

## **Report of activities from January 2021 to March 2022**

VIBA made significant achievements during this period in spite of the restrictions due to COVID - 19 pandemic. The major activities include 1. Donation of infrastructure such as IQAC facility and reception counter to the college 2. Financial assistance to Botany department during NAAC accreditation process 3. Participation in alumni meetings during NAAC peer review team visit 4. Installation of Champaran freedom struggle memoirs in Vatika, (public park at Palakkad) and in the botanical garden at college campus 5. Knowledge partner for the preparation of Vision 2030 document by Palakkad Management Association 6. Support for plant identification for Kerala Bioblitz program associated with India Biodiversity Portal (IBP) 7. Online GB meeting with detailed presentation of activities and release of third VIBA - Botanica 8. Periodic online and physical EC meetings 9. Photographic and quiz competitions for members 10. Continuation of the VIBA endowment lectures and webinar series 11. Felicitation to Olympian Sreesankar and other achievers 12. Honouring Dr. P. Haridasan, Principal for the promotion as Deputy Director, Collegiate Education (Kozhikode) 13. Welcome to VIBA programme for outgoing students and 14. Visit to Ahalia International Foundation, – Integrated campus at Palakkad.

Most significant achievement of VIBA during this period was honouring two of their respected teachers and mentors – Prof. V.P. Krishnan Nambiar (from 1956 to 1977) and Prof. R. Vasudevan Nair (from 1956 to 1989). Both of them left for their heavenly abode in 2003 and 2021 respectively.

Several VIBA members served as resource persons for district biodiversity technical support group, for number of webinars in connection with environment, bamboo and science days and also for green skill development programmes. The tenure of the second executive committee after rejuvenation of VIBA was over by May 2021 and new committee members, unanimously elected, took charge from 1<sup>st</sup> June 2021.

A consolidated report of activities is given below.

### **General body meeting - 8<sup>th</sup> May 2021 (online)**

GB meeting started with the theme song of VIBA. During the welcome address that followed Dr. Maya C. Nair, President and HOD, Department of Botany mentioned about the circumstances that lead to online meeting and expected to have a change soon so that physical meeting can be organized. Dr. P. Haridasan, Principal while delivering the presidential address appreciated the support of VIBA to the college in several ways including infrastructure and mobile phones to needy students. Online release of third Botanica by

dignitaries - Smt Priya Ajayan, Municipal Chairperson, Sri E Krishnadas, Deputy Chairman, Prof. S. Syamaladevi and Prof R. Vasudevan Nair, Former HODs of the department followed. During the felicitations, Dr. C. V. Sreeranjith Kumar, IQAC Coordinator and Sri. Pratheesh, Secretary OSA congratulated VIBA for the noteworthy contributions and wished all the best for future endeavours. The Secretary, Dr. K. K. Seethalakshmi gave a summary of the activities from 2017 onwards. The audited account for 2019-2020 was presented by Dr. Rekha Vasudevan, former treasurer and the account for 2020-2021 was given by Ms. Hema, treasurer

**Prof. V. P. Krishnan Nambiar memorial endowment award:** First Prof. VPKN memorial endowment cash award was announced in the online GB. While briefing about the award, Sri. Jayakrishnan G. Menon mentioned that a large number of Botany alumni of Victoria College fondly remember their beloved 'Nambiar sir' for his deep knowledge in the subject, excellence in teaching, and above all, as a nice human being who influenced their character development and career building. With the interest of the amount (Rs 2,30,000/-) sponsored by the family members, students and other alumni, four cash awards were declared by Dr. V. K. Jayasree, daughter of Prof. VPKN. While addressing the members, Dr. Jayasree mentioned the influence of the news letter, VIBA – Botanica in understanding the respects and regards of students towards her father and it inspired her to contribute for an award to student achievers of GVC Botany department. Since there are three university rank holders for post graduation this year, it was decided to honour all three and the topper for graduation. Accordingly the following are the awardees for 2021 and the awards will be presented in the next physical GB.

