

mains', Hakim Rai discussed the varied nature of felsic magmatic activities along the southern margin of eastern Karakoram, with its implication on geodynamics. Rajesh Sharma explained the typology of fluid inclusions and sulphide mineralization in a uprising metamorphic belt of Himalaya. R. C. Patel, based on apatite-fission track dating, inferred the deformational and exhumation history of crystalline rocks from Kumaun Himalaya. M. N. Joshi discussed the nature of strata-bound Veitsch-type, magnesite deposits of western Himalaya and its likely relation to Vendian–Cambrian magnetization epoch. R. S. Rawat explained the syngenetic and epigenetic features and some possible exploration sites of sulphide mineralization in Uttarakhand Lesser Himalaya. B. K. Mukherjee dealt with the fate of ultrahigh pressure metamorphism in the Himalaya. Prabha Joshi presented the fluid-inclusion data and explained the P – T – X_{CO_2} condition of talc deposit formation in the Deoban carbonates of Kumaun Lesser Himalaya. Ritu Chauhan presented lithological and AMS variations, and inferred three-phase deformational history of Seraghat–Dwarahat region of the North Almora Thrust. R. A. Singh explained the defor-

mational and tectonic history of Nauti and Adbadri regions of Lesser Garhwal Himalaya. Rajeev Upadhyay reported U–Th-rich zircon and monazite from granulites of Indus and Shyok suture zone from Ladakh Himalaya. Manju Pandey provided microstructure and P – T condition of metamorphosed mafic rocks of Central Crystalline from Kumaun Himalaya. Moulisree Joshi discussed the use of structural and morphotectonic analyses to establish neotectonic activities of Bilaspur region, SW Himachal Himalaya. G. C. Kothyari integrated the field observations, digital elevation models and seismic records and inferred the prevalence of neotectonic activity along the North Almora Thrust Zone.

In a special session on 'Earth surface environment and human health', P. Dev discussed noise pollution and its impact on human health in Saharanpur District. Yogesh Joshi discussed the growth of subaerial biofilms on rock surfaces, their medicinal value and utility in the study of glaciers. Nidhi Arya outlined the geological and ecological features responsible for environmental changes in the high-altitude Tsokar lake, Ladakh region. Archana Bora, using multi-proxy climatic indicators, discussed the environ-

mental changes in the north of Baralacha Pass, NW Himalaya.

The first Lifetime Achievement Award of SAAEG was presented to K. S. Valdiya. Jokhan Ram (ONGC Limited) was honoured by SAAEG for his significant contribution in the field of basin analysis and hydrocarbon exploration. There was a common consensus among the speakers that the three main themes of the seminar have been represented well by the papers presented and several papers have attempted to unify these three processes into a larger crustal and mantle evolution scenario. The SAAEG-sponsored young geoscientist awards for best presentation of research-oriented papers (oral and poster) at the seminar was awarded jointly to Swati Deol and Prabha Joshi and the best poster award was given to Manju Pandey. The seminar concluded with closing remarks by K. S. Valdiya, who stressed upon the need of interlinking the research results with mineral exploration programme, and expressed his views to draft a new mineral policy in the Indian context.

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MEETING REPORT

Rashtriya Vigyan Sanchark Sammelan*

A special addition to the Indian Science Congress this year was the Science Communication Meet. It was catalysed by the Indian Science Congress Association (ISCA) and supported by National Council for Science and Technology Communication (NCSTC), and Department of Science and Technology (DST), New Delhi.

Addressing the inaugural function of the Meet on 4 January 2008, the Principal Scientific Advisor to Government of India, R. Chidambaram said that the lack of basic knowledge is the cause for miscon-

ceptions about nuclear technologies. He added that nuclear power is an inevitable option to satisfy future energy needs of the world in the context of depleting fossil fuels and that climate changes also force the need for nuclear technology. Speaking about the importance of science communication, he stressed on the need to disseminate science information at various levels. He stated that C. V. Raman and S. Chandrasekhar demonstrated extraordinary skills as science communicators, which created a lot of interest among the masses. According to him, science communication goes beyond the frontiers of visual media. He prevailed upon the communicators not to bring their prejudices into science communication; issues like IPR and technology-controlling regimes hinder exchange

of information. Chidambaram quoted Alvin Toffler and said that technology is power and science communication can be used as a tool for development, global peace and environmental protection.

