



## International Association of Geomorphologists

*Association Internationale des Géomorphologues*

**IAG/AIG Newsletter No. 26 (3/2010)**

### From the Editor's Desk

Dear Geomorphologists

I thank you all for your kind help and co-operation in enabling me to publish the newsletter on time. I request that you continue this co-operation in order that future issues of the newsletter continue to be published on time.

**Sunil Kumar De**

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### 1. Obituary



Prof. S. R. Basu  
1942-2010

**Prof. Subhashranjan Basu** was born in Khulna District of the undivided Bengal on December 7, 1942. He studied in Presidency College, Calcutta, at undergraduate level and obtained his Master's degree in Geography from the University of Calcutta in 1965. He had received Ph.D. degree from the University of Calcutta in 1974 for his pioneering research work on "The decay and the associated problems of river dynamics of the Bhagirathi Valley". He received the D.Litt. degree in 2007 from the University of Calcutta for his gigantic work on "Landslides in Darjiling-Sikkim Himalayas".

Professor Basu started his teaching career as a Lecturer in Geography at Presidency College, Calcutta in 1968. He left the College to join the Department of Geography, University of Calcutta in the year 1974. In 1977 he joined the Department of Geography, North Bengal University as a Reader where he became the Head of the Department and Professor. Finally, he joined the University of Calcutta as a Professor in 1990 and became the Head of the Department during 1993-1995. He retired from the said post in December, 2007. After his retirement he was given the charge of the

Head to start the Department of Geography in Rabindra Bharati University, Kolkata. He received the University Grants Commission Emeritus Fellowship in 2009.

He is well known in the field of Geomorphology as well as Environment for his pioneering work in the fields of river dynamics of Bhagirathi and Hugli, landslides in Sikkim and Darjiling Himalayas, alluvial fans in the Himalayan foothill region, groundwater hydrology, Arsenic and other environmental issues. In his credit Prof. Basu published more than 65 research articles, 14 books and monographs and 8 reports. He has supervised 25 Ph.D. theses out of which 19 scholars have received their Ph.D. degree from North Bengal and Calcutta University and 6 scholars are on the way to submit their theses.

He was selected as the Visiting Scientist by the Indian National Science Academy (INSA) under International Science Exchange Programme for two terms (May-June, 1987 and October-November, 1990) to exchange scientific ideas in Poland. He was appointed as the Visiting Professor in the Division of Geography, Staffordshire University, U.K. during Oct-Dec, 1995 and in the Department of Environmental Studies, University Rajasthan, Jaipur in August, 2001.

Prof. Basu was one of the founder members of the Indian Institute of Geomorphologists (IGI), elected as the President of the Institute (IGI) for the year 1998-1999 and as the Associate Editor of the Indian Journal of Geomorphology for the period 2000-2005. He was elected as the Honorary Secretary of the Geographical Society of India for several consecutive terms since 2004 and served the Society in the same post till the end of his life. He was also elected as the President of Geography Section of Indian Social Science Congress for the year 1997 and acted as the Chairman of Organizing Committee of the "International Association Geomorphologists (IAG) Symposium on Geomorphology and Environment and International Workshop on Landslides in Sikkim and Darjiling Himalayas" held in Kolkata in February, 2004. That was the first event of IAG in India organized under the banner of Indian Institute of Geomorphologists (IGI).

He left all of us on August 24, 2010. The vacuum created by his sudden demise is very difficult to fill up. May his soul rest in peace.

## 2. IAG/AIG Working Group Reports

### a. *News from Danxia Geomorphology Working Group (Danxia recognized as UNESCO World Heritage property)*

At the 34<sup>th</sup> session of the World Heritage Committee of UNESCO, held in July in Brasilia, a group of representative Danxia sites in southern China has been inscribed on the World Heritage list as a natural property, under the criteria No. *vii* (scenic beauty and outstanding scenery) and No. *viii* (geology and geomorphology). The property is a serial one, which means it consists of more than one site but together they illustrate a common theme and complement each other. This common theme is a unique geomorphological landscape developed on Mesozoic continental clastic red beds, mainly conglomerates, but with intercalations of sandstone and mudstone. Subsequent basin inversion resulted in uplift of former intracontinental basins, dissection and creation of considerable relief. Long-term weathering and selective erosion under predominantly warm and humid climates has produced arrays of red cliffs, towers and plateaux, as well as assemblages of bizarre minor landforms both at the surface and underground.

