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FIRST MEETING OF THE RECONSTITUTED NEIST RESEARCH COUNCIL HELD



Dr Harsh K Gupta (Left, facing), Chairman, NEIST, Research Council presiding over the RC meeting

The first meeting of the reconstituted Research Council of NEIST-Jorhat was held in the conference hall of NEIST under the Chairmanship new Chairman Dr Harsh K Gupta, Raja Ramanna Fellow & Former Secretary, Department of Ocean Development, Govt. of India on 20 August, 2007. Among the members present were Prof H R Wason, Department of Earthquake Engineering, IIT, Roorkee, Prof VS Rao, Director, BITS-Pilani, Prof Promod Tandon, Vice-Chancellor, North Eastern Hill University, Shillong, Meghalaya and Dr PG Rao, Director, NEIST-Jorhat. It is worth mentioning here that the Research Council provides the direction and vision of the research works and helps the laboratory to formulate R&D programmes keeping in view the national priorities and opportunity niches and also helps to design a road map towards achieving this. In the meeting the Director made a presentation about NEIST, Jorhat which included the things like SWOT analysis of NEIST, Kelkar Committee's recommendations and actions taken, highlights of 10th Plan Achievements, etc. Presentations of the progress of various laboratory projects such as (i) Supra institutional project, (ii) Laboratory facility creation, (iii) In-house projects, (iv) Network projects were also made by the concerned scientists for discussion, recommendation and approval, etc. by the Research Council. The Chairman and members accompanied by the Director also visited the various departments of the laboratory and had interactions with the staff.

Dr G Thyaaraian visited NEIST. Jorhat



Dr G Thyagarajan discussing a point with scientist during his visit in the presence of Dr P G Rao, Director, NEIST, Jorhat

Dr G Thyagarajan, former Director and former Chairman of Research Council, RRL-Jorhat paid a visit to NEIST on 16 July, 2007. He went round the various departments of the laboratory in the morning hours to witness the on going research activities and met the scientific staff working their. Later on at noon he had a formal meeting with the Heads of Divisions/Sections and Area Coordinators. In the meeting Dr Thyagarajan informed that despite his utmost efforts and willingness to continue as the Chairman of Research Council, he could not do so due to his other assignments with CSIR. He informed that he was 40 years old when he became the Director of a CSIR laboratory at Jorhat and the experience he gathered as the Director at RRL-Jorhat subsequently served as the basis for embarking on as Director of other CSIR labs and other assignments too. He reminisced with profound thanks and deep appreciations the cooperation he received from the RRL(NEIST) staff during his tenure at RRL(NEIST). He also expressed his great satisfaction over the growth and development of the laboratory ever since he left it and proclaimed that quality and infrastructurewise the laboratory is among the tops of CSIR today and in this connection he also wished the laboratory's continued prosperity in the years to come.

Dr Thyagarajan also had interactions with the scientists and urged upon them to keep up their good and quality work. As he is mentally very much attached to the laboratory, he promised to pay similar visits in future also. Earlier, Dr P G Rao, Director, NEIST-Jorhat welcomed and expressed happiness for the kind visit of Dr Thyagarajan.

Training-cum-Production unit coming up at Tripura

With the joint initiatives of NEIST-Jorhat, CLRI-Chennai and Tripura State Council for Science & Technology (TCSTC), Agartala a Training-cum-Production Centre for non-leather footwear has come into being at Dhajanagar, Udaipur, South Tripura in the small scale sector. Managed by Udaipur Nagar Panchayat, an urban local body of Tripura, this Training-cum Production centre is intended to develop need based human resources and entrepreneurship within the state through motivation and training. The Ministry of Human Resources Development, Govt. of India has been extending financial grants in the form of a project for setting up of the centre at Tripura and CLRI-Chennai acted as the coordinating laboratory for execution of the work. A tripartite MoU was also signed between NEIST-Jorhat, CLRI-Chennai and TSCST-Agartala to this effect. The unit was formally inaugurated by Sri Badal Choudhury, Hon'ble Minister of Science & Technology, Finance, PWD, etc. Govt. of Tripura on 30 July, 2007. Dr P G Rao, Director, NEIST-Jorhat attended the inaugural function of the centre as a Guest of Honour. This centre is expected to fulfil a long felt need of the entrepreneurs of the state of Tripura.

