



GEOGRAPHERS' NEWS LETTER

Association of Punjab Geographers

(Registered under Societies Registration Act XXI of 1860 No. 1902 of 1998-99)

Vol. 18 No. 1

January 2017

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*New dreams, new hopes, new experiences and new joys,
With each New Year, we get a fresh, clean page to start
over, APG wishes that life will definitely write a
beautiful and remarkable New Chapter for you this year
Happy New Year-2017!*

Editors

17th APG Meet and National Conference, 2016

The 17th APG Meet and National Conference of Association of Punjab Geographers was hosted by SCD Government College, Ludhiana on 4th-5th November, 2016 with theme entitled 'Dynamics of Population, Environment and Regional Development: Issues and Challenges'. Principal of the college, Dr. Dharam Singh, welcomed the dignitaries and delegates, while theme of the conference was introduced by Convener of the conference and HOD, Dr. Harbans Singh. The Chief Guest of the Inaugural Session, S. Ranjit Singh Dhillon, MLA (Ludhiana East), released the Souvenir of the Meet and also launched the APG website. In his inaugural address, he urged the scholars to find solutions of emerging problems from the wisdom derived from past times and also stressed the importance of treasuring the rich heritage and cultural values of Punjab.



*S. Ranjit Singh, Dhillon, Chief Guest,
is releasing Souvenir along with other dignitaries*

Keynote address was delivered by Dr. Gopal Krishan, Professor Emeritus, Department of Geography, Panjab University, Chandigarh, who is also National Fellow of ICSSR, New Delhi. During his address, he raised very pertinent questions that 'why geographers could not enhance their importance in present day context?' He underlined that the need of the hour is to discuss 'Where is Geography?' instead of 'What is Geography?'

Prof. D.D. Sharma, President, APG delivered his Presidential remarks in which he portrayed the disparities in resource utilization between the rich and the poor world. While, introducing APG, Prof. H.S. Mangat said that APG is an association of people who believe in the 'Cause of Geography' and the territorial limits of APG are not constrained to the boundaries of Punjab. He shared the details of the newly launched APG website and requested the members to visit it regularly to have information about various activities of APG. He also invited suggestions to improve the functioning of APG.

Distinguished guests and past alumni of the college, including Dr. Gopal Krishan (Professor Emeritus, Panjab University, Chandigarh), Mr. Dharamvir Bector and Mrs. Rajni Bector (Cremica Foods Ltd.), Dr. J.P. Singh (Formerly, Professor, Punjabi University, Patiala), Miss Khushpal Kaur (Principal, Retd.), Mr. Rajinder Sharma (Chief Town Planner, Punjab, Retd.) and Dr. D.S. Manku (Principal, Retd.) were also honored by the college.

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The plenary session of the conference was chaired by Dr. M.S. Jaglan and Dr. D.D. Sharma. There were three speakers. Prof. Dhian Kaur (Department of Geography, Panjab University, Chandigarh), dwelt on 'Changes in Underground Water Table in a Green Revolution Region - the Case of Punjab', Prof. Krishna Mohan (From the same Department) made a presentation on 'National Map Policies in India and Emerging Issues'. Dr. Anil Sood (Head, ACM Division, Punjab Remote Sensing Centre, Ludhiana) discussed in detail the 'Basics and Applications of Remote Sensing, GIS, GPS and Spatial Data Infrastructure'. The plenary session ended with fruitful discussions and question-answers in open house.

The two days of the presentations, divided into four major technical sessions were further divided into several sub-technical sessions focusing on various sub-themes like Agricultural development and Indian food policy; Energy, water and agrarian crisis; Industrialization as a driver of development; Urban growth challenges like water, waste, pollution, mobility; Indian urban polices and smart cities; Demography, health and education; Depleting resources and sustainable development; and Geo-informatics and its role in development planning. In all, 90 research papers were presented. About 170 delegates from various parts of India attended this conference.

The valedictory session at the end of the second day was chaired by Dr. Jagtar Singh, Principal Commissioner, Income Tax, Patiala. In his valedictory address he applauded the efforts of the college and APG office bearers in making the conference a success. Mrs. Simerjeet Kaur (Organizing Secretary) read the conference report and in the end Prof. M.S. Jaglan (President Elect, APG) presented the Vote of Thanks.

APG Website

Much awaited website of APG has been launched on the 17th APG Meet. Members are requested to visit www.apgorg.org for any information regarding activities of APG. Any enquiry/suggestion related to it may be mailed to Dr. H.S.Mangat at hsmangat@rackeys.com

18th APG Meet and International Conference - 2017

18th APG Meet and International Conference is being hosted by PG Department of Geography (School of Arts & Languages), Lovely Professional University, Jalandhar (Punjab) in the month of Oct/Nov, 2017. Further details will be put on the websites of APG and LPU shortly.

New Arrival

A new book entitled 'Climate change and human health scenario in South and Southeast Asia', edited by **Prof. Rais Akthar** has been published in May by Springer and released at Aligarh by the Vice Chancellor, AMU, on 4th June, 2016.

