

SOCIETY FOR PLANT BIOCHEMISTRY AND BIOTECHNOLOGY
DIVISION OF BIOCHEMISTRY, ICAR-IARI, NEW DELHI

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Proceedings of the Annual General Body Meeting of the Society for Plant Biochemistry and Biotechnology (SPBB) held on 20th November, 2020.

The Annual General Body Meeting of the Society for Plant Biochemistry and Biotechnology (SPBB) was held on 20th November, 2020 during the National Virtual Conference on 'Current Trends and Challenges in Plant Biochemistry and Biotechnology with the following agenda items.

1. Briefing on SPBB annual activities for the previous year 2019-2020
2. Invitation of proposals for the next year's (2020-2021) activities
3. Others by the permission of chair

The meeting was initially scheduled at 06:00 PM, however it had to be adjourned and was again convened at 07:00 PM due to lack of quorum. A total of 22 members attended this meeting. EC-Members-Dr A. M. Kayastha, Dr Anil Kumar, Dr G. S. Suresha, Dr Jasdeep Padaria, Dr. K. R. Koundal, Dr. P. K. Jain, Dr Paramjit Khurana, Dr R. C. Bhattacharya, Dr R.C. Borah, Dr. Rakesh Singh & Dr. S. K. Sinha could not make it to the meeting due to certain unavoidable reasons. Dr. P. K. Mandal, Joint Secretary, SPBB coordinated the meeting by welcoming the Chairman, Dr S. L. Mehta (President, SPBB), Drs. S.R. Bhat & Archana Sachdev (Vice-Presidents), Dr. Shelly Praveen (Secretary), Dr. R. Srinivasan (Chief Editor, JPBB), Dr. Aruna Tyagi (Treasurer, SPBB) and EC members.

At the outset, the Chairman, Dr. S. L. Mehta welcomed the members and requested Dr. R. Srinivasan to present the Chief Editor's report. Dr. Srinivasan briefed the members regarding current status and progress of the in-house Journal (JPBB). Dr Srinivasan thanked Editorial Board members and reviewers for their hard work in processing the manuscripts received for their possible consideration towards the publication in JPBB. He then apprised the members about following points:

- At present, approximately 500-550 manuscripts are being received, out of which 40-50 finally get published, after going through the critical and comprehensive reviewing process at different levels, in four issues of the journal published per year. Some of the members suggested to increase the number of research papers being published per issue from 13 to 15 while others were in favour of enhancing its frequency to garner more citations, which is an important factor for the calculation of impact factor of a journal. As informed by Dr. Mamta Kapila from Springer Nature India Pvt. Ltd in a previous meeting, this step, if approved, may help to enhance the revenue generation as well.
- The current Impact factor of JPBB (for the year 2019) is 0.773 and royalty received from Springer Nature India Pvt. Ltd. during the calendar year 2019-2020 was Rs. 7,08,058/- (Rupees seven lakhs eight thousand fifty eight only).

- Prospects of coming out with a special issue on the topic of 'Plant Stress Biology' in the year 2021 and proposed Dr Manoj Prasad's name as a Guest editor for this special issue. Considering the vast experience and recognition of Dr. Manoj Prasad in this field, the Chairman readily agreed for the same.
- Looking at the problem of non-responsiveness of certain editors, some new members have been inducted in the Editorial Board while some members have withdrawn their name from the Editorial Board. The members agreed to remove the names of non-responsive editors from the board and suggested to minimize the period upto 03 months for the decision on submitted manuscripts. The Chief Editor was authorised to take necessary steps.

In the end, he requested all the members to submit their high quality research papers in JPBB to further enhance its reputation and visibility.

After Dr. Srinivasan's presentation, Dr. S. L. Mehta requested to Dr. Shelly Praveen, Secretary, SPBB to present the Secretary's report. Dr. Praveen placed on record a deep sense of gratitude and appreciation to all the previous and present executive members of the Society for their continuous support in strengthening the Society. Dr Praveen also conveyed sincere condolences to the late Dr. VL Chopra and Dr. SR Chatterjee, two of the eminent founder members of the Society. She then updated the house regarding different activities planned/executed during the previous year as given below under the umbrella of the SPBB.

1. Workshops

- a) Gene Editing for Enhancing Plant Productivity and Stress Tolerance was organised during 10-12 November, 2019 at ICAR-IIRR, Hyderabad.
 - b) Workshop on Transgenic crops: Technology and Application (for students of Class XI-XIIth) was organised at ICAR-NIPB, New Delhi during January 30-31, 2020.
 - c) National e-workshop on 'Functional Foods, Bioactive Compounds and Phytochemicals for Better Nutrition' has been scheduled for 09-11 December, 2020 with UBKV, West Bengal
 - d) Workshop on 'Biomolecules, Bio resources and Biotechnology' for school teachers of Delhi through online mode has been scheduled for 15.01.2021 with ICAR-IARI, New Delhi.
- 2. Webinar:** A webinar on 'Nutrition, Immunity & Covid-19' has been successfully organised by ICAR-IARI on 30.09.2020. During this webinar, a special issue of the JPBB on 'Advances in Plant Biology: Impact of Arabidopsis Research' was released by Dr. S. L. Mehta, President of the Society & a product, 'Hallur- gluten blended bajra flour was released by Dr. A.K. Singh, Director, ICAR-IARI.