NEIST assists in setting up a quality control laboratory at Agartala

The Public Works Department (PWD), Govt of Tripura made a request to Director, NEIST-Jorhat for assisttance in setting up of a Quality Control laboratory at Agartala on their behalf. In this connection they also sent a list of equipments that will be normally required by PWD, Tripura for conducting various tests. The Director, NEIST visited and also had discussions with the Ministers and PWD officials at Agartala in connection with the proposal. Accordingly, the Applied Civil Engineering division of NEIST-Jorhat has become actively engaged for the job. The division has already procured various equipments from Kolkata which are going to be transhipped to Agartala. The

division will also impart training to the personnels deputed by the Tripura government. Shri A Biswas, In-Charge, Applied Civil Engg. also visited the site in Tripura and had discussions with the officials of PWD. The works were in progress. The NEIST- Jorhat and PWD, Govt. of Tripura are likely to sign an MoU for the purpose.

NEIST-FINER Technological assistance to entrepreneurs

A batch of 17 entrepreneurs from the North East, aspiring to set-up zinger and other food processing industries in the region, visited the Central Food Technical Research Institute (CFTRI), Mysore to have the detail interactions regarding setting up of industries based on the available technologies and commercial viability of the Food based industries, etc. The team was led by Federation of Industries of North Eastern Region (FINER), a Guwahati based NGO for promoting entrepreneurship in the region and the move was the result of NEIST-FINER joint initiative as per an MoU entered into between the two.

NEIST's publications among the 'Top 25 hottest articles' and 'Top 50 most downloaded articles' of "ScienceDirect" The two of the research publications of Dr N C Barua, Scientist F and his team of the Natural Products Chemistry Division have been able to cut out a coveted niche among the `Top 25 Hottest Articles' in Chemistry - Tetrahedron: Asymmetry as estimated by the megazine `ScienceDirect' for each of the first quarter of two consecutive years viz. 2006 and 2007. The research publications are namely (i) Catalytic asymmetric Henry reaction - review article, Tetrahedron : Asymmetry, Voume 17, issue 24, 1 December, Pages 3315-3326 authored by Boruwa, J, Gogoi, N, Saikia, PP and Barua, NC and ii) Stereoselective total synthesis of (+)- boronolide, Tetrahedron, authored by Boruwa, J and Barua, N C.

In an another development, Dr James Milne, the publisher of Organic & Inorganic Chemistry, Elsevier Ltd., Oxford, U K vide his letter of 22 June, 2007 conveyed that the research publication titled `Stereoselective total synthesis of (+)-boronolide' published in Tetrahedron Vol 62:6 1193-1198pp 01-Feb-2006, authored by Boruwa J and Barua NC, has been recognised as a 'Top 50 most downloaded' article from Tetrahedron on ScienceDirect during the year 2006. This achievement was adjudged in the context of i) Tetrahedron is one of the top 5 most downloaded journals on ScienceDirect (alongside the like of Cell, The Lancet and Tetrahedron Letters) (ii) over one million full text articles are downloaded from the five Tetrahedron publications each month (that is one article being downloaded every 2-3 seconds), (iii) almost 5000 institutes currently take Tetrahedron online via ScienceDirect, providing unparallel worldwide access to the journal's content, (iv) papers from Tetrahedron publications are regularly featured as the 'most requested' articles at CAS (Source : CAS Science Spotlight:www.cas.org/spotlight).

These achievements of Dr N C Barua and his team came as a morale booster to the creative efforts of the scientific community of NEIST-Jorhat.

Projects undertaken

Grant-in-aid

(i)Development of Super High Strength Proppants to be undertaken on behalf of Oil Industry Development Board, Ministry of Petroleum & Natural Gas, New Delhi. (Sanctioned Amount - Rs33.50 lakh, PI- Dr D K Dutta, Sc. F). An MoU is also going to be signed between NEIST- Jorhat and OIIB to this effect shortly.

Consultancy

(i)Soil investigation for MSQ Improvement Project at Digboi Refinery undertaken on behalf of the Project Department, Indian Oil Corporation Limited (Assam Oil Division), P O Digboi, Assam. (Total estimated cost Rs. 8,90,172/-, PI- Sri A Biswas, TO(E)and I/c Applied Civil Engineering Division, Duration - 120 days). `An integrated approach to control of biogenic hydrogen sulphide production in oil wells and processing of fluids through chemical and microbial routes' undertaken on behalf of Oil India Limited, Duliajan, Assam (Contract Amount - Rs. 6.759 lakh, PI- Dr B K Gogoi, Head, Biotechnology divn.)