Anuj Sinha (Advisor, NCSTC) spoke on the focal theme 'Challenges in communicating science and technology in regional languages', which was apt and timely. Most of the papers were submitted by academicians, journalists from both print and electronic media, and they highlighted in general, the lacunae, pitfalls and possible solutions. Some of the papers were on content analysis, while others chronicled the history and evolution of science communication in their respective regions. Presentation of the papers and the roundtable discussions provided concrete recommendations, the

*A report on the Rashtriya Vigyan Sancharak Sammelan (Science Communication Meet), 95th Indian Science Congress, held from 3 to 7 January 2008 at Andhra University, Visakhapatnam.

implementation of which would help make communication of science and technology in regional languages more effective, increasing the reach of science and technology to the masses.

Sabyasachi Chatterjee (New Alipur College, Kolkata) spoke on 'Problems and prospects of science communication in Bengali language: A historical probe'. According to the speaker, the problematic scenario included terminologies in the regional languages, perception of science and technology that the society at large has developed, determining the target audience, etc. Starting from the 19th century, Bengali intellectuals had started to communicate science. Naturally, they had to face teething problems. However, they successfully developed a trend of communicating science in the indigenous language that is being followed even now for dissemination. Science communicators of the present period are trying to communicate scientific theories and their applications in a lucid way so that common people become interested. The aim is to develop a scientifically informed and attitudinally rational society.

C. V. Sarveswara Sarma (Konaseema Science Parishat, Amalapuram) spoke on 'Challenges faced in science communication in regional languages'. Sarma mentioned that as literacy and education was poor in the area that he belonged to awareness about the utility and beauty of science has remained dormant. He further added that there was a need to change the situation. There are not many competent science writers in regional languages. Science writers feel that the authorities/managers of the mass media are not organized enough to do justice to the popularization of science. The number of science writers in regional languages though less, is not insignificant. It should be borne in mind that presentation of science has to be at different educational and intellectual levels and in several languages which are used in the country. Popularization of science is mostly dependent on freelance writers, who have been struggling to enlighten the public about science. Good contributions from new writers are often overlooked. This

not only discourages the new writers, but new subjects and new styles are lost to the scientific literature of the country.

Jayanth G. Paraki (Bangalore) spoke on 'Challenges in communicating science and technology in regional languages'. According to him, communicating in regional languages poses several challenges, notably those that involve semantics and syntax. The thinking process that is integral to communication is challenged most severely in science and technology-related communications in regional languages. The ten most important challenges faced include – understanding the content and expressing it in a regional language; motivation and attitudinal training of trainers and educators; goal-oriented training of stakeholders; importance and limitations of computers in communications; assessment and documentation of benefits to the rural population; overcoming constraints posed by specific programmes/projects; quality considerations; compiling a dictionary of science and technology terms; methodology and acceptance by the community of the programme/project. The speaker concluded his talk mentioning that the needs of the population determine the various processes involved in actual communication and we have to focus on collective thinking, functioning and collective action. Documentation and building up a critical mass and number of communicators is mandatory.

Prabhat K. Bajpai (DAV College, Kanpur) said that there has been a trend of science communication from the ancient Vedic period, but in the present set-up, the communication is largely through English, barring some translations and other efforts. The Constitution of India recognizes 18 official languages, though many more languages or dialects are there on record. Bajpai mainly spoke in favour of the need of correct translation of conceptual terms and proposed a two-way model, i.e. from apex to grass-root and vice versa, to test the degree of correctness and also to make the communicator well-versed in receiving and communicating the required information.

He also suggested that the emphasis should be laid initially on technologies and facts of day-to-day utility and on the interests of the common man, and be communicated in an attractive and encouraging manner.

Charanjit Kaur (Sri Sathya Sai College for Women, Bhopal) noted that India has an impressive scientific heritage. Scientific research in fields such as mathematics, astronomy, medicine and materials science has been carried out in the Indian subcontinent since ancient times. Throughout history, there have been attempts to take science to the common people. However, a gap has persisted between scientific knowledge and the common man, and until recently, almost no effort was made to bridge this gap. For the past two decades, efforts have been made from both government and non-government platforms to enhance the public understanding of science. The idea is to help science and scientific culture penetrate India's socio-economically diverse society and to transform it into a nation of scientifically thinking and scientifically aware people. India's science communicators have used various modes of communication to reach out to the masses, like the print media, audio-visual media, folk media, interactive media, mass media, mass education and networking. She concluded by mentioning that science exhibitions, science fairs, demonstrations, workshops, lectures, scientific tours, conferences and more recently, digital software, have the advantage of being interactive forms of science communication, but to create these in regional languages is a huge challenge.

The invited speakers from all over the country were selected through Science Communication Meets held at different ISCA Chapters. Eminent science communicators from different parts of the country spoke on varied aspects of communicating science to the masses in regional languages.

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