Young Geographer Award 2017

Original research papers are invited for **Dr. Saminderjit Singh Young Geographer Award 2017** from all those young geographers who have not attained the age of 33 years. A soft copy of the paper prepared according to the format of 'Punjab Geographer' should be submitted in English to **Dr. B.R. Thakur, Assistant Professor, Department of Geography, H.P. University, Shimla**, (E-Mail- brthakur53@gmail.com, Mob-09418065518). The papers received later than October 10, 2017 will not be considered for evaluation. For details visit www.apgorg.org.

Condolence Resolution

Association of Punjab Geographers deeply mourns the sad demise of **S. Nirmal Preet Singh**, Senior Municipal Town Planner, Punjab and Finance Secretary, APG who left us for his heavenly abode in the prime of his life on November 5, 2016. By his departure, the Association of Punjab Geographers has lost a dedicated supporter and well-wisher working for the cause of Geography. The APG sends its heartfelt condolences to the bereaved family and prays to the God for peace of departed Soul and to provide strength to the family to bear the irreparable loss.

News from the Departments

Department of Geography, Kurukshetra University, Kurukshetra

The department has introduced Choice Based Credit System in M. Sc Geography with effect from 2016-17. The Master degree Programme in Geography carries 94 credits with 74 credits, 16 credits and 4 credits assigned to core, elective and open elective papers respectively. This includes 16 credits assigned to practical work and 4 credits assigned to Socio-economic Survey of a village/locality.

The Department has also revised M. Phil coursework for making it research oriented. It includes four papers namely Research Design and Methods in Geography; Advanced Quantitative Methods in Geographic Research; Research Methods in Human Geography and Research Methods in Physical Geography.

Department of Geography, University of Jammu, Jammu

The department has got approval for support under FIST programme by DST.

Department of Geography, MD University, Rohtak

1. The Department of Geography is working on an ambitious project with Department of Science of Technology, New Delhi to develop a model on g-governance for planners, administrators, academicians and general public. Department is working on 2 clusters taking 5 villages each in Jind and Sonipat districts. Prof. Mehtab Singh is Director of the project.
2. The Department organized one day workshop/seminar on GIS Development sponsored by Department of Student Welfare, M.D. University Rohtak on November 20, 2016. Professor Mehtab Singh coordinated the seminar.
3. The Department organized National Level Winter School

Training Programme in Geospatial Technologies from 24 November, 2016 to 14 December, 2016 sponsored by NRDMS/DST, Govt. of India, New Delhi. Professor Mehtab Singh coordinated the Programme.

Department of Geography, Kumaun University, SSJ Campus Almora in Uttarakhand

A Workshop on "GIS Development and Setting up GIS Cell for District Bageshwar" was jointly organized by COE NRDMS, Department of Geography, Kumaun University, SSJ Campus Almora, Uttarakhand and UCOST Dehradun at Vikash Bhawan, district Bageshwar, on 9th June, 2016. The Cell has started functioning under the control of the District Magistrate, Bageshwar since 9th June, 2016

News about the Members

Prof. V.S. Manhas, University of Jammu has joined as Chairperson of the department.

Prof. M.S. Jaglan, Department of Geography, Kurukshetra university, presented a research paper 'Rainfall Anomalies and their Impact on Agriculture in Western Rajasthan' on 33rd IGU Conference at Beijing, August, 2016. Prof. Jaglan also chaired a session with Prof. Mahmoud Ashour of Egypt.

Prof. Rajeshwari, Department of Geography, KUK, presented a research paper 'Gender Issues and Status of Women in Haryana', on 33rd IGU Conference at Beijing, August, 2016.

Dr. B R Thakur, Assistant Professor, Department of Geography, Himachal Pradesh University conducted **21 Working Days Capacity Building Training Programme in Geospatial Technologies** w.e.f 08-28 November, 2016 funded by NRDMS, Department of Science and Technology, Government of India, New Delhi.

He has also received a Major Research project titled **Reconstruction of Geographic Space and Socio-economic Life in Erstwhile Princely Chamba State: A Study in Historical Geography** funded by Indian Council of Historical Research, Government of India, New Delhi.

Dr. Anuja Tigga has joined as Associate Professor in the Department of Geography, Andhra University, Visakhapatnam.

Dr. Lakhvir Singh Gill, Principal, University College, Sardulgarh, Mansa has joined as Principal, University College, Ghanaur, Patiala.

Prof. J.S.Rawat, Director, COE NRDMS, Department of Geography participated as "Special Invitee" in the Conference on "Location Based Services (LBS) -2016: Transforming Coordinates to Business" organised by Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI), New Delhi on 3rd June 2016, at Federation House, New Delhi.

He also delivered lecture on "Application of GIS in Road Development in Uttarakhand" for the PWD Engineers of Uttarakhand at the Academy of Administration, Nainital on 30th June, 2016.

Ms. Seema Choudhary has joined Department of Geography, HPU, Shimla as Asstt. Professor.

Prof. D. D. Sharma has been elected Vice President of NAGI.