Danxia World Heritage property includes six sites in six provinces: Chishui (Guizhou), Langshan (Hunan), Danxiashan (Guangdong), Taining (Fujian), Longhushan (Jiangxi), and Jianglangshan (Zhejiang). According to the scientific description in the nomination document, each site represents a stage in the evolutionary sequence of Danxia landscape development, from an initially dissected plateau (Chishui) and closely spaced rounded domes (Langshan) to remnant towers rising above the basin floor (Jianglangshan).

Danxia sites have long been frequented by Chinese tourists but are rather poorly known outside China. Global recognition by UNESCO, improved access, and creation of bilingual museums and outdoor displays at each site should better reveal this outstanding scenery to the world which is not to be missed by geomorphologists.

*Piotr Migoń, Vice President (IAG/AIG Working Groups)*

### b. *4th Session of the IAG Working Group on Geomorphological Hazards (IAGEOMHAZ) & International Workshop on Geomorphological Hazards*

An international workshop on "Geo Morphological Hazards & 4th Session of the IAG Working Group on Geomorphological Hazards (IAGEOMHAZ)" were organized by the Centre for Geo-Technology, Manonmaniam Sundaranar University, Tirunelveli, Tamilnadu, India, at Kanyakumari on July 21-23<sup>rd</sup> 2010. The conference venue at Kanyakumari was selected for it had faced the devastating blow by 2004 tsunami. Dr.S.Kaliappan, Vice Chancellor, Anna University, Tirunelveli inaugurated the workshop and focused on the need for better and effective coordination of fields of study like civil engineering, environmental engineering, GIS and remote sensing technologies, natural hazards and mining besides geomorphology. The Vice chancellor observed that unless such coordinated efforts among professionals and scientists in these fields materialized, the society at large will not benefit entirely and completely the fruits of the scientific and technological advancement. This is specially true in respect of mitigation and management of natural hazards. Prof. N. Chandrasekar (Convener of the workshop) welcomed the delegates.

The workshop was presided over by Prof. Dr.G.Victor Rajamanickam (Dean of Research, SAIRAM, a renowned scientist and coastal process-GeoTechnologist) in place of Dr.R.T.Sabapathy Mohan Vice-Chancellor M.S.University, Tirunelveli who had to rush to Chennai on an official business. Dr.G.V.Rajamanickam underscored the point that protecting people and properties and investments in the coastal lands, the natural protective barriers like coastal dunes, beach ridges and mangrove regimes, called for more careful analysis and synthesis of data, to design management measures and processes. He further added, the devastation in Cuddalore and Nagapattinam probably was due to focussing of Tsunami (2004) wave energy by the submarine canyons - a role that needs to be verified by further research investigation in the coastal ocean.

Prof. Sunil Kumar De (Vice-Chairperson of the IAG Working Group on Geomorphological Hazards) delivered the key note address on *Landslide Susceptibility Zonation of the Kurseong Subdivision of Darjiling Himalayas*. A special lecture on *Fluvial Geomorphological Hazards of the Brahmaputra Basin* was given by Prof. S. C. Mokhopadhyay (UGC Emeritus Professor, Kolkata) and he delivered the key paper in the first Technical session.



Dr. Sunil Kumar De, Prof. G. V. Rajamanickam, Prof. N. Chandrasekar and Prof. S.Kaliappan

The workshop had 57 papers presented by eminent scientist from various research organizations for discussion. The papers covered areas like landslides, coastal erosion, storm surges, river & shore erosion, sea water intrusion in coastal aquifers, sea level raise due to climate change and anthropogenic impact and consequent hazards to people and property. Prof. Mohammed Abdullah Al- saleh, Department of Geography College of Arts Kings Soud University Riyadh, Saudi Arabia presented a paper on *Application of Remote Sensing Data to Evaluate and Map Floods Influencing Factors in Western Saudi Arabia*. Ramani Bai Varadarajan, Associate Professor,