Course	Name of students	Particulars	Amount (Rs.)
M. Sc.	Souparnika S.	First in GVC and first in University	2000
“	Veena C.	Second in GVC and second in University	1500
“	Greeshma Balu	Third in GVC and eighth in University	1000
B. Sc.	Sandhra K. R	First in GVC	1500

**By-law amendments :** Three amendments to the by-laws were proposed by Adv. Rajesh O. N. Nair, which was unanimously approved by the GB.

Existing	Amendment proposed & accepted
Clause 8 (b): Immediate past President and Secretary will be ex-officio members of the Executive Committee	Immediate past President, Secretary and Treasurer will be ex-officio members of the Executive Committee
By law 8, 10 and 11 Total strength of E C President: 1; Vice Presidents: 2; Secretary: 1; Joint Secretaries: 2; Treasurer: 1 Members nominated: 1; Other members: 7 Total: 15	The strength of EC will be increased to 17 of which three will be nominated. One faculty member and two others whose service is essential to the growth of Association. From the next EC onwards (in 2023) the total strength will be 17 members.

Clause 24: The Secretary / Treasurer shall have a recoupable permanent advance of Rs 1000/-	The Secretary / Treasurer shall have a recoupable permanent advance of Rs 5000/-
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**New Executive committee (June 2021 - May 2023):** The term of Executive committee was over by 31 May 2021 and notification for election was done. Sri Jiji Varghese was nominated as the returning officer. The following members were unanimously elected

Vice Presidents	- Girish Cherukat & Adv. Rajesh O. N. Nair.
Secretary	– Dr. K. K. Seethalakshmi
Treasurer	– P. Hema.
Jt. Secretaries	– P. K. Ramanath & Anju G.
Members	– Dr. Suraj Ananthakrishnan, Dr. Rekha Vasudevan, Dr. Manju C. Nair, Sandhya V. Kumar, Rampradeep R., Karthika M & Athira S.

The HOD of Botany department Dr. Maya C. Nair as President, Dr. A.R. Rasmi as faculty member and Dr. K. Haridasan, former Secretary as ex-Officio member will continue. By the end of March, 2022, VIBA has five patrons, Dr. M. C. Gopinathan, Ms. T. Geetha, Prof (Dr.) Mohandas B. Menon, Dr. S. Prasanna Kumar and Dr. A. Rekha Vasudevan. All the patrons are invitees to executive committee.

**Announcement of photographic competition:** A new activity – photographic competition in connection with World environmental day was announced by Girish Cherukat.

**Suggestions from members:** Suggestions consolidated by P. K. Ramanath, Vice President, included health care initiatives, training programmes for students and members for capacity development and also to increase number of field trips. EC agreed to take up these when the pandemic situation changes.

The meeting was concluded with vote of thanks from Sri. U. Divakaran, Jt. Secretary.

### Executive Committee Meetings

Nine meetings were held during this period including a special one for approval for self publication of commemorative volume. Of these, five meetings (3 in the first quarter and two in the last quarter) were physical and the remaining was online. New committee took charge in June and prior to that a combined online meeting of outgoing and new members were held on 23<sup>rd</sup> May 2021. The list of current EC including six new members is given above. The Committee members actively participated in the meeting and many schemes were implemented after critical scrutiny by the EC. The EC honoured the President Dr. Maya C. Nair for getting promotion as Associate Professor and Dr. Rekha Vasudevan for receiving her doctorate. Again VIBA congratulated Dr. Maya C. Nair in January 2022 for becoming the Vice-principal of GVC. The efforts of Dr. K. Haridasan for getting Vanamitra award to Green Ahalia were very much appreciated. VIBA also congratulated Dr. Seethalakshmi for getting elected to National Governing Council (NGC) of Bamboo Society of India. .

