

GUBS ACTIVITIES 2008-2009

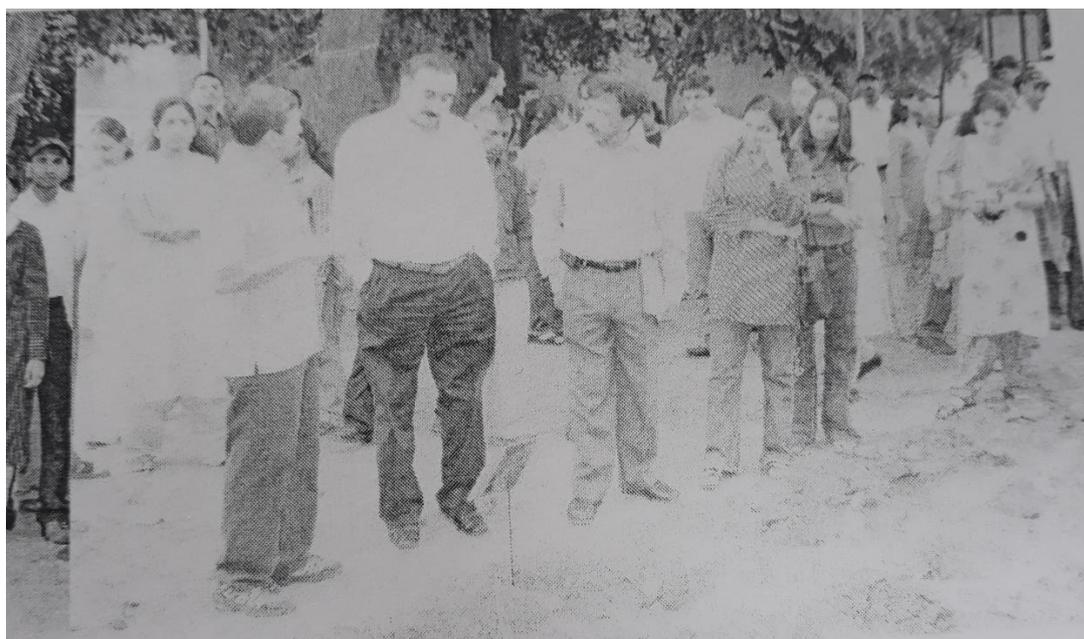
The activities of Gujarat University Botanical Society-GUBS were flagged off this academic year (2008-2009) with the inaugural function on Friday, 1st August, 2008. As a part of the activities, the members had put up an exhibition of plant-based value added products under the banner of KREATIONS which was coordinated by Staff-In-Charge, Dr. Archana U. Mankad. The members participated actively and in large number with their creativity and lots of hand-made objects were displayed. The objects included accessories for table-use and display/cosmetics/greeting cards/dry flower arrangements/personal-use accessories etc. Alongside, a collection of herbal creams formulated and prepared by Ms. Riddhi Patel, Ph.D. student and interesting photo display attracted lots of attention. In all, the exhibition generated great enthusiasm among the members and visitors. On this occasion, because of the large participation, Prof. Yogesh Jasrai, Head-Department of Botany, announced that a special creative corner will be created with accessories for the members, wherein such products can be designed. It was planned that on a suitable day an 'Open House' would be arranged by the Department of Botany for Visitors (students of different departments, parents, interested people etc) wherein the research activities/teaching programmes/departmental facilities/display items (best from waste) prepared by the students would be exhibited.

Prof. Yogesh Jasrai, Head - Department of Botany delivered an Invited Lecture on Our Life style, Environment and Medicinal of Plants, organized by International Society for Research on Civilization Disease and Environment (ISRCDE), Ahmedabad at M.G. Science Institute on Wednesday, 13th August, 2008. Prof. Jasrai gave a very lucid presentation of changing lifestyles and their effects on health. He also highlighted the usefulness of various medicinal plants and their effects for treatment and cure of various health disorders. A note on the role of medicinal plants in our customs and rituals were also explained as a part of conservation. Students were sensitized on the importance of prioritizing health needs and balanced lifestyles accordingly.

The Research scholars of this department had attended a workshop on Urban Forestry at Sardar Patel Institute of Public Administration (SPIPA)-Ahmedabad. Mr. Santosh Singh and Ms. Pratiksha Patel-Ph.D. students and Mr. Anil Prajapati-M.Phil student shared their experiences of participation in the

workshop. The presentation was timely since on August 15th a tree plantation drive was planned at Ahmedabad Education Society grounds to sensitize people on the need to grow more trees. Such programmes generate awareness and beautify localities, thus create a better environment. Language is one of the powerful mediums of communication. Proficiency in English paves the way to success. English being globally accepted gets special attention. Communicative skills boost confidence and aids in personality development. SCOPE is a Government of Gujarat initiative to promote awareness and opportunities through proficiency in English. Prof. Yogesh Jasrai, Head of the Department of Botany strongly believes that there was a long felt need for improvement and overall development of the personality of our students. English speaking is one step towards it. Following this, a lot of interest had been generated and the students were motivated for proficiency in English. The students of this department have, thus, come forward to get themselves enrolled for training in communicative English under SCOPE. Owing to good enrollment SCOPE has initiated a special batch for Botany students in the department and classes have commenced. The students of Department of Botany had, last year, taken admission in the on-line EDUSAT Programme on RS-GIS-GPS conducted by The Indian Institute of Remote Sensing (IIRS)-Dehradun through Educational Multi Media Research Centre (EMMRC), Gujarat University, Ahmedabad. Among the student participants from this Department, Ms. Gunjan Motwani of M.Sc. (Part II) has been awarded a certificate of passing the exam conducted by IIRS, Dehradun. **Dr. Hitesh Solanki**, Reader, has been conferred a fellowship by The International Society of Earth Sciences, Lucknow in July 2008.

