Domus Trust. The ICA Asia-Pacific (ICA-AP) regional office was established in New Delhi in 1960 to provide a voice and forum for knowledge, expertise and coordinated action for and about co-operatives in the region. The ICA Domus Trust was set up in recognition of the valuable contributions made by Dr. Mauritz Bonow.

### 2016 awardees

A sub-committee was set up during the 11th ICA-AP research conference to review and adjudicate the best research papers. The sub-committee consisted on Mr. Balu Iyer, Dr. G.N. Saxena and Prof. A Kurimoto.

The First prize of US\$ 500 was awarded to Ms. Shefali Pardeshi, Research Officer at VAMNICOM for her paper on Gender Equality and Women Empowerment, "A case of Lijjat Papad, Pune.

The Second prize of US\$ 300 was awarded to Dr. Lucia Veronica Granados Martinez and co-author Silva, C. Ibarcena, R. from Peru for their paper, "Green microfinance for the base of the pyramid market: A cooperative response to address the needs of vulnerable population and climate change impacts in Peru.



## Asia Pacific Workshop on University/Campus Co-operatives in SAARC nations



On 16 November, the NCUI and the ICA-AP Committee on University/Campus Co-operatives (University Committee) jointly organized a knowledge sharing workshop on University/Campus Co-operatives in SAARC nations. The theme was, “positioning campus co-operatives in the context of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs),’ and organized on the sidelines of the 12<sup>th</sup> Regional Assembly. The idea of the workshop was given by the late Dr. Dinesh, former Chief Executive, NCUI at the 7<sup>th</sup> annual meeting that was held in Bangkok in September 2015. Case studies on co-operatives and student life on campuses was shared by Alliance members Singapore National Co-operative Federation, Metro Manila Consumer Co-operatives Ltd., Japanese National Federation of University Co-operatives Association, University of Delhi and University of Mysore (India). Dr. Daman Prakash in his keynote address, asserted the importance of promoting co-operatives in university/campuses as well as in the education curriculum in SAARC nations. The workshop was attended by 50 participants from 10 countries and was facilitated by Dr. Yashwantha Dongre of the University of Mysore. Mr. Balu Iyer, Regional Director addressed the gathering and expressed support from the ICA-AP towards the revitalizing university/campus co-operatives in the SAARC nations.

## **ICA-AP and ICA-AP Consumer Committee “Sustainable Supply Chain”**

In a globalized society, “Supply Chains” are spread worldwide and involve a complex web of locations and people. While it is believed to be effective for economic development, the negative issues relate to oppressive labor conditions, child labor, and environmental damage. The seminar on, “Sustainable Supply Chain Management,” was focused on transparency and respect which seeks greater equity among stakeholders in an environmentally sustainable way.

Mr Devagiri Nihal, LEED Project Manager ILO Country Office for Sri Lanka and the Maldives made a presentation on, “The Labour Problem in Sri Lanka and Introduction of LEED PROJECT.” The LEED Project was started in 2011, to support the post-war recovery efforts and to bridge the North and South of the country. The LEED project focuses on connecting agriculture co-operatives (paddy, fruits and vegetables and fishery) in the North with retailers in the South and enabling assured sourcing and steady income stream for the producers. In 2016, the project has connected 5,000 fruits and vegetables producer households with 8 exporters and grossed US\$2 million in total turnover. More information on the LEED project can be found

at: [http://www.ilo.org/colombo/whatwedo/projects/WCMS\\_397563/lang--en/index.htm](http://www.ilo.org/colombo/whatwedo/projects/WCMS_397563/lang--en/index.htm)

Mr Siva Devireddy, CEO of Gocoop, gave a lecture on “Sustainable Supply Chain – experience of Gocoop.” India is one of the major handmade textiles producing nation in the world and has over 24,000 small scale producer co-operatives/artisan groups. To reach customers, most of these co-ops/groups go through layers of middlemen; as a result the producers earn a pittance while the same is sold to consumers at 3-5 times the initial price. Gocoop founded in 2011, directly connects the co-operatives and artisans with consumers and bulk buyers through an online platform. The aim is to ensure sound supply chain by reducing the middlemen, ensuring stable income to producers, and bringing a range of products to the consumers at a fair price. More information on Gocoop can be found at <http://gocoop.com/>

## **Solidarity with the Japanese co-operative movement**

The Regional Assembly showed its solidarity with the Japanese co-operative movement by adopting the following resolution - “We, cooperators participating in the 12<sup>th</sup> Regional Assembly of the International Cooperative Alliance Asia and Pacific in New Delhi on November 18, 2016, express our deep concern on the Japanese Government’s move that may interfere with the autonomy and independence of cooperatives and express our strong support for the Japanese Co-operative Movement.”