## Support to Botany department

**Financial assistance:** VIBA gave a support of Rs. 50000/- to strengthen and maintenance of the facilities in the Department. It was used for establishment of a croton germ plasm, cactus garden, procurement of plants and planters, renovation of display boards and painting of green houses

**Alumni meetings during NAAC team visit:** VIBA participated in the Alumni meetings organized by IQAC on 30<sup>th</sup> October 2021 and the NAAC peer review committee on 17<sup>th</sup> November 2021. Dr. K. K. Seethalakshmi presented the achievements and future action plan of VIBA for next five years before the NAAC committee. Committee members appreciated the team work of VIBA and congratulated them

**Participation in open defence of Ph. D student:** On 3<sup>rd</sup> February 2021, VIBA members joined on line for the viva-voce examination of Ms. Arabhi to defend her thesis on 'Microhabitat and angiosperm diversity analysis in selected hillocks of Palghat Gap Region, Kerala, India' submitted to Mahatma Gandhi University, Kottayam

**Welcome to VIBA:** During this programme, VIBA EC members meet out going students of Botany department, give them a briefing about VIBA and invite them to join VIBA. Also provide them a certificate folder with a farewell message and wish them a bright future. This programme, which started in 2019, was not organized for two years due to Covid regulations. On 30<sup>th</sup> March 2022 the second of the series was organized for outgoing students of 2022 batch. Dr. A. R. Rashmi, Faculty and VIBA member gave a detailed introduction about the association and its activities. Dr. K. K. Seethalakshmi, Sri P. K. Ramanath and Ms. Muhsina addressed the students. The VIBA and faculty members of the department presented the folders and wished good luck to all outgoing students. Ms. Karthika M, EC member, VIBA proposed vote of thanks

**Support to Library:** Dr. K Haridasan, former secretary and ex-officio member supported library with the subscription for Karshakasree and also presented a book on Trees of Arunachal Pradesh

## Endowment Lectures & Webinars

**Dr. M. C. Gopinathan endowment lecture:** Dr. M. C. Gopinathan is an alumni who completed his post graduation from GVC in 1978 and an active member of VIBA. He donated an amount of 1.65 lakhs to organize an annual lecture with its interest. The third MCG lecture in this series was organized online on 27 February 2021. Dr. Ritesh Kumar Choudhary, Head, Biodiversity and Palaeobiology Group, Agharkar Research Institute, Pune, Maharashtra was the resource person. He gave a detailed presentation on "Omega taxonomy vis a'-vis phyto diversity documentation". The students, research scholars and faculty members were benefited from the detailed presentation starting from the basics, taking through various stages of advancements and also addressing some of the problems faced by Botanists, especially Taxonomists. A lot of appreciation was there during the feedback

received from the participants and many of them expressed their interest for collaborative work with Dr. Ritesh.

**Sarojini B. Menon Memorial Endowment lecture:** This award was instituted by Prof (Dr.) Mohandas B. Menon, Former Deputy Vice Chancellor, Wawasan Open University, Malaysia, in memory of his mother Sarojini B. Menon. He had donated an amount of Rs. 1.5 lakhs which is kept as a long term fixed deposit. According to the MOU, the interest accruing from this amount need to be used by VIBA for an annual activity organized preferably during November- December. The nature and content of the activity would be relevant to the larger society and beneficial to the professional community of Botany including students, teachers and researchers as well as local community in and around Palakkad. This year a virtual endowment lecture was organized on 28<sup>th</sup> November 2021, on the second death anniversary of Sarojini B. Menon. Dr. T. V. Sajeew, Principal Scientist, Kerala Forest Research Institute, Peechi was the resource person. He is basically an Entomologist with interest in Biological Invasions, Political Ecology, Sound scape Ecology and Chemical Ecology. The topic of this lecture was ‘What is happening to Plants during changing climate? Why should we bother?’. The lecture was attended by students, faculty members of various colleges, family members of Dr. Menon and VIBA members.