Projects completed

Grant-in-aid

(i)Creating awareness and promotion of medicinal plants available in Arunachal Pradesh for production and marketing of medicinal plants towards sustainable development of ST population of Arunachal Pradesh undertaken on behalf of Department of Biotechnology, Ministry of Science & Technology, Govt. of India. (PI- Dr B N Saha, Scientist, NEIST Branch, Itanagar, Arunachal Pradesh)

(ii)Characterization and upgradation of some limestone deposits of North Eastern Region of India for value addition and rational utilization undertaken on behalf of Ministry of Mines, Govt. of India, New Delhi. (Project Code - GAP 136, Contract Amount - Rs. 20 lakhs, PI - Dr P C Borthakur, Ex-Scientist)

(iii)Assessment and promotion of economic wetland biodiversity of Manipur ; a concern for ecological, ethnical and economical dimensions undertaken on behalf of GB Pant Institute of Himalayan Environment & Development, Ministry of Environment & Forests, Govt. of India Kosi-Katarmal, Almora, UP. (Project Code - GAP 145, Amount Received - Rs. 4.52 lakh, PI- Dr H B Singh, Scientist, NEIST-Manipur Sub-Station)

Consultancy

(i)Manufacture of coal briquettes for gainful utilization of Nagaland coal undertaken on behalf of Directorate of Geology & Mining, Govt. of Nagaland, Dimapur. (Project Code - CNP 420,Contract Amount - Rs. 2 lakh, PI - B P Baruah, Scientist, Coal Divn.)

Technology released

Agropractice for BLI - Arun An improved strain of Lemongrass

(i)Herbal Research & Development Institute, Centre for Aromatic Plants (CAP) Govt. of Uttarakhand, Industrial Estate, Selagui-248197, Dehra Dun

(ii)Arunachal Vikash Ebum Shiksha Sangataan, Itanagar, Arunachal Pradesh.

Independence Day celebrated



Dr P G Rao, Director, NEIST, Jorhat unfurling the National Tricolour

The country's 60th Independence Day was celebrated in the laboratory at 7.30 am on 15 August, 2007. Held in front of the Administrative Block, Dr P G Rao, Director, NEIST hoisted the Indian Tri-colour in the presence of the members of NEIST staff, their family members, children of the campus and others. It was followed by singing of National Anthem. He showered Independence Day greetings to all. The Director also addressed the gathering on the occasion. In his speech, the Director paid rich tributes to the memory of great martyars and national heros and appealed to all, more particularly to the scientific community of NEIST, to rededicate themselves to the cause of nation building with greater devotion in the larger interest of protecting the country's hard-earned and precious sovereignty and integrity at this hour of distress and to stand solidly against all the disruptive and divisive forces.

Sadbhavana pledge



Dr Harsh K Gupta, Chairman, NEIST Research Council is seen administering the Sadhbhavana Pledge to NEIST staff in presence of R C Members on Sadhbhavana Day.

On the occasion of 'Sadbhavan Day' on 20 August, 2007, at a small function held at NEIST auditorium Dr H K Gupta, Chairman, RC, NEIST and Dr P G Rao, Director, NEIST administered the Sadbhavan pledge to the members of the staff of NEIST in the presence of RC members.

Training imparted to students

(i) Training on Analytical Techniques



Student trainees being imparted training on Analytical Techniques

A training course on 'Analytical Techniques for Organic & Inorganic materials' was organized in the laboratory for the students of Post Graduate Diploma in Analytical Chemistry, Department of Chemistry of Gauhati University during 5-15 August, 2007. The training included both theory and practical classes. In practical classes the students were demonstrated how equipments are run and results interpreted. The training was imparted on the use of sophisticated analytical gadgets like high field NMR, Mass Spectro-metry(MS), Gas Chromatography (GS) GCMS, IR&UV Spectroscopy, X-ray crystallography, Differential thermal analysis, HPLC, HPLC MS in chemical analysis, etc. The participants also attended classes and demonstration on analysis of Petroleum, Cement and Coal and had close interactions with the scientists. The training programme was sponsored by the Gauhati University.

(ii) Training for Project work

Shri Bidyut Prakash Purohit, a student of M Sc Biotechnology, Sambalpur University, Orissa carried out his project work titled 'Use of PCR based RAPD markers to study the genetic diversity in Zanthoxylum species of Assam' for the part fulfilment of the degree of Master of Science in Biotechnology. He worked under the guidance of Dr S P Saikia, Scientist, Medicinal Aromatic & Economic Plants Division.

