Traditional and Modern Approaches to Plant Taxonomy – Sandhya Misra, Birbal Sahni Institute of Palaeobotany, 53-University Road, Lucknow-226007. (Email: sandhyabsip@gmail.com)

Science Academies Refresher course titled “Traditional and modern approach to plant taxonomy” was organised during 15-29 November, 2012 at University of Agricultural Sciences, GKVK, Bangalore in collaboration with Botanical Garden and Herbarium, Department of Forestry and Environmental Sciences, Bangalore. The refresher course was funded by Indian Academy of Sciences, Bangalore; Indian National Science Academy, New Delhi and the National Academy of Sciences India, Allahabad

This course, co-ordinated by Dr. R.R. Rao (INSA Honorary Scientist) and Dr. M. Sanjappa (the course convenor), was attended by 25 candidates representing research scholars, teaching faculty from various universities, institutes and colleges across India.

The course was inaugurated by Prof. H. Y. Mohan Ram followed by a formal welcome and general introduction by the course co-ordinator Dr. R.R. Rao and the course convenor Dr. M. Sanjappa. In his inaugural speech Prof. H. Y. Mohan Ram talked about the importance of taxonomy and its wider implications in various fields of research. This was followed by presidential address by K. Narayana Gowda, Vice Chancellor, UAS, Bangalore, he

emphasised that for a quality research in the country it is prerequisite to have a good knowledge of taxonomy.

The whole course was well planned into 35 lectures along with laboratory sessions. The course started with the basics of taxonomy, nomenclature etc and with every lecture the participants were introduced to the multi-faceted role of taxonomy.

Fruitful discussion with the eminent workers in their respective fields, M.P. Nayar (Endemism in Indian Plants), Ramakrishna (Acts and conventions), K. Shankar Rao, S.R. Yadav (Taxonomy of Grasses), D. Narasimhan (Cladistics and Phylogeny), K.G. Bhat (Taxonomy of Palms), Y.N. Seetharam (Pollen Morphology and Taxonomy), V. Bhaskar (Vegetative Characters in identification of forest tree species; Taxonomy of Impatiens Species complexes, K.N. Ganeshaiah, Balakrishna Gowda (Conservation of threatened Plants), R. Uma Shaankar (Molecular Taxonomy, modern techniques in solving taxonomic problems), C. Satish Kumar (Orchid Taxonomy), C. Kameshwar Rao (Role of Taxonomy in Biotechnological research), M.D. Rajanna (Role of Botanic gardens in Plant conservation), K.R. Shivanna (Reproductive biology and Conservation) along with the course co-

ordinator R.R. Rao (Herbaria, its concepts, function and current problems in management; Species and Population; Plant Nomenclature; Trends in evolution of Angiosperm flowers) and course convenor Dr. M. Sanjappa (Taxonomic revisions and Monographs, identification and preparation of botanical keys for the local plants, Role of Botanical Survey of India in documentation of Flora of India), greatly helped in understanding the role of taxonomy.

Since the core theme of the course was taxonomy, a one day field trip to Devarayana Durga and adjoining areas with an objective to make the participants know how to implement or execute the taxonomical knowledge imparted in the classes in the field. A test was also conducted to evaluate the purpose of organising the course.

In the Valedictory Session on 29th Nov, 2012 Chief Guest K.R. Shivanna, emphasised on the need and vital roles taxonomy plays from mere identification, documentation to the conservational, managerial and action plans. Along with organisers, participants also expressed their views about the course. The session concluded with the kind and promising words of the course co-ordinator R.R. Rao who expressed his heartfelt gratitude towards the funding agencies.

Polularization of Science – V.K. Khanna and D.K. Trehan, South Asia Association of Economic Geologists, Jabalpur Chapter. (E-mail : vkk1234@gmail.com)

The three day *Mahakaushal Vigyan Mela* in Jabalpur from 24th to 26th February, 2013 organized by Madhya Pradesh Council of Science and Technology was a grand affair. The aim was to provide a platform to students, teachers, government and other organizations and the dissemination of scientific knowledge to farmers and artisans. The mela provided a stage for interaction between the scientists, students, farmers, artisans, citizens and tribals. The events included essay, drawing, quiz competitions, display of models, posters, handicraft by tribals, training and

awareness programmes and farmer workshop. Science mobile van with working models was a great attraction.

The *Mahakaushal Vigyan Mela* - 2013 was inaugurated by Chairperson of Madhya Pradesh University Regulatory Commission, Prof. Akhilesh Pandey. Vice-Chancellor of Jabalpur Medical University, D.P. Lokwani and Vice-Chancellor of Rani Durgawati University, Jabalpur, Prof. Kedar Nath Singh Yadav were the guests of honour. Prof. Pramod Verma, Director General, M.P. Council of Science and Technology and Scientific Advisor to State

Government presided over the function. All the dignitaries emphasized the need of basic science for the development of the country. They also asserted the need of spreading scientific information and developments to remote areas. “*Vigyan Ka Haath Aam Admi Ke Saath*” should be the motto. The mela will be a great step to popularize science.

On this occasion the dignitaries released the book ‘*Jal Samrakshan, Prabandhan Evam Jal Jagrukta*’ written in Hindi by Prof. V.K. Khanna and published by Kitab Ghar, New Delhi. The book is a part of popularization of science.