

ISG- Regional Conference 2014- a brief report

Indian Society of Geomatics (ISG) organised a Regional Conference on **Geoinformatics for Early Warning of Disasters with Special Emphasis on NE Region** at Shillong during Sept 18-19, 2014. The conference was hosted jointly by Indian Society of Geomatics, Shillong Chapter, North Eastern Space Applications Centre (NESAC), and North-Eastern Hill University (NEHU). The inauguration programme of the conference was began with singing of national anthem followed by lighting of lamp by the dignitaries. Dr. K.K. Paul, Hon'ble Governor of Meghalaya and the Chief Guest inaugurated conference.



Dr S. Sudhakar, Director, NESAC and the Organising Secretary of the conference welcomed all the dignitaries and the participates to the conference. He also briefed about the conference and the preconference tutorial. Dr A.S. Rajawat, Vice President, ISG delivered the presidential address on behalf of Sri A.S. Kiran Kumar, Director, SAC, Ahmedabad and the President, ISG. He mentioned about the activities of ISG. He appreciated the efforts of NESAC, NEHU and newly formed ISG-Shillong Chapter for their sincere effort for successful organisation of the conference.



Prof. P. Shukla, Vice Chancellor, NEHU and the Guest of Honour appreciated efforts of ISG and offered his gratitude for choosing NEHU as the venue for the conference. Hon'ble Governor in his speech highlighted the import role of geoinformatics in disaster management. He also stressed on improving the accuracy of early warning of disasters. Inauguration programme ended with singing of national anthem. During the inauguration function, Conference Souvenir was released the Hon'ble Governor, while Special issues of ISG Newsletter and NESAC Newsletter were released by Vice Chancellor, NEHU and Vice President, ISG respectively. The Inaugural function ended with offering of vote of thanks by Prof. B.S. Mipun, Jt. Organising Secretary of the Conference.



The Inaugural Function was followed by a Plenary Session, in which four eminent speakers delivered invited talks on various disaster with special emphasis on NER. These are as follows:

1. ***Historical Events of Earthquake in NER and Role of Early Warning for DRR:*** By Dr. S. Baruah, Head, Geo Sciences Division, North East Institute of Science & Technology, Jorhat.
2. ***North Eastern Regional Node for Disaster Risk Reduction (NER-DRR)-A model to address disaster in NE Region:*** by Dr. S Sudhakar, Director, NESAC, Shillong.
3. ***Initiative of Assam State Disaster Management Authority for Disaster Risk reduction*** by Smt. Nandita Hazarika, SPO, ASDMA, Guwahati.
4. ***Role of Space Technology in Early Warning and Disaster Management:*** by Dr A.S. Rajawat, Head, Geoscience Division, SAC, Ahmedabad.

An industrial exhibition was organised during the Conference with various governmental and private organizations such as National Remote Sensing Centre (NRSC), North Eastern Space Applications Centre, Madhya Pradesh Council of Science & Technology (MPCOST), Assam State Disaster Management Authority and Total IT Solutions Pvt. Limited showcasing their products and services for the benefit of the participants and visitors. The industry and space exhibition was inaugurated by Dr. S. Sudhakar, Director, NESAC and the Organising Secretary just before lunch. A cultural programme was organized on first day of the conference prior to the Welcome dinner.



During the two days about 180 research papers were presented under Seven Technical Sessions covering a wide range of themes as given below:

- Earth Observation Missions for Early Warning of Disasters
- Role of Communications and navigational satellites in disaster management
- Disaster Management in North-East India - Issues and Challenges
- Early Warning and Flood Management in NE Region
- Earthquake Precursors
- Landslides hazard zonation and Early Warning
- Cyclone, Drought, Forest-Fire, Land degradation
- Development of early warning systems for various hazards
- Urban/Regional Planning vis-à-vis Natural Disasters
- Village Information System & infrastructure
- Disaster Risk Reduction & Rehabilitation
- Climate change and Hazards/Disasters
- Preparedness to address the natural hazards to the NE segment of India
- Biodiversity and Early Detection of Endangered Species
- Technological Trends in Geomatics
- Geoinformatics for Industries and Business

An exclusive session (Session VII) for Industry presentations was arranged on 19th Sept, 2014. A cultural programme was organized on first day of the conference prior to the Welcome dinner.

At the end of the Technical Sessions on the second day Panel discussions was held, which was chaired by Dr. Sudhakar, Director, NESAC. Important resolutions were passed for onward transmission to various users particularly those concerned with disaster management activities. The programme ended with presentation of awards for three Best papers presented during the conference. The Awardees are Ms Roopjyoti Hazarika of NEHU, Shri Pranab Kaushik of NESAC and Sri Kapil Ghosh of Tripura University as 1st, 2nd and 3rd respectively.



The conference was preceded by a Pre-Conference Tutorial on **Early Warning System for Floods** organised at NESAC on Sept 17, 2014. About 50 participants, mostly research scholars participated in the pre-conference Tutorial. The Tutorial was inaugurated by Shri P.P. Srivastava, Former Member, North Eastern Council (NEC), Shillong. Prof. M. Perumal, Head, Department of Hydrology, IIT, Roorkee was the chief speaker for the Tutorial. Dr D. Barman, Scientist, NESAC coordinated the Tutorial, which includes hands on training for the participants. At the end of the Tutorial, Dr. S. Sudhakar and the Organising Secretary of the Conference distributed certificates to the participants.



The conference was co-sponsored by Oil India Limited, M.P. Council of Science & Technology, Indian Space Research Organisation, Department of Science & Technology, Ministry of Earth Sciences, National Disaster Management Authority, Assam State Disaster Management Authority, North Eastern Space Applications Centre, Survey of India and Indian Council of Social Science Research-NER, National Remote Sensing Centre and Antrix Corporation Ltd.