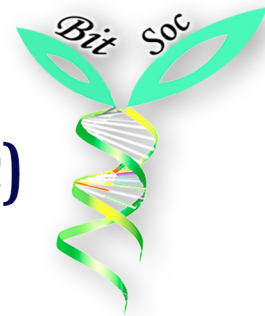




**Biotechnology Society of
Wayamba University of Sri Lanka (BitSoc)**



Volume 12 Issue II (October 2020)

BitSoc News

E circulated Newsletter

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**Department of Biotechnology,
Faculty of Agriculture & Plantation Management,
Wayamba University of Sri Lanka**

"Our world is built on biology and once we begin to understand it, it then becomes a technology"

Ryan Bethencourt



Annual General Meeting



The 11th Annual General Meeting of the BitSoc was held on 7th September 2020 at Biotechnology Lecture Theatre, Faculty of Agriculture and Plantation Management, WUSL. The academic staff members of the Department of Biotechnology and students representing all four year batches of the faculty were attended. As agenda items, presenting the annual report of the 2019/2020 tenure, get approval for the financial statement and election of new members for the steering committee for the next tenure were lined up. Members thanked outgoing president Mr D.M.S. Bandara and secretary Ms D.A.U.H. Perera for their tremendous contribution over the period for successful completion of many fruitful events.



Steering Committee members of BitSoc- 2020/2021 tenure

- President: Mr S.A.V. Viduranga (176140)
- Secretary: Ms R.T.B. Arachchi (176006)
- Vice president: Ms D.K.B. Priyani (176108)
- Assistant secretary: Ms M.H.F. Mushfika (176089)
- Senior treasurer:
Prof. D.P.S.T.G. Attanayaka
(from 7th September to 21st October 2020)
Mr M.J.M.S. Kurera
- Junior treasurer: Mr K.K.P.K. Perera (176179)
- Editor: Dr (Ms) P.S. Warakagoda
- Advisor: Dr (Ms) D.R. Gimhani



Executive Committee Members

- Prof. (Ms) N.S. Kottearachchi
- Dr K.M. Mewan
- Mr D.M.S. Bandara (166089)
- Ms D.A.U.H. Perera (166024)
- Ms D.R.K. Rathnayaka (176118)
- Ms L.D. Maleesha (176082)
- Mr K.H. Madanayake (186075)
- Mr O.K.T.N. Dananjana (196026)



I wish to express my gratitude to the past president and the members of BitSoc for their great service, commitment and achievements towards the success of the society. I am honored to assume the role of president of BitSoc for the year 2020/2021. BitSoc has become a dynamic student society which adds color to the Faculty of Agriculture and Plantation Management as well as Wayamba University of Sri Lanka. I humbly request all BitSoc members to be collaborative and cooperative to fulfill the goals of the society in order to accomplish them successfully through the activities plan for the year 2020/2021.



Mr S. A. V. Viduranga
President (BitSoc - 2020/2021)

BitSoc for the Betterment of the Society



BitSoc decided to carry out an online awareness sessions on home gardening during the lockdown period that prevailed due to the Corona pandemic. The official Facebook page of BitSoc society was used to make people aware of different gardening tips and also on the importance of gardening towards a self-sufficient economy. A series of posts with the title of “**Quarantine to Green Time**” were published for some selected crops that can be easily grown in home gardens. Many people appreciated this series of posts and identified it as a timely initiative taken by the agriculture undergraduates.



BitSoc “Padura”- 2020



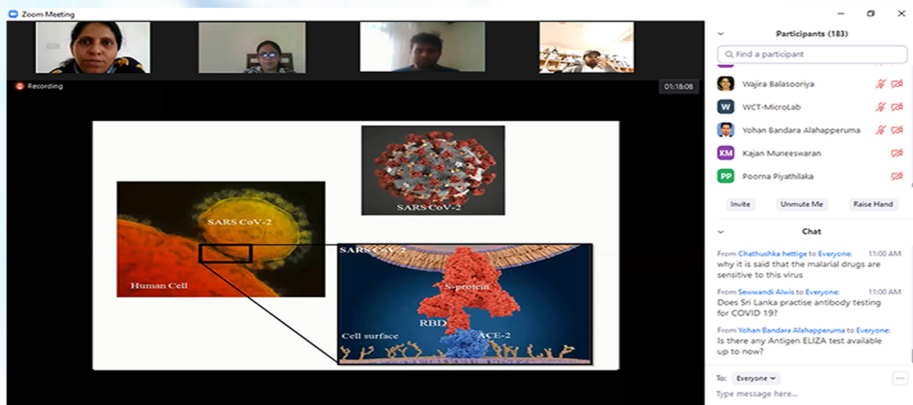
The annual get together of BitSoc family-BitSoc