Earlier, the following statement was read out by Mr. Akira Banzai.

*I would like to take this opportunity to tell you about the recent attempt in Japan to try to demutualize*

*agricultural cooperatives in Japan and I hope you can share our sense of crisis through my report. About three years ago, there was a similar move in Japan where the government wanted to dismantle multi-purpose agricultural cooperatives in Japan. When that happened, the ICA global board was very supportive to our fight against the move. The ICA global board sent a delegation to Japan and also supported us in organizing seminars. In June 2014, the ICA issued a statement saying that the Japanese government's move totally ignored the cooperative values and principles. At that time, many member organizations from the Asia-Pacific region were very supportive to us as well. We received kind letters of support from member organizations of China, India, Korea, Mongolia, etc. I would like to take opportunity to thank you all again for the support that you gave us. As a result of all your support, when the Japanese government announced its official policy in June 2014, they still wanted the credit business of the multi-purpose agricultural cooperatives to be separated and transferred out and they still wanted to see agricultural cooperatives' status to be converted to limited companies, but they did not make it compulsory in the policy. They left it to members to decide. On our part, under the amended agricultural cooperative law that came into effect in April 2016, agricultural cooperatives have been actively promoting their own business reform.*

*However, just last week, on 11 November, the advisory council to the prime minister, the Regulatory Reform Promoting Council, issued a new draft recommendation for further reform of agricultural cooperatives. In the new recommendation, they want Zennoh, the national federation of economic business of agricultural cooperatives, to stop their joint purchase business. They also want Zennoh to convert their marketing business from consignment sales to purchase sales. They want these to be compulsory. The recommendation also says that, if there is no progress, they want the government to set up a new organization (a second Zennoh). The recommendation further says that the credit business of multi-purpose agricultural cooperatives should be transferred to the Norinchukin Bank, which is the national federation of credit business of agricultural cooperatives. The recommendation wants to see a reduction in the number of the agricultural cooperatives engaged in credit business to half of the current number in the coming three years. All these proposals are unfair interference to private organizations such as agricultural cooperatives and they go totally against the cooperative principle about autonomy and independence. This draft recommendation is still a draft of the advisory council and will be studied by the ruling parties. We will also have a chance to express our views representing agricultural cooperatives, before the government makes its final decision at the end of this month, November 2016. Having very grave sense of crisis, JA-Zenchu will work with other cooperatives in Japan to express strong opposition to these proposals. At the same time we are implementing our own business reform and organizational reform.*

*We would like to inform this development in Japan to the ICA global board as well to share our experiences with cooperators around the world. I hope you continue to give us understanding and support*

## The Alliance Africa Youth Conference, Kigali, Rwanda



The Alliance Africa (ICA Africa) held the Alliance Africa Youth Conference in Kigali, Rwanda on October 29, as part of their 12<sup>th</sup> Regional Assembly. More than 240 co-operators from 22 countries, from within and outside Africa attended the conference. There were 26 case studies presented on the following sub-themes, 1) Partnerships and collaborations - successful partnerships and lessons learnt, 2) Promoting financial inclusion for young people through co-operatives, 3) Employment vs job creation, and the role of business development services – which way forward for youth in Africa? Case studies were also presented from the Americas, Asia-Pacific, and Europe were regions. Ms. Yuki Nishimoto, from the ICA-AP Malaysia Business Office presented a case study on, “the Role and Education Program of Youth Staff in Consumer Co-op in Japan.”

Per a 2015 UN report, the population of youth (age15-24) was 1.2 billion; of which 19% were in Africa. By 2030, it is expected that 42 percent of youth in the world will be in Africa. Most sub-Saharan countries are struggling to educate their young people and anticipating very high youth unemployment rates.

