

OBITUARY



Prof. (Dr.) A. Ramachandran
(12-11-1957 to 27-03 2020)

Dr. A. Ramachandran, the Hon'ble Vice Chancellor of Kerala University of Fisheries and Ocean Studies (KUFOS), Panangad, Kochi passed away at Cochin on March 27, 2020 at the age of 61. Dr. Ramachandran was an eminent educationist and scholar in Fisheries, Food Technology and Environment Science.

A man of great vision, he worked tirelessly to place KUFOS in the international orbit. He understood the importance of getting a national impression for the growth of the University and he was instrumental in KUFOS entering into MOUs with various National and International Organizations and Universities with the idea of improving the competence of students and faculties. It was during his tenure that the University started promoting Approved Research Centres for developing research aptitude and collaborative research in the Campus.

As a committed scientist, Dr Ramachandran was the brain behind establishing Centres of Excellence to promote R&D activities in various spheres of specialization of the University and eventually four Centres of Excellences were established and inaugurated by the Hon'ble Fisheries Minister during 2017. For academic development, two new programmes viz., B.Tech (Food Technology) and M.Sc (Environmental Science) were started and seeing the demand for the fisheries course at national level, he increased the number of seats in the professional B.F.Sc programme from 50 to 80 from the academic year 2019-20 onwards. With the view to cop up with the new proposed UGC regulation, he in his last budget speech on 21 March 2020, proposed to start a M.Tech (Food Technology) besides few distant education courses in the University.

As a man who walked ahead of his time, Dr. Ramachandran realized that the future of world economic system will revolve around the Blue Economy and the sustainable utilization of aquatic wealth. He had been making sincere efforts to create awareness among policy makers and general public about the importance of blue economy in the context of India. It was under his leadership that KUFOS hosted the India's first and Asia's second International Conference on Blue economy, Aquatic Resources and Blue Economy (AQUABE 2019) at Kochi in November 2019. He could bring in the Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA) as the main partner in the conference, besides the participation of scientists, policy makers, faculty members, students, social workers, entrepreneurs and farmers from over 28 countries across the world. This ultimately led KUFOS to be the centre for the proposed Centre of Excellence of IORA, as announced by the IORA Secretary General Dr Nomvuyo N. Nokwe at the Conference venue. Dr. Ramachandran was pursuing with great enthusiasm for the centre to become a reality. The IORA secretariat has conveyed their deepest and heartfelt condolences at the sudden demise of the great personality.

Dr. Ramachandran, after completing his M.Sc in Industrial Fisheries from CUSAT in 1982 with first rank, got selected to the Agricultural Research Service of Indian Council of Agriculture Research (ICAR) with a First Rank. He joined the Central Institute of Fisheries Technology (CIFT), Cochin in 1984 and started his professional career as a Scientist at the Veraval Research Centre of CIFT at Gujarat. After eight years of stint with CIFT, he selected teaching as his future carrier and joined Cochin University of Science and Technology as a Reader in School of Industrial Fisheries. He rose gradually in his carrier and occupied various coveted positions such as Controller of Examinations, Registrar at CUSAT and Director of School of Industrial Fisheries before he assumed charges as the Vice chancellor of the KUFOS in the year 2016.

As a seasoned researcher he secured his Post Doctoral fellowship from the Delft Technical University, The Netherlands had published more than 300 internationally recognized research papers and authored many books in Fisheries and Ocean Science and has successfully guided as many as 16 scholars towards PhD. He had also been an

expert member in many a National and International Fisheries Councils and Committees. Dr. Ramachandran will be remembered among fisheries academic fraternity as an internationally acclaimed scientist from the South Asian region. As Adviser to Sultan Qaboos Bin Said, the ruler of Oman during 1994-98, he played a significant role in the revival of marine fisheries of Oman. He is known for his commitment, sincerity and simplicity.

He was also the recipient of many National and International awards in fisheries sector including Jawaharlal Nehru Fund Award for Academic Excellence 1982 and Dr. N. Balakrishnan Nair International Environmental Excellence Award (2019) from Hawassa University, Ethiopia.

Son of former Cochin Mayor and veteran Indian National Congress Party leader, late Shri K S N Menon and Smt. Ambujakshy Menon, Dr Ramachandran is survived by his wife Dr. Thanooja Rajeswari, Senior Teacher at Campian School, Kochi, and their only son Rahul Ramachandran is a marine engineer working at Singapore.

The entire KUFOS fraternity with heavy heart sincerely mourns the sudden untimely demise of their leader in all respects.

May his soul Rest in Peace.