**Webinars on current topics:** VIBA organized two online webinars in the reporting period. The first one “Farm laws 2020 – Pros and Cons” on 9<sup>th</sup> January, 2021 was handled by Prof. (Dr.) P. Indira Devi, Former Director of Research, Kerala Agricultural University, Vellanikkara. The speaker for second one “Can budget 2021 Re-farm Indian Agriculture”. On 13<sup>th</sup> February 2021 was Ms. Mythili Bhusnurmath, Consultant, Economic Times. Sri Jayakrishnan G. Menon, Vice President was mainly responsible for organizing webinars on current topics

### **Online Competitions for VIBA members**

**Photographic competition for World Environment Day:** VIBA conducted an online photographic competition for the members during May 2021. The results were announced by Girish Cherukat on 5<sup>th</sup> June 2021 - the World Environment Day. About 24 members participated in the competition and best five were selected as winners.

Sri. Girish Cherukat, Adv. Rajesh O. N. Nair and Dr. Rekha Vasudevan organized this event.

**QUIZ competition:** During the lock - down period a quiz competition was organized with the support of Sri Jameer and Sri Jaseer, VIBA members as masters,. There was good response for this programme, especially youngsters. Top five scorers were selected as winners and list of winners of both the competitions are given below.

Winners of photographic and Quiz completions.

Position	Photographic competition	Quiz competition
First	Dr. Kavitha P.G	Dr. Suresh V
Second	Dr. Arabi	Muhsina A. A
Third	Dr. Jisha	Anjana N
Fourth	Jameer	Smitha M
Fifth	Poornima.	Adv. Rajesh O. N Nair

VIBA congratulates all winners of the competitions and thanks to participants and organizers for making it possible. The prizes for all competitions will be distributed in the next physical general body meeting.

## **Outreach programmes**

**Knowledge partner for Palakkad Vision Document – 2030:** For the ‘ Palakkad Vision Document 2030’, an initiative of The Palghat Management Association (PMA). VIBA was one of the knowledge partners. Sri Jayakrishnan G. Menon was the Chairman of Agri and Tourism vertical. Dr. M. C. Gopinathan, Dr K. Haridasan, Dr. K. K. Seethalakshmi, Sri. Prabhu P.M, and Sri. P. K. Ramanath, provided suggestions in their fields of expertise. Most of them were incorporated in the document under the vertical Agriculture. The logo of VIBA was displayed in all boards, fliers and acknowledged in the vision document. The document was released formally at on 26 September 2021. Hon. speaker Sri. M. B. Rajesh presented it to District Collector, Ms. Mrunmai Joshi IAS. All the participants congratulated PMA for preparing such a document, first of its kind. Sri. Pratheesh, Secretary, OSA, GVC is the President of PMA. The copy of the document was handed over to the Chief Minister and circulated to policy makers and other stake holders likely to be involved in the implementation of the proposal.

**Plant Identification for Biobliz:** Kerala Biobliz is a citizen science program initiated by Asokha Trust for Research in Ecology and the Environment, Bangalore and Community Environment Research Centre, Alapuzha (ATREE-CERC), in association with India Biodiversity Portal (IBP). It is to document the biodiversity with the participation of school and college students, teachers and the enthusiastic general public. The program is expected to promote interest, awareness and participation in conservation activities and sustained monitoring of the biodiversity of the region. VIBA honoured the request of Dr Manju V. Subramanian Assistant Professor, (daughter of Prof. C N Ammukutty - former faculty of Victoria college). Dept. Of Zoology, The Cochin College, Dr. Maya C. Nair accepted the leadership of Biobliz and Taxonomy experts from VIBA were involved. The participants from Cochin College are forwarding photographs of plants in the vicinity through Whats App messages. Dr. Maya’s team is giving them the binomial names as per latest botanical nomenclature, along with family to which it belongs and the common names in Malayalam. The activity continues.