“Padura”- 2020 was held on 9th September 2020 at the Exam Hall, FAPM. The main purpose of the function was to welcome the new 3rd year students who started their specialization at the Department of Biotechnology, FAPM. The 4th year students of the department organized this event with the advice of the academic staff. Dr D.R. Gimhani, Head of the Department, other senior academic staff members, academic support staff members, non-academic staff members and 3rd and 4th year biotechnology specialization students were took part in this event. The day was filled with many entertaining activities. All had a great time filled with amusement and pleasure.



Webinar on COVID-19

BitSoc identified the importance of conducting a guest lecture for the students of the faculty on COVID-19. With the existing distance learning platform, a webinar titled “**COVID-19: What We Need to Know**” was conducted to meet the purpose. Dr Sameera Samarakoon has been invited as the resource person. The content includes; an introduction to COVID-19 and way of its spreading, diagnostic tests, a video on real time PCR, managing confirmed patients, controlling the spreading of virus and progress achieved so far on developing a vaccine for COVID-19.



Biotechnology Society (BitSoc)
Organized

Webinar on
COVID-19: What you need to know
"Let's protect our loved ones, defeat Covid-19 pandemic"

Date :- 24th October 2020 (Saturday)
Time :- 10.00 a.m. - 12.00 noon
Mode :- Online (Via Zoom)

- Virus and its spreading
- Diagnostic tests
- Managing confirmed patients
- Containment measures to control spreading
- Vaccine development

Resource person
Dr. Sameera R. Samarakoon
(BSc, MSc, PG Dip, PhD, M.I. Biol, L.I. Chem.C)
Senior lecturer, Institute of Biochemistry,
Molecular Biology and Biotechnology (IBMBB)
University of Colombo

Biotechnology Society of Wayamba University of Sri Lanka (BitSoc)
Department of Biotechnology,
Faculty of Agriculture and Plantation Management,
Wayamba University of Sri Lanka



Our Congratulations

Newly appointed Head/Department of Biotechnology



Dr (Ms) D.R. Gimhani has been appointed as the Head, Department of Biotechnology with effect from 02nd September 2020. She was a past graduate of the Department of Biotechnology, Faculty of Agriculture and Plantation Management, Wayamba University of Sri Lanka. She was awarded the Global Rice Science Scholarship, in 2011 by the International Rice Research Institute (IRRI), Philippines to pursue her PhD. Accordingly; she obtained her PhD in Biotechnology in 2015. She has over 10 years experience as an academic and researcher in the fields of molecular plant breeding and plant biotechnology.

Postgraduate Achievements



A past BitSoc member, Mr W.S.P. Madhuranga obtained his MSc in Marine Biotechnology from Jeju National University, South Korea in 2020 and won the award of excellence in outstanding achievement.

He is the first author of a recently published research article titled “Molecular expression analysis and characterization of Rockfish (*Sebastes schlegli*) B cell activating factor”.



Ms G.M.U.D. Wijenayaka, graduate of the Department of Biotechnology (2014/2015 batch) received an opportunity to conduct her MPhil in the area of pharmacognosy and toxicology at the Department of Pharmacology, Faculty of Medicine, University of Ruhuna. During that research she tries to discover anti-diabetic properties in selected plants. The research is funded by an AHEAD grant.

New Recruitments



Mr M.J.M.S. Kurera joined the Department of Biotechnology as a Lecturer (Probationary) with effect from 02nd October 2020. Mr Kurera has obtained a BSc (Agriculture) degree with a First Class honours from Wayamba University of Sri Lanka in year 2015. In 2018, he received a MSc degree in Applied Organic Chemistry from University of Colombo. His research interests include organic & natural product chemistry and nanotechnology.

Up coming Activities

- Creating a Blog Site And YouTube channel
- Establishing a database on BitSoc members
- Biotechnology day 2020