3. SPBB Lecture Series

A series of lectures were delivered by eminent scientists/speakers during the year 2019-20. One of them was delivered by Prof. Hanu R. Pappu, Washington State University, USA on 20.01.2020 on the topic of 'Do's and Don'ts in Successful Job Search'. Another three lectures

were delivered by Dr. Felix Bast, Central University of Punjab on the topic of ‘Nutrition myths’; Dr. Nitin Singhal, NABI, Mohali on the topic of ‘Micronutrients the small building blocks of nutrition: utility, remunerations and beyond’ and by Dr. Sushant Verma, Primus Super Specialty Hospital, Delhi on the topic entitled, “A surgeon’s view on nutrition and immunity” during the Webinar on 30.09.2020.

4. National Conference

An undergoing National Virtual Conference entitled ‘Current Trends and Challenges on Plant Biochemistry and Biotechnology’ (20-21 November, 2020).

5. SPBB-Springer Awards (JPBB): This award was constituted in collaboration with Springer Nature India Pvt. Ltd. for honouring the Best Editor & Best Reviewer of the JPBB and conferred to Dr. S. R. Bhat & Dr. Manoj Prasad respectively, during the inaugural session of the conference. The two Best research article awards were also given to Dr. Sushil Kumar and Dr. Chanderdeep Tandon for highest cited research articles during 2015-2020.

6. Dr N. B. Das Memorial Lecture: Dr Praveen informed the house about the scheduled 5th Dr. N. B. Das Memorial Lecture to be delivered by honourable Dr. Trilochan Mohapatra, Secretary (DARE) & Director General (ICAR)’ during the undergoing National Virtual Conference on 21st November, 2020.

Furthermore, Dr Praveen also informed the house about the felicitation of Ex-Chief Editor Dr. T. R. Sharma for joining as the Deputy Director General (Crop Science), ICAR during the EC meeting held on 15.02.2020 as a sincere gratitude to him for nurturing the JPBB. Dr. Praveen also informed the house regarding the various activities planned for the upcoming year 2021. She updated the current status of membership in SPBB, as given below:

- Life Members : 890
- Institutional Members : 05
- Annual Members (2020) : 05

The Chairman applauded and congratulated Dr Shelly Praveen for her sincere and dedicated efforts in bringing greater visibility and impact of SPBB. Dr Mehta then requested Dr. Aruna Tyagi, Treasurer, SPBB to brief and update the financial health of the society to the members. Dr. Aruna Tyagi welcomed the members and presented the financial status amidst the house as per the audited annual accounts of the SPBB. She thanked all the past Executive Committees of the Society for transferring her a strong and sound financial foundation to further build upon.

The Chairman further appreciated the efforts of Dr. S. R. Voleti, Dr. S. M. Balachandran & Dr. S. K. Mangrauthia for organising National Conference during 08-09th November, 2019 in Hyderabad.

He sought the willingness of the potential partners for co-hosting next year’s conference with SPBB. The ICAR-IARI showed their keenness to organise the International Conference entitled

“Role of Biochemistry and Molecular Biology in Agriculture for Enhancing Tolerance, Grains Productivity and Processability” in the year 2022 (Dr. Ranjeet Ranjan Kumar, ICAR-IAR). The ICAR-CPCRI, Kasargod showed interest to organise a National symposium on “Harnessing the Nutraceutical and Nutritive Potential of Value Added Products of Palms and Cocoa” during 2021 (Dr. S.V. Ramesh). The ICAR-IARI has also showed interest to organise a Workshop/Training programme for Agricultural Entrepreneurship to farmers - Hallur Product (Dr. Ranjeet Ranjan Kumar). The another proposal for workshop on Genome Editing was also received from ICAR-IIRR, Hyderabad during 2021 (Dr. S. K. Mangrauthia). The chairman suggested them to submit their proposals in prescribed format through proper channel for the consideration in next EC meeting.

Meeting ended with a vote of thanks to the Chair and to the house by Dr. Pranab K. Mandal, Joint Secretary, SPBB.

Comments, if any, on the proceeding, may please be sent to the undersigned within seven days from the date of receipt of the proceedings.



(**Shelly Praveen**)
Secretary, SPBB