Throughout the conference, the topic actively discussed was the role of the Savings and Credit Co-



operative (SACCO) in financial inclusion of youth. SACCO is one of the biggest sector of co-operatives in Africa and is the predominant form of external financing for small and micro enterprises. In addition to financing, SACCOs could promote entrepreneurship among youth. This could be a viable poverty reduction strategy given most new jobs are created through small enterprises and self-employment. The assistance could take the form of business training, advisory services, mentorship, and access to finance.



## **EU Section**

### **Knowledge Sharing Workshop on Industrial and Service Co-operatives at the 12<sup>th</sup> RA**

**2016**

The ICA/EU Partnership program on co-operatives in development, organized the *Asia Pacific workshop on Industrial and Service Co-operatives* during the 12<sup>th</sup> Regional Assembly in New Delhi. The workshop was a follow-up to the *Stakeholders Meeting on Collective Entrepreneurship* organized in Kozhikode (India) in August this year. The workshop was attended by over 30 delegates from India, Indonesia, Iran, Japan, Korea, and Philippines.



Mr. Bruno Roelants and Mr. Hyungsik Eum of CICOPA, the ICA sectoral organization on industrial and service co-operatives, facilitated the workshop as knowledge partners. Case studies were presented by the Korean Federation of Workers Co-operatives, the Japanese Co-operative Workers Union, and the Labor Co-operative Unions from the Philippines and India. The Iranian Chamber of Co-operatives discussed the potential to organize industrial and service co-operatives in their country. Drs. Robby Tulus, former ICA-AP Asia Pacific Regional Director shared the nature of circumstances of workers' movements and co-operatives in Indonesia. The participants from India included the ULCCS, ActionAid India, Books for Change, and the Kerala State Labor Co-operative Federation. The half day workshop resulted in commitment to develop thematic research projects and strategize the formation of networks representative of 'work and co-operatives'. Earlier in August, ICA-AP had a consultative engagement and meetings on the subject matter with the ILO Sri Lanka office, SANASA Federation, National Federation of Handicrafts Co-operatives, Sri Lanka Consumer Co-operative Societies Federation the National Co-operative Council of Sri Lanka, and the EU Delegation for Sri Lanka and Maldives, in Colombo.



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## UPCOMING EVENTS

- Training Program for Managers of Consumer Co-operatives in Tokyo and Kobe from November 28 to December 11, 2016; contact Yuki Nishimoto at [yuki.nishimoto@icaap.coop](mailto:yuki.nishimoto@icaap.coop)
- Sub-Regional Workshop on Development of Consumer Co-operative in Colombo, Sri Lanka on December 7 and 8, 2016; contact Yuki Nishimoto at [yuki.nishimoto@icaap.coop](mailto:yuki.nishimoto@icaap.coop)
- Revitalizing Campus/University Co-operatives in Colombo – National level Youth Meeting on Co-operatives, in Colombo, Sri Lanka on December 8; contact Santosh Kumar at [santosh.kumar@icaap.coop](mailto:santosh.kumar@icaap.coop)
- C2C workshop on agricultural cooperatives in China from December 10 to 12; contact Ju Wonsick at [ju03303@gmail.com](mailto:ju03303@gmail.com)
- ICA-MAFF-JAPAN training course on fostering core leaders of agricultural cooperatives in Thailand and Japan from Feb 26 to April 11, 2017 (countries: Bhutan, Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar, Nepal, Vietnam); contact: A.K. Taneja at [taneja@icaroap.coop](mailto:taneja@icaroap.coop)
- Creating Linkages for Co-operative Business and Marketing in Arab Countries – Sub-regional thematic seminar and networking meeting, in Jordan on January 30 and 31, 2017; contact Santosh Kumar at [santosh.kumar@icaap.coop](mailto:santosh.kumar@icaap.coop)
- Conference on Co-operative Development in Iran on February 15 and 16, 2017, Iran; contact Santosh Kumar at [santosh.kumar@icaap.coop](mailto:santosh.kumar@icaap.coop)
- Women's Committee office bearers meeting and seminar in March 2017; contact Savitri Singh at [savitrisingh@icaroap.coop](mailto:savitrisingh@icaroap.coop)
- 10<sup>th</sup> Ministers Conference from April 18-21, 2017 in Hanoi.
- Capacity Building Seminar for Central Asian Co-operatives in Kyrgyzstan in June (29-30).
- ICA Global Conference and General Assembly from November 14-17, 2017 in Kuala

Lumpur

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