Role of Geographers as Spatial Planners in China**

Dr. M. S. Jaglan*

Interaction with the Chinese geographers and geoscientists during the Conference revealed that research in geography and other sciences is integrated and synchronized with the developmental processes of society and economy in China. The geographers are playing a pivotal role in preparing the framework of Landuse Planning, Agricultural Zoning, and schemes of development for sustainable regional agricultural production systems in China. These schemes provide guidelines for different agricultural zones on utilization of natural resources like land and water, and prescription of appropriate technology for agricultural modernization.

Another area where Chinese geoscientists are contributing is urban-industrial development planning. Their knowledge and expertise have been utilized by Government of China in designing spatial structure of society and economy in the urban landscapes. Based on the "Pole-Axis System" theory, the spatial structure of industrial areas has been designed for the balanced regional and societal development.

One would be certainly mesmerized to witness the functioning of urban transport and sanitation systems in Beijing and surrounding urban landscape. It was a pleasant experience to witness the functionality of the infrastructure developed for Beijing Olympics. The neat and clean Olympic Square is being utilized for recreation apart from being the centre of sports activities.

It became evident from the presentations of Chinese geographers that they have also contributed significantly in the growth of tourism industry in their country. In fact, tourism industry and research in Tourism Geography in China grew simultaneously during 1980s. The research inputs from geographers played a significant role in tourism development during 1990s. At present, geographers are providing plans for location of tourist places, regional tourism plans and inputs for development of tourism system/industry in China. It goes to the credit of Chinese tourism planning in which geographers contributed significantly that during last two and half decades their ecotourism model has played multiple roles in spreading the ideas of the ecological civilization which educate the tourists about environmental ethics and art of preserving the environment and living in harmony with the nature.

In a session on Area Development I came across a presentation on the Mega Silk Road Project. This presentation was done by the adviser to Prime Minister of China who happens to be a geographer. This project is seen as one of the biggest economic project that would bring economic transformation in China. It was not the first time I realized the potentials of geography as an applied science. But certainly it was first time I witnessed the functionality of the discipline in economic and regional planning.

Planning Commission of India also envisaged a plan for delineation of, Agro-climatic Zones in 1988. But this plan failed to take off. In the face of staggering agriculture, deteriorating agro-

ecological systems and degradation of rural and urban environment, India should also take a cue from the success of China by recognizing the potentialities of geographers towards spatial planning and develop regional plans for development of agriculture, industry, tourism and urban places.

Experiences as Tourist

Our excursion to the tourist places was refreshing. The Great Wall of China was built over a long period during Qin, Han and Ming dynasties. But it was indeed built by common people of China and it is made of their blood and sweat. Lakhs of people took part in its construction and thousands of them sacrificed their lives. People were forcibly lifted and taken as bonded labourers to work on the wall. Talks with Chinese people, will reveal numerous stories of bloody tortures. A Chinese legendary story says that a man was abducted by the army of the emperor on his marriage day and taken to the wall to contribute his labour in its construction. His bride kept on waiting for him for months. After about six months his bride in a winter night saw in the dream that her bridegroom was shivering in the cold. She collected clothes and food in a cart and started travelling towards the construction site of the wall. But upon reaching there she did not find her husband. She kept the search on for days and finally she met a person who knew her husband. He told her that her husband died within a week of his arrival as there was a heavy rain and landslides. A portion of wall caved in and her husband died under its debris. The dead body of her husband was used as a construction material and was buried in the wall. The story goes that she was adamant to get the body of her husband back for ceremonious burial at her place. She sat near the wall for about a week demanding his dead body. Suddenly, there was a heavy downpour and landslides. The wall under construction caved in

once again and the dead body of her husband came out of debris which she took back to her place.

Visit to Ming Tombs and Forbidden City revealed that there are a lot of similarities in the construction processes of historical monuments and history of India and China. One day trip to Tianjin City, located about 130 km southeast of Beijing on Pacific coast, by bullet train which takes 33 minutes to traverse this distance was equally refreshing. Tianjin is an industrial city. This third largest city of China is a picturesque multicultural urban landscape. One can witness the architectural designs of various western countries in the city. But the Marco Polo Square in the core of Italian Style Town is magnificent. It reminds the onlookers that this Italian traveller established the cultural links between East and West after the Dark Age in Europe. A glance at the Tianjin Eye standing across the fluent flowing translucent water stream of Ho Hai gives a ray of hope to an Indian like me that the cleanliness and sanctity of the rivers can be maintained even in the cities of India provided we make concerted and truthful efforts for that.

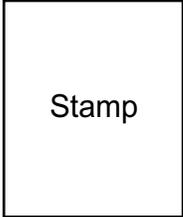
* Professor, Department of Geography, Kurukshetra University, Kurukshetra.

** Based on the observations and interaction during, 33rd IGU Conference at Beijing, August, 2016.

Request: APG appreciates the above write-up of Prof. Jaglan and requests the members to send such experiences of geographic importance to H.S.Mangat at hsmangat@rackeys.com; geogjaspal@gmail.com for publication in the News Letter to share with fraternity of geographers at larger scale. Contribution of unique photographs depicting geographical knowledge/ landscape (may be useful for classroom teaching) clicked by him/her with date and place will also be appreciated.

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To,



Stamp

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