(iii) Ms Thounaojam Chanu Rosila, M Sc student of Amity Institute of Biotechnology, Noida and Sarbashri Pranjali Bharali & Pojul Loying, M Sc students of Department of Chemistry, Gauhati University received training in the areas of Molecular Biology, Biochemistry, Separation technique, etc. from Dr B G Unni, Scientist 'F'.

Training on Footwear to commence at Training Centre of Manipur Sub-station

With the joint initiatives of Central Leather Research Institute, Chennai and NEIST-Jorhat (both CSIR labs.), a Non-leather Footwear Training-cum-Production centre has been established in the NEIST Substation of Imphal, Manipur under a joint project with a view to providing a platform or outlet for the local entrepreneurs of the Manipur state for enabling to set up small scale industries in the non-leather sector and also for judicious disposal of the raw materials of the state. Consequent upon the completion of the installation of the centre, the first batch of trainees comprising of 7 participants were recently recruited at the centre for imparting training. The training is all set to commence from the first week of September, 2007 which is going to fulfil a longfelt need of the entrepreneurs of the state. The Principal Coordinator of the training being Dr H B Singh, Scientist-in-Charge of the NEIST Substation.

Seminar/Symposia/Meeting attended

Dr P G Rao, Director, NEIST attended the following meetings :

(i) Research Council meeting of Central Institute of Medicinal & Aromatic Plants(CIMAP), Lucknow on 3 July, 2007.

(ii) Meeting of Science & Technology Department, Govt. of Assam at Dispur Secretariat on 4 July, 2007.

(iii) Attended the RAB meeting 2005-06 on 13 July, 2007 at Chennai Central University.

(iv) Visited NEIST Sub-station at Imphal, Manipur on 14 July, 2007.

(v) Meeting at CFTRI, Mysore along with FINER members on 9 July, 2007.

(vi) Management Council meeting of CGCRI, Kolkata on 28 July, 2007.

(vii) Attended inauguration of Footwear Training Centre at Udaipur, Agartala, Tripura.

Dr P C Tamuly, Scientist F attended the Seminar on MSME act 2006 - Growth Engine for SME sector in North' on 24 July, 2007.

Dr JCS Katakya, Scientist F attended a seminar on Solid Waste Management' organised by Prajnalaya (Organization for Children and Rural Under-developed People) of Saraipani, Titabor, Jorhat on 23 August, 2007 at Prajnalaya.

Ms D Begum, Technical Officer attended the 'Workshop-cum-Brain Storming of all the Heads of CSIR Knowledge Resource Centres' at HRDC Ghaziabad during 19-20 July, 2007.

Dr B N Saha, Scientist F and In-charge, NEIST Branch, Itanagar attended the interactive work shop on prospects of developing lionage between JFMCs and Industrial/Business houses for value addition and marketing of NTFPs under NAP scheme as a resource person. The workshop was organised by the State Forest Research Institute, Itanagar and held at Itanagar during 19-21 July, 2007.

Ms D Begum and Mrs A Goswami, Technical Officers attended the seminar organised on the occasion of Librarians' Day held at CKB Commerce College, Jorhat on 12 August, 2007 and organised by the Jorhat Library Association.

Dr T Goswami, Scientist attended the round table meeting on 'Innovation in Building Technologies' organised by Building Materials and Technology Promotion Council (BMTPC). Ministry of Housing and Urban Poverty Alleviation, Govt. of India and held at India Habitat Centre, New Delhi on 21 August, 2007. The meeting was inaugurated by Kumari Lelja, Hon'ble Minister of State (Independent Charge, Ministry of Housing & Urban Poverty Alleviation, GOI.

Dr B G Unni, Scientist F and Area Coordinator, Biological Science, attended the Fulbright Chapter Leaders Meeting on invitation by United Education Foundation in India (New Delhi) held at USEFI House, 12 Hailey Road, New Delhi on 22 August, 2007. Dr Unni also spoke on the Alumni Achievements, events and Fulbright chapter activities in India.

Students visit

A group of Class X standard students from Dibrugarh escorted by the Teacher-in-Charge Shri Jayanta Bhattacharya visited the laboratory on 19 July, 2007. They were taken round the various departments of laboratory to get themselves exposed to the on going research activities as well as the research environment. Sri C S Bordoloi, Technical Officer, attended to the students on behalf of the laboratory.