The students of the Botany Department actively participated in the Plantation Programme for medicinal plants on Friday, 22nd August, 2008 at the Medicinal Park near the Physics Department. The Plantation Programme for Medicinal Park was inaugurated by the Honorable Vice Chancellor-Dr. Parimal Trivedi, who took personal interest in the whole activity. Dr. Trivedi emphasized the significance of such informative parks. He also assured of all necessary help for its development on a grand scale. Dr. Yogesh Jasrai, Professor and Head, Department of Botany coordinated the whole activity in association with the Society for Environment Protection (SEP) and Estate Department, Gujarat University, Ahmedabad. Mahindra Group of Industries — Ahmedabad had sponsored the event of Plantation Programme for such medicinal plants. There is a need for awareness among people about the various medicinal plants and their uses. Such a Medicinal Park would facilitate not only visitors but also staff and students of all departments of the university to enrich their knowledge, along with creating an interest in growing and use of medicinal plants.



The staff and students of the Botany Department (Total-52) visited Shoolpaneshwar Sanctuary, Sardar Sarovar Narmada Dam, Gujarat State Fertilizers and Chemicals Limited-Vadodara and National Research Centre for Medicinal and Aromatic Plants - Boriyavi as part of the Botanical Excursion. The students got a chance to view the Narmada Dam site, trek in the forests of Shoolpaneshwar and study the plants and view the Ninai water fall which is at its best during this time of the year. The visit to Gujarat State Fertilizers and Chemicals Limited —Vadodara was fascinating, where the students got to see commercial production of Banana through micropropagation. The process of

hardening of such tissue culture raised plants was also witnessed in the greenhouse and net-house on a very large scale. The visit to National Research Centre for Medicinal and Aromatic plants — Boriyavi was just as educative and exciting to observe and study a very large collection and maintenance of important plants in the live form.



The students and teachers of this department celebrated the Ozone Day on Tuesday, 16th September, 2008 with an Invited Lecture on Epigenetics by Dr. S. R. Kaid Johar, Head-Department of Cell Biology, Iladevi Cataract & IOL Research Centre -Ahmedabad. Dr. Kaid gave a very informative and detailed account of EPIGENETICS with reference to gene expression and specific role under changing conditions. The students from other departments including Life Sciences, Biochemistry and Environmental Sciences along with the students of Botany benefited immensely from this Lecture.

The Research Scholars of this Department participated in a National Conference on “Taxonomy Teaching and Research: The Relevance in the National Context” at Petlad on 29th September, 2008. Ms Nisha Goswami, M Phil student bagged the '2ⁿ prize in the poster competition. Navratri was celebrated by the members of Gujarat University Botanical Society as the GUBS-Garba Utsav. The programme included competitions for the Best Dancer, Best Dress, Best Arti Thali and Best Toran. The members participated actively with a lot of enthusiasm and festive spirit. Research Scholars of this Department also participated in National Seminar on Sustainable Agriculture and Environment Management organized by the Rajasthan University, Jaipur during 7-8 November, 2008. Ms. Roshni Adiyecha, Ph D student, won the 1st prize for the poster presentation in this National Seminar. The staff and students of the Department of Botany participated in the Golden Jubilee Conference on Challenges and Emerging Strategies for Improving Plant Productivity organized by The Indian Society for Plant Physiology & Indian Agricultural Research Institute New Delhi during 12-14 November 2008.

Sumesh Dudani, Ms. Jayshree Advani, Ms. Pragna Patel and Ms. Toral Joshi from this Department participated in the 1st Science Conclave-a Congregation with Nobel Prize Winners organised by Indian Institute of Technology-Allahabad from 15-21, December, 2008. This Conclave was first of its kind in Scientific history of India and Nobel Laureates like Prof. Kroto (Chemistry), Prof. Tannoudji and Prof. Friedman (Physics) inspired the participants with their presence and interactions. Our participants benefited greatly and were encouraged to go further in their chosen field in science. They also had an opportunity to interact and develop contacts with fellow participants in respective subjects.

The Annual function of Gujarat University Botanical Society (GUBS) and the Farewell Function was held on Friday, 6th March, 2009 with a lot of enthusiasm. The activities of the society were summarised by the Secretary Mr Sumesh Dudani. Ms Kajal Gandhi, the Treasurer of the Society gave the report of the

expenses during the year 2008-09. The members who had won in various events all round the year were awarded prizes and were given certificates. The M Sc — I students gave a warm Farewell to their seniors (M SC-II and M Phil) and wished them good-luck while the M Sc-II Students extended their gratitude and help. The moments were made memorable with class-wise group photographs at the end of the function.

Dr. Hitesh Solanki attended the 96th Indian Science Congress (ISC2009) from January, 2009 at North Eastern Hill University, Shillong, Meghalaya. Dr. Solanki also presented a research paper entitled *Prosopis juliflora* (Swarts) DC firewood plant of Kachchh District: A Case Study.

Ms. Neelam P. Kapadiya, Ms Rashmi Baria and Ms Binny Karlikar, M Phil students have been awarded UGC Promoted Rajiv Gandhi National Fellowship for SC Candidates for pursuing research work in Botany for five years.

Dr. Hitesh Solanki alongwith Mr Sumesh Dudani, M Sc student and Ms Gunjan Motwani, M Phil student participated in the National Conference on Prosopis at Gujarat Institute of Desert Ecology (GUIDE), Bhuj during 20-21 February, 2009.

Prof. Y.T.Jarsai

