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Laboratory Animal Science in Sri Lanka: Where we are Today

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In November/December 2011, I had the opportunity to participate in the first International Certificate Course on Laboratory Animal Science (LAS) held in Sri Lanka organized by the University of Colombo and the Utrecht University, the Netherlands. The course was a FELASA, Cat. C programme which introduced LAS to Sri Lankan scientists. During the course, the possibility of establishing an association for LAS in Sri Lanka was explored. The Sri Lanka Association for Laboratory Animal Science (SLALAS) was founded in December 2012 with Prof. Mangala Gunatilake as the founder President. I was fortunate



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to have been appointed as the founder Secretary. The name proposed by myself was accepted as the name of the association. The ICLAS agreed to waive off membership fee of the budding association for 2 years.

The Executive Committee decided to conduct workshops to establish LAS in Sri Lanka and to raise funds. In the first year, 4 such workshops were done. The inaugural Scientific Sessions of SLALAS was held in January 2014 where the zebra fish egg model was introduced for the first time. Several eminent international resource personnel were present for the conference. Another 4 workshops were conducted in 2014 to popularize the 3R concept under the presidency of Dr. Mayuri Thammitiyagodage. All our training programmes were very well received by the research and academic community of the country and we are humbly proud of our achievements in empowering the knowledge on LAS in Sri Lanka. The second annual scientific sessions were also held in January 2015 with great success. As the President of SLALAS for 2015, with my very supportive and capable team, I would work tirelessly to raise the standards of LAS in Sri Lanka to the best of my ability.