Invited Speakers and Participants

Department of Civil Engineering, University of Nottingham, Malaysia Campus presented a paper on *Determination of Seawater Intrusion hazards by Geo-Chemical Analysis of Ground water*. Prof. Abdullah A. Al. Taher, Geography, Kings Saud University, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia presented a paper on *Human Adjustment to sand Drift and Sand Dunes Movements in the Eastern Province of Saudi Arabia*. Ram Anand Bheeroo, Mercelement, St.Jean Quatre Barnes, Mauritius presented a paper on *Shoreline Change Analysis Using Spatial Technology along the Coast Between Trou aux Biches and Mont Choisy- Mauritius Island*. Dr. Padmini Pani, Jawarharlal Nehru University, Dr. Sudhakar Pardeshi. Pune University and Dr. Anju Gupta University of Jammu spoke on different geomorphological hazards in different parts of India.

Dr. S. Manickam (The Registrar, MSU, Tirunelveli) presided over the valedictory function held on July 22,2010. Dr. Y. Srinivas, Associate professor, Centre for Geotechnology, MSU, Tirunelveli proposed vote of thanks.

On 23 rd July 2010, A field workshop was arranged in the coastal segments, viz.,Manakudi, Shankuthurai, Rajakkamangalam, Muttam, Manavalakurichi and Colachal in Kanyakumari District. These sectors were affected by the deadly blow of 2004 tsunami, still preserve the destructive foot print of the tsunami. The Field work shop was organized by Prof. N.Chandrasekar - Tirunelveli, Prof. Ashish K. Paul – Kolkata and Prof. Sunil Kumar De - Tripura. Prof. Ashis Kr. Paul prepared a field manual and was circulated to the participants in the field monitor and various land form features and its vulnerability.

In the Field, the young geomorphologists were given intensive training on geomorphic Technologies adopted in costal studies.

**N. Chandrasekar, Convener**

### 3. Young Geomorphologists Section

a. **IAG/AIG GRANTS for the IAG/AIG Regional Conference on Geomorphology: *Geomorphology for Human Adaptation to Changing Tropical Environments*. Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, 18-22 February 2011**

The International Association of Geomorphologists (IAG/AIG) offers up to 7 grants to YOUNG GEOMORPHOLOGISTS (under 35 yrs old) from AFRICA who are willing to take part in the Regional Conference on Geomorphology to be held in Addis Ababa (Ethiopia) from 18-22 February 2011.

The IAG/AIG Regional Conference in Ethiopia promotes exchange of studies and methods for the investigation of tropical geomorphology in connection with different effects of global environmental changes. The Conference programme includes lectures, workshops and a series of pre-conference and post-conference field trips. An Intensive Course for Young Geomorphologists on Landslide Geomorphology and Mapping (LANDMAP) is also planned as a pre-conference activity (Dessie basin and town, 14-17 February 2011).

The Conference is organized by the newly formed Ethiopian Association of Geomorphologists (EAG) with the support of universities and associations from Ethiopia, Belgium and Italy.

The IAG/AIG has allocated 5000 euros to this initiative. The amount of single grants will depend on the country of origin (or place of residence) and on estimated financial needs of the grant winners. The grants are intended to cover travel costs to and from Addis Ababa, accommodation during the Conference and the registration in the pre-conference Intensive Course. In addition, the Organizing Committee will waive the Conference registration fee. The *participation in the Intensive Course is highly recommended* and the intention to participate in the Course will be considered as a preferential title in the selection of the applicants. The selection of candidates will be carried out by a Commission appointed by the IAG/AIG Executive Committee.

For further information on the Conference, please visit the IAG/AIG website <http://www.geomorph.org/>

**Mauro Soldati**, IAG/AIG Training Officer

b. **Final Result of the Selection for IAG/AIG Grants for the BSG Postgraduate Training Workshop, Windsor, UK, 13-16 December 2010.**

Three IAG/AIG GRANTS of 350 euros each, intended to favour participation in the BSG Postgraduate Training Workshop of Windsor, UK, have been awarded to the following of PhD students in Geomorphology from EUROPE:

Borbála SÜMEGHI (Hungary)  
Matteo VACCHI (Italy)  
Malgorzata WISTUBA (Poland)

11 eligible applications have been submitted, plus 1 non-eligible.