**Support for Biodiversity conservation to Green Ahalia project:** VIBA has been supporting Green Ahalia for their biodiversity conservation programme. The concept and master plan is from Dr. K. Haridasan, who is the consultant for this project. Dr. Maya C Nair and Dr. K. K. Seethalakshmi are honorary members in the Green Ahalia Advisory Board. Several planting materials were provided by VIBA members to strengthen the thematic gardens in the campus. To mention some of them - ferns from Dr. Maya C. Nair, orchids, ferns and gymnosperms by Dr. Manju C. Nair, gymnosperms by Dr. Rekha Vasudevan, bamboo and other plants by Dr. K. K. Seethalakshmi. Drs. Maya C. Nair and Rekha Vasudevan Drs. Manju and Rajesh inaugurated some of the theme parks. VIBA members visited Ahalia campus on 8<sup>th</sup> January 2022.



**VIBA members as resource persons:** Drs. Maya C. Nair, Suraj Ananthakrishnan and Seethalakshmi are members Biodiversity Technical Committee for Palakkad Dt. Dr. Seethalakshmi gave a webinars on Science day in February 2021 for Mercy College, Palakkad and series of webinars in connection with World Bamboo day on various topics on bamboo. She also handled three sessions on bamboo propagation and development for Green skill development programme at KFRI and also for Krishi Vigyan Kendras of various states in March, 2022.

Apart from subject related activities many of our members are involved in different professions and continues their own fields of interest after retirement. To name some of them Justice P. N. Ravindran after his retirement from high court is practicing at Supreme Court. Ms. Lathika is actively involved as editor of an online magazine ‘ Malayalanadu’. VIBA has many reputed medical doctors as members who had offered commendable services during pandemic period. Also there are representation in Govt service, media and film world.

### **Felicitations to Olympian Sreesankar**

In a function organized by GVC to congratulate Mr. Sreesankar for getting selection to participate for long jump in Tokyo Olympics, 2021 VIBA also joined to wish him best of luck. A memento was presented on this occasion. Many EC members participated in this event

### **Tribute to Prof. R. Vasudevan Nair**

It was very unfortunate that we lost one of our most respected and beloved teachers, a well known taxonomist, Prof. R. Vasudevan Nair on 13th August 2021. He was an integral part of VIBA, participated in all our physical GB meetings, served as a resource person for competitions, and shared his experience in Victoria College and also contributed articles on rare plants in VIBA Botanica. The logo of VIBA Botanica is his contribution. EC members paid their last homage at his residence. A tribute was offered on 29<sup>th</sup> August online in which his family members, relatives, students, faculty members of department and close associates shared their fond memories about him. VIBA shares the grief with his daughter, Dr. Rekha Vasudevan and family and pray that his soul may rest in peace

### **Installation of Champaran sathyagraha memorials**

The Champaran sathyagraha the first non-violent freedom struggle lead by Gandhiji was about cultivating Neela amari (*Indigofera tinctoria*) the plant from which the dye indigo is extracted. Farmers in the Champaran village in Bihar were forced to cultivate money crops like Neela amari instead of food crops which resulted in poverty. It was the success of Champaran Satyagraha that instilled confidence in Gandhiji to use Satyagraha as a means of struggle for Independence. The Champaran sathyagraha is completing 105 years in April 2022. To create awareness about the first struggle to public and students alike, VIBA installed two memorials - one in Vatika and the other in Botanical garden in the GVC campus

**Memorial at Vatika Gardens:** To provide awareness to public about the importance of this event in India's freedom struggle, a memorial of was made in Vatika by planting

seedlings of Neela Amari and installing two display boards in English and Malayalam on 2<sup>nd</sup> October 2021. District tourism promotion council (DTPC) supported VIBA by in this endeavor. A press conference was conducted in which Sri. Girish Cherukat, Adv. Rajesh ON Nair, Sri. Jayakrishan G. Menon and Dr. K. K. Seethalakshmi briefed about the importance of the memorial. Hon'ble MP Sri. Sreekandan inaugurated this function by planting the seedlings. Sri Dinesan, DTPC Secretary also joined for planting. Both of them briefed about the importance of Champaran Sathyagraha and appreciated VIBA for taking up such an activity. Many VIBA EC members addressed the gathering. The event was organized following Covid protocols, hence an online link was also provided for those who can't make it.

