

Work on DRDO vessel begins at shipyard

The cutting of the first steel plate, the initial step in the construction of a ship, took place at the Cochin Shipyard Limited (CSL) for Ship No. 20 of the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) on Thursday.

Y. Sreenivas Rao, scientist and project director of the Ship No.20 project, DRDO, Hyderabad, cut the first steel plate by switching on the plate cutting machine. The ceremony was conducted in the hull shop of the yard. Madhu S. Nair, chairman and managing director, directors, officers, supervisors and workmen of the CSL were present. Senior representatives from the Indian Register of Shipping and DNV-GL, the classification societies for the vessel, also attended the ceremony, said a release.



Auspicious start:The plate cutting ceremony, one of the initial steps in the construction of a new ship, being conducted at the Cochin Shipyard for Ship No 20.

The ship with a length of 118.4 metre, width of 20 metre and draft of 7.1 metre and having a weight of 3,900 tonne, was contracted in last August. The CSL is currently building a barge for the National Petroleum Construction Company, Abu Dhabi. The shipyard has started the design work for two vessels of “1,200 passenger cum 1,000 tonne cargo” capacity and another two “500 passenger cum 150 tonne cargo” capacity vessels for the Andaman and Nicobar Administration.

The shipyard has already delivered 18 of the 20 Fast Patrol Vessels built for the Coast Guard and the remaining two vessels are getting ready for delivery. The Ro-Ro vessels for the Kochi Corporation are also scheduled to be delivered soon.

“Good scope for research in life sciences in DRDO”

Stating that there was a huge potential for life sciences-related research in Defence Research and Development Organisation, R. Appavuraj, Director of Proof and Experimental Establishment (PXE) of DRDO in Odisha, welcomed young scientists to explore the opportunities provided by the DRDO.



Inaugurating the 9th national conference of National Academy of Biological Sciences at Madurai Kamaraj University here on Thursday, Mr. Appavuraj said that while many were of the view that DRDO focused mainly on military equipment, it carried out research in various fields. “It has institutions such as Defence Food Research Laboratory and Snow and Avalanche Study Establishment, where many scientists from life sciences work,” he said, adding that

Prospects: R. Appavuraj, Director, Defence Research and Development Organisation, Chandipur, Odisha, addressing a conference at Madurai Kamaraj University on Thursday.—
Photo: S. James

many agricultural scientists, particularly from Tamil Nadu, were involved in research work at the DRDO.

Lauding the conference organisers for choosing a relevant theme of ‘New biological researches: opportunities and challenges for sustainable development,’ Mr. Appavuraj recollected his work with former President A.P.J. Abdul Kalam. “Dr. Kalam gave utmost importance to environment-related issues. Once, on our Chandipur campus, he changed the site we had earmarked for construction of a guest house as it involved felling of trees,” he said.

Speaking at the inauguration, S. Natarajan, Vice-Chancellor, Gandhigram Rural Institute, highlighted the importance of finding solutions to mitigate the adverse impact of climate change. “It is estimated that rice and wheat production may dwindle to 30 per cent by 2030 and climate change will also bring down our gross domestic product by 1.8 per cent to 3.4 per cent,” he said. “Hill and coastal ecosystems will be the worst affected and young scientists have a major role in coming up with solutions to face these impacts,” he said. ‘Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam Memorial NABS – Life Time Achievement Award’ was conferred on K. Ramasamy, Vice-Chancellor of Tamil Nadu Agricultural University, and ‘Prof. S. Kannaiyan Memorial Award’ was conferred on R.R Hanchinal, Chairman, Protection of Plant Varieties and Farmers’ Rights Authority, on the occasion.

K. Muthuchelian, Chairperson, School of Energy, Environment and Natural Resources at the MKU and organising secretary of the two-day conference, said that nearly 400 delegates from diverse fields would be presenting their research papers at the conference. ‘Bioinformatics, bar coding and benefit sharing in biodiversity,’ a book authored by Mr. Muthuchelian was released.

G. Valli, VC of Mother Teresa Women’s University; S. Sudalaimuthu, VC of Karpagam Academy of Higher Education; V.A. Parthasarathy, president of NABS; D.J. Bagyaraj, vice-president; T. Marimuthu, secretary; Kirti Singh, Chairperson, World Noni Research Foundation; and K. Shiva Shankar, president, Environment Protection Institute, offered felicitations.

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'Abdul Kalam was very keen on protecting our environment'

MADURAI: Late President A P J Abdul Kalam was very keen on protecting the environment, said R Appavuraj, director, defence research and development organisation (DRDO), in Madurai on Thursday.

He was speaking at the inaugural function of the two-day national conference titled New Biological Researches: Opportunities and Challenges for Sustainable Development in Agriculture, Biology, Energy, Environment, Health and Climate Change, organised by Madurai Kamaraj University's School of Energy, Environment and Natural Resources and the National Academy of Biological Sciences held on the university campus.

Recalling an incident, Appavuraj said that when Kalam was in DRDO he demanded that a guest house be relocated from the planned spot as a lot of trees had to be felled to accommodate the building. After he became the President, Kalam visited the site and expressed his happiness after seeing the trees flourishing, the director said.

Appavuraj said that despite the common notion that DRDO was involved in research only in the defence field, it carries out researches in various fields, including life sciences. He said there were many opportunities for researches in biological sciences.

The director released a book 'Bioinformatics, Barcoding and Benefit Sharing in Biodiversity,' authored by K Muthuchelian, head, School of Energy, Environment and Natural Resources by handing over the first copy to G Valli, vice-chancellor, Mother Teresa Women's University, Kodaikanal.

S Natarajan, vice-chancellor, The Gandhigram Rural Institute-Deemed University, said the country was facing many challenges due to climate change. In 2030, wheat and rice cultivation will face a decline to the extent of 30 per cent. He said that if the temperature increased by 1 degree centigrade, the yield of crops will decline by 40 per cent and if it increased by 2 degrees centigrade, there will be no yield.

K Shiva Shankar of University of Agricultural Science (Bangalore) said that for a citizen of the US or Canada, land requirement for food, cloth and shelter was four to five acres, which was not the case in India due to rampant consumerism. "This needs to be controlled," he said.

During the function, the Dr A P J Abdul Kalam Memorial NABS-Life Time Achievement Award was given to Tamil Nadu Agricultural University vice-chancellor K Ramasaamy, Prof S Kannaiyan Memorial Award to Protection of Plant Varieties and Farmers' Rights Authority (Government of India) R R Hanchinal and Recognition Award to NABS vice-president D J Bagyaraj.

About 400 delegates, including professors, principal scientists, scientists, research scholars and students from across the country presented research papers at the conference. Kirti Singh, chairperson, World Noni Research Foundation; S Sudalaimuthu, vice-chancellor, Karpagam Academy of Higher Education (Coimbatore), V A Parthasarathy, president, NABS and T Marimuthu, secretary, NABS, were also present.