



Alternatives Initiative in Sri Lanka: Pre- and Post-Conference Workshops at the Inaugural Scientific Conference of the Sri Lanka Association for Laboratory Animal Science

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1 Introduction

Ethical principles to reduce pain and suffering in animals during scientific experiments made scientists understand the importance of alternative methods to implement the 3Rs concept, which later led to the development and validation of different alternative models. European countries are far ahead in this venture compared to most Asian countries. Therefore, a Pre-Conference (January 24, 2014) and a Post-Conference (January 26, 2014) workshop were conducted on several alternative models during the *Inaugural Scientific Conference of the Sri Lanka Association for Laboratory Animal Science* held on January 25, 2014, as an initiative to introduce alternatives to ani-

mal experiments to the Sri Lankan scientific community. This was possible through the contacts developed by Prof Mangala Gunatilake, who spearheaded the establishment of the *Sri Lanka Association for Laboratory Animal Science* (SLALAS) in December 2012, with international scientists concerned with animal welfare and alternatives. In her introductory remarks, she gave a brief overview of the concept of alternatives and its relevance to Sri Lanka. Inaugurating the Post-Conference workshop, the Most Venerable Olande Ananda Thera, a Buddhist Monk of High Order, explained the value of lives, whether they are human or animal, and the importance of respecting all life. This drove home the importance of looking for alternatives to animals in experiments and research.