A group of school students from the Holy Flower School, Teok accompanied by the Teacher-in-charge visited the laboratory in the morning hours on 31st July, 2007. Sri Probin Boruah, Technical Officer attended to the students visitors and they were taken round the laboratory to get themselves acquainted with the research environment of the laboratory.

Paper published

SAIKIA SP AND KANJILAL PB : Conservation of Biodiversity with special reference to Medicinal Plants. Biodiversity - Herbal Medicine (Ed. S Jyrwa), 2007, p-6-17.

Papers presented

SAHA B N AND DUTTA S C : Cultivation and processing of aromatic plants - problems & solutions. Presented in the the interactive workshop on prospects of developing lionage between JFMCs and Industrial /Business houses for

value addition and marketing of NTFPs under NAP scheme organised by the State Forest Research Institute, Itanagar during 19-21 July, 2007 at Itanagar.

BEGUM D : Digital library environment and the librarians. Presented in the seminar organised on the occasion of Librarians' Day held at CKB Commerce College, Jorhat on 12 August, 2007 organised by the Jorhat Library Association.

VISIT ABROAD

NEIST Scientist participated in the International Conference on Juvenile Hormone



Dr B G Unni

Dr B G Unni, Scientist F and Area Coordinator of Biotechnology participated in the 9th International Conference on Juvenile Hormone held at York City of United Kingdom during 5-10 August, 2007 and delivered a lecture on Juvenile Hormone research in the scientific session 'Regulators of Juvenile Hormone Biosynthesis'. It is worthwhile to mention that the international conference on Juvenile Hormone (JH) is the only symposium to focus the major research activities on Juvenile Hormone from morphological changes to molecular biology and functional properties of Juvenile Hormone in insects.

Instrumentation

Online Secondary Database 'SCOPUS'

During the year an Online Secondary Database called SCOPUS was added which covers S&T published information worldwide over LAN of the laboratory.

Earth Resources

VSAT Communication System

Benefit to clients/users

A state of art online VSAT Communication System adopted and connected to existing seismograph station for monitoring the seismicity of NER India.

Congrats !

The following members of the staff have been promoted by the Assessment Promotion Committee to their next higher grades with the effective dates shown against them :

Staff Promoted to w.e.f

Name	Gr	w.e.f
Dr P C Borthakur	Gr IV(6)	03.04.2006
Dr S Mahiuddin	Gr IV(5)	09.07.2004

Dr P C Neog	Gr IV(5)	01.04.2005
Dr M C Kakati	Gr IV(5)	01.02.2006
Dr R L Goswamee	Gr IV(4)	26.06.2005
Dr B C Saikia	Gr IV(4)	31.08.2005
Dr Tridip Goswami	Gr IV(3)	16.06.2005

Welcome !

The following incumbents (from amongst the Temporary Status workers of NEIST, Jorhat) have joined the Council's Service at NEIST, Jorhat on regular basis after they were found fit by the Interview Committee as well as the Competent Authority of NEIST in the posts of Tech Gr.I(1), Asstt.(G) Gr III and Gr 'D' (Non-Technical) with the effective dates shown against them. They will be put on probation for a period of one year from the dates of appointments which may be extended or curtailed at the discretion of the Competent Authority :

Incumbent		Gr	w.e.f
Sri Himendra Hazarika	Asstt(G)	Gr III	20.08.2007
Sri Nageswar Singh	Tech	Gr I(1)	03.08.2007
Sri Boloram Gayan	Tech	Gr I(1)	03.08.2007
Sri Romen Ch Saikia		Gr D	03.08.2007
Sri Pradip Ch Saikia		Gr D	03.08.2007
Sri Pradip Kr Das		Gr D	03.08.2007
Sri Sushil Gayan		Gr D	03.08.2007
Sri Lila Gandhia		Gr D	03.08.2007
Sri Kolamoni Kalita		Gr D	03.08.2007

Farewell

The following member of the staff of NEIST-Jorhat retired from Council's service on attaining the age of superannuation with the effective date shown against him :

Sri R K Buragohain, Technical Officer, Gr III(5) w.e.f. 29.12.2006.

The following member of the staff of NEIST-Jorhat was relieved of Council's duty by the Competent Authority of NEIST on submission of his resignation with the effective date shown against him -

Shri Lunkhomang Khongsai, SO(F&A) w.e.f 24.08.2007.