**Mauro Soldati**, IAG/AIG Training Officer

### 4. National Conference Reports



Ivan S. Schukin (1885-1985),  
"Father" of Russian Geomorphology

#### 6<sup>th</sup> Schukin Conference on Geomorphology

The Sixth Conference in memory of Prof. Ivan S. Schukin, one of the founders of geomorphology in Russia, has been held in Moscow State University (MSU) on May 18-21, 2010. These meetings are organized on a once-in-5-years regular basis by the Geomorphology Department of MSU with the support from the Russian Association of Geomorphologists. The conference was chaired by Prof. G. Safyanov with the assistance from Vice-Chairs: Prof. S.Bolysov, Dr. V.Myslivets, Prof. A. Panin, and Secretaries: Ju.Fuzeina, Dr. S.Lukianova, Dr. L.Shipilova. The conference was attended by 170 participants from all-over Russia, Armenia (1), Belarus (1), France (1), Germany (1), Iran (1), Kazakhstan (2), Kyrgyzstan (1), Ukraine (4), USA (2). Over 90 oral talks and 110 posters were presented in the plenary and four topical sessions. An invited lecture on cross-contributions between geomorphology and geoarchaeology was given by the IAG Vice-President

E. Fouache. Two one-day post-conference field trips were devoted to the links of Medieval settlements in the western Moscow Province to glacial and fluvial topography (May 22, guided by Prof. A.Lukashov and Prof. O.Borsuk), and to ancient and modern landslides on the Moscow River valley slopes (May 23, guided by Prof. A.Lukashov).

## 5. Upcoming Seminars/Conferences/Workshops/Trainings Programmes

### i. Austria

International Conference on the Status and Future of the World's Large Rivers. April 11-14, 2011, Vienna.  
<http://worldslargerivers.boku.ac.at/wlr/>

### ii. USA

6th International Conference on River Basin Management including all aspects of Hydrology, Ecology, Environmental Management, Flood Plains and Wetlands. Riverside, California, USA 25 - 27 May 2011.  
<http://www.wessex.ac.uk/rbm2011cfpb.html>

### iii. Greece

The Romanian, Italian, Belgian, French and Greek Associations of Geomorphologists, invite you at the 15<sup>th</sup> Joint Geomorphological Meeting (JGM), under the umbrella of IAG, entitled **Fluvial and coastal systems in tectonic active areas** to be held in Athens, Greece, June 1 – 4, 2011.  
<http://www.geomorphology2011.geol.uoa.gr>

### iv. Australia

International Union of Geology and Geophysics conference here in Melbourne, 28 June - 7 July 2011. For more details please log on to: <http://www.iugg2011.com/program.asp>

### v. Singapore

Remote Sensing, Natural Hazards and Environmental Change. Singapore, July 28-29, 2011.  
For more details please contact: Liew Soo Chin, CRISP, NUS ([sclicw@nus.edu.sg](mailto:sclicw@nus.edu.sg)), Jean-Claude Thouret, LMV, Blaise Pascal ([opgc.univ-bpclermont.fr](http://opgc.univ-bpclermont.fr)), Avijit Gupta, Large Rivers and Climate Change, IAG ([avijit@foxhill.demon.co.uk](mailto:avijit@foxhill.demon.co.uk))

### vi. Poland

9th Convention of Polish Geomorphologists "Landform geodiversity in Poland", Poznan, Poland, 20-22 September 2011. Contact: Malgorzata Mazurek ([gmazurek@amu.edu.pl](mailto:gmazurek@amu.edu.pl)); Web: [www.sgp.org.pl](http://www.sgp.org.pl)

### vii. Czech Republic

International Scientific Carpatho-Balkan-Dinaric Conference on Geomorphology. Ostravice, Czech Republic, October 17-20, 2011. For more details please visit the IAG/AIG website: [www.geomorph.org](http://www.geomorph.org)

### Editor's Note

The success of the IAG/AIG Newsletter depends upon the contributions that we receive. On behalf of IAG/AIG, I would request you to assist us by supplying information related to the forthcoming activities and innovations in geomorphology in your respective countries (commentaries, reviews of regional or national meetings and field trips, summaries of issues pertinent to geomorphology and announcements of future meetings and workshops. Your contributions should be forwarded to the IAG/AIG Publications Officer.

*Published by*

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