



ICAR-CMFRI Celebrates 70th Foundation Day

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Wonders of marine biodiversity exhibited at Open House programmes

The ICAR-Central Marine Fisheries Research Institute (CMFRI) celebrated its 70th foundation day on 3rd February 2017, by conducting the Open House, an exhibition-cum-education programme, at its Headquarters in Kochi and all the Regional Research Centres.



Nearly 4,000 people visited the Headquarters of the institute located in Kochi, Kerala to watch in awe the splendours of aquatic organisms in the sea and to understand the latest developments in marine fisheries research. As part of the programme, the National Marine Biodiversity Museum, various state-of-the-art laboratories, marine research aquarium, Agricultural Technology Information Centre (ATIC) and hatcheries were opened to the public at the Headquarters. Information service was provided at the all exhibition stalls arranged under the aegis of 10 Divisions of ICAR-CMFRI. The museum, which is designated as the National Repository by the Union government, was the main attraction to the visitors. Around 1137 finfish species, 153 crustaceans, 487 molluscs, 49 echinoderms, 198 corals and sponges, 91 seaweeds and 233 various other specimens make up the collection in the museum. The Antarctic krills, horse shoe crab, sea snakes, sea birds, pearl oyster, sea cow, sharks, penguin and dolphins were the main attraction at the marine biodiversity museum, which is designated as the National Repository by the Union government. The krills are the most favourite food item for blue whales and dolphins.

The visitors also displayed keen interest in understanding the functioning of the fish ageing laboratory situated at the Headquarters. The laboratory uses state-of-the-art equipment to find out the age of the fishes. The scientists explained to the visitors the various stages involved in the process. Models of cage fish farming, aquaponics, ornamental fish farming, recirculating aquaculture system (RAS) etc. were demonstrated to the public. The visitors also interacted with the scientists and engaged in discussions on the issues and challenges being faced by the marine fisheries of the country. Laboratories related to molecular biology, bioprospecting, cell culture, fishery biology, environmental research, climate change, ocean acidification etc. also were opened to the public during the programme.

Foundation day was also celebrated in all the Regional Research Centres located in Veraval, Mumbai, Karwar, Mangalore, Calicut, Vizhinjam, Chennai, Tuticorin, Mandapam and Visakhapatnam, and the Field Centre in Puri and the KVK of ICAR-CMFRI in Ernakulam by conducting similar Open House programmes, attracting the public to view and understand the research activities of the institute.

Dr. S. D. Tripathi, Former Director of CIFE was chief guest at the Mumbai Research Centre of the ICAR-CMFRI. Students of schools and colleges, fishermen, officials, stakeholders and faculty members from various colleges visited various laboratories and museum at the Centre. Students from 12 schools and local enthusiasts visited the museum, instrument laboratories and biogas plant at the Mangalore Research Centre. A documentary film on the secrets of marine life and a short film on activities of the Mangalore RC were also screened for the public. The marine research aquarium named '*Sagarika*' was the key attraction at the Vizhinjam Research Centre where eminent fishery scientists delivered talks on the various phases of marine fisheries research in the country.

The Open House programme, organized at the Calicut Research Centre, evoked excellent response and more than 1000 students from various schools and colleges, besides the general public visited laboratories, marine fish farm, marine research aquarium and marine biology museum.

The Karwar Research Centre of ICAR-CMFRI created public awareness on marine cage farming, nursery rearing, Recirculating Aquaculture System etc. during the foundation day programme.

More than 2,000 students from the schools and colleges visited the aquarium and museum at the Mandapam RC of the institute. Awareness on marine resource conservation, biodiversity issues, mariculture and aquarium keeping was given to the students. Dr Paul Pandian, Fisheries Development Commissioner, Govt. of India was one of the guests at the foundation day programme organized at the Veraval Research Centre.

The Visakhapatnam Research Centre focussed on providing awareness on Recirculatory Aquaculture System (RAS) to the visitors of the institute during the Open House programme.

An elocution competition on the topic 'Green Energy-Opportunities and Challenges' was conducted at the Tuticorin Research Centre of ICAR-CMFRI as part of the programme. Drawing competition on marine biodiversity and its conservation was also conducted in addition to the Open House at the Centre. The Chennai Research Centre helped the participants understand the ongoing research activities of the Centre through interaction with the scientists of pelagic, demersal, crustacean and molluscan fisheries divisions. The cashless mechanism facility installed at the Sale Counter of Krishi Vigyan Kendra of ICAR-CMFRI in Ernakulam was explained to the public and students with a request to utilize cashless transactions as far as possible.