54th Annual Conference of Association of Microbiologists of India (AMI): A Report

Pratyosh Shukla

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The 54th Annual Conference of the Association of Microbiologists of India (AMI-2013) and the Platinum Jubilee Celebrations of the Association was held at Maharshi Dayanand University, Rohtak, Haryana, India during November 17–20, 2013. An International Symposium on ‘Frontier Discoveries and innovations in Microbiology and its Interdisciplinary relevance’ (FDMIR-2013) was held in conjunction with the conference. The premier event was organized in collaboration with the National Institute of Food Technology Entrepreneurship and Management (NIFTEM), Kundli, Sonapat, India. AMI, established in 1938, is one of the oldest and most reputed scientific organizations of the country. The program included plenary and panel sessions with invited speakers and poster presentations. More than 1800 participants including 25 speakers from overseas attended this prestigious conference. Eminent speakers from USA, UK, Australia, Spain, South Korea, Sweden, France, Mexico, Germany, Nigeria, Japan, Finland and South Africa attended this important scientific conference. Further, a specially convened global scientific session was participated by six international societies of microbiology viz. American Society for Microbiology (ASM), Spain-India joint scientific session of the Scientific Board of the European Section on Applied Biocatalysis, South Africa Society of Microbiology (SASM), Japanese Society of Enzyme Engineering (JSEE), Microbiological Society of Korea (MSK) and Nigerian Society of Microbiology (NGM). The conference provided an opportunity for research professionals in microbiology, biotechnology and allied life sciences for novelty to discuss

and share the proficiency and familiarities in microbiological research for societal benefits.

The program was inaugurated on 17th November, 2013 at Tagore Auditorium of the university by Mr. B.S. Hooda, Chief Minister of Haryana who expressed his satisfaction in bringing together researchers from academia, industry and the government through such conferences to ensure knowledge sharing for societal upliftment. ‘Guest of honour’, Prof. Dinesh Singh, Vice-Chancellor, University of Delhi, reiterated the need for integration of knowledge base among interdisciplinary areas of science and other disciplines for effectively utilizing microbiological research results in the upcoming knowledge driven society. Er. H.S. Chahal, Hon’ble Vice Chancellor, M.D. University, Rohtak and Chief Patron of AMI-2013 in his welcome remarks commented the significance of such conferences and role of AMI in developing research and academic interest amongst young researchers. In his Presidential address Prof. Rup Lal, President AMI, deliberated the growth of AMI and its broader fields with inclusion of newer topics and research areas. He described the role of microbiologists and challenges in front of them towards the excellence of academic and scientific communities. The session was also addressed by Prof. Tapan K. Adhya, General Secretary, AMI, Dr. P. Shukla Organizing Secretary, AMI 2013 and Prof R.C. Kuhad, Chairman, Organizing Committee. The souvenir cum abstract book of AMI 2013 was also released by the Chief Minister of Haryana in the presence of all the dignitaries.

In his keynote speech, Prof. Julio Polaina, Institute of Agro-chemistry and Food technology, CSIC, Spain spoke on the molecular engineering of glycoside hydrolases for food applications and discussed recent discoveries on structural and functional studies of relevant industrial enzymes. In this international event twenty technical

P. Shukla (✉)
Department of Microbiology, Maharshi Dayanand University,
Rohtak 124001, India
e-mail: pratyosh.shukla@gmail.com

sessions were organized under different themes viz. Agricultural and soil Microbiology, Algal Biotechnology, Biodiversity, Bio-fuel and Bio-energy, Bioinformatics and Metagenomics, Environmental Microbiology, Enzyme Technology, Food Microbiology, Industrial Microbiology, IPR, Medical Microbiology, Nano-biotechnology and Plant Microbe Interaction. There was also a joint ASM-AMI session on infectious diseases. Each session of the conference consisted of an invited lectures by the chair followed by poster presentations on explicit themes by the participants afterwards discussion with chair, co-chair and delegates. There were more than 30 platinum jubilee lead invited lectures, 9 young scientists' presentations and 950 posters. In each session, the best poster presentations were awarded by AMI to support the young research students in the form of prize, souvenir and certificates. The conference

also witnessed the signing of MoU between AMI, India and ASM, USA to have a formal association between the two sister societies of Microbiology.

The valedictory session was presided by Shri Jagannath Pahadia, Hon'ble Governor of Haryana and Chancellor, M.D. University, Rohtak in the presence of Er. H.S. Chahal, Hon'ble Vice Chancellor, M.D. University, Rohtak, Vice Chancellor, Prof. S.S. Sangwan, VC, PBDS Health University, Rohtak, Prof. Victor Di Rita, ASM, USA, Prof. Rup Lal, President, AMI, Prof. T.K. Adhya, General Secretary, AMI, Prof R.C. Kuhad, Chairman, Organizing Committee, Prof. Julio Polaina, CSIC, Spain and AMI officials from the Central Council. The 55th Annual conference of AMI will be organized by Tamilnadu Agricultural University (TNAU), Coimbatore, Tamilnadu.