**Memorial at Botanic Garden, GVC Campus:** Another similar memorial was installed in the Botanic garden of GVC near the Gandhi statue with an objective to create awareness among students. It was planted on 4<sup>th</sup> November, 2021 by Dr. S. Prasanna kumar, one of the patrons of VIBA. A display board was provided here also

To conclude, VIBA is proud to inform that we have taken a new initiative of publication of scientific books during this year. The first one is commemorative volume, "Conspectus on realms of biodiversity" to honour Prof. R. Vasudevan Nair. We could self publish it with liberal support from VIBA members. VIBA is planning to continue similar activities in the coming years to make authentic information available. Process of getting the association registered is initiated and waiting for the approval of general body. Launching of a website, increasing number of members, continuation of the newsletter VIBA - Botanica, endowment lectures, webinars on current topics, greening up of the campus, academic support programmes and better interaction with students are planned for the coming years. We like to place on record our thanks to new patrons Ms. T. Geetha, Dr. Prasanna Kumar and Dr. Rekha Vasudevan for their valuable support during this period for construction of IQAC, reception Counter and publication of the book. All the achievements VIBA made so far are only because of the whole hearted support received from the members. We expect that you will continue to be with us to keep VIBA VIBRANT!!!.

Wishing you all the best for healthy, happy and prosperous time ahead



Dr. Maya C. Nair  
President




Dr. K. K. Seethalakshmi  
Secretary



### Receipts and payment of VIBA for financial year 2021-2022

Receipts			Payments		
Particulars	Amount Rs.	Total Rs.	Particulars	Amount Rs.	Total Rs.
Opening Balance as on 1-4-2021			Publications		
As per Indian Bank SB	119626.9		1. VIBA- Botanica Printing & Postage		50182.3
FD with Indian Bank 50000 x 4	200000		2. Commemorative Volume		191156.8
SBMM Endowment	150000		Infrastructure		
Cash in Hand	2781.3	472408.2	1. IQAC Office complex	1275000	
Interest received			2. Recept. Counter Dr. P. K. & VIBA	1182100	2457100
1. From Savings Bank	5549		Support to Bot. Dept for NAAC		15000
2. FD with Indian Bank 50000 x 3 (monthly)	7452	13001	Honorarium - SBMME & Quiz		9000
From Endowments with OSA			Domain Registration		6537
1. Dr. M. C. Gopinathan Endowment	8100		Champan Sathyagraha Memoirs		
2. VPK Nambiar Memorial Endowment	15922	24022	1. DTPC Vatika	9475	
Donations received			2. Gandhi Garden GVC	5535	15010
1. Infra structure IQAC office T Geetha	1275000		Postage General		82.6
2. Infra structure Reception Counter Dr. P. K.	1171800		Stationery		9797.5
3. For commemorative Volume RVN	237101		Flood Cess		0.08
4. Printing Botanica	10000		EC meeting Tea & snacks		200
5. Champan Sathyagraha memoir	5500		Cheque charges		142
6. To VIBA general	10001	2709402	Advance from Secretary		1100
RVN Book Sales including postage		20520	Closing Balance		
Member Fee - Bank 10 M x 1000 + 4 x 1000 Cash 4000		14000	FD 50000 x 4	200000	
			FD SBMME endowment	150000	
			Cash in SB Indian Bank	148031.84	
			Cash in hand	13.1	
					498044.94
Grand Total		3253353.2	Grand Total		3253353.2

  
 Hema P.  
 Treasurer  
 Victoria Botany Alumni Association  
 Govt. Victoria College, Palakkad.

  
 Dr. K. K. Keethalakshmi  
 Secretary  
 Victoria Botany Alumni Association  
 Govt. Victoria College, Palakkad.

  
 Floyd Joseph  
 Auditor