

**Centre for Disaster Management**  
**St. PETER'S UNIVERSITY**  
**Avadi, Chennai 600054**

**Preconference Workshop on Disaster Management, January 21-22, 2014 &  
International Conference on Disaster Management, January 23-24, 2014**

**REPORT**

**International Conference**

An international conference on disaster management was organized by the Centre for Disaster Management of St. Peter's University during January 23-24, 2014. The conference was attended by 135 delegates including five from abroad. Fourteen key note papers and 27 contributed papers were presented during the conference.

Prof. Dr. Achintya Haldar, University of Arizona, U.S.A., was the Chief Guest during the inaugural session of the conference. He highlighted the importance of the conference and its relevance to not only India but also for other countries. The conference should facilitate exchange of latest knowledge and developments in disaster management. He also emphasized the need to disseminate the knowledge to different sections of the society and the implementing agencies. Dr. D.S. Ramachandra Murthy, Vice chancellor, St. Peter's University, in his presidential address, mentioned that the natural and manmade hazards can become disasters unless we take preventive action to minimize the effect of the hazards with respect to loss of life and property. Disasters can be avoided or minimized through application of science, technology and management techniques. There is now a paradigm shift from disaster relief to disaster management - from the prevalent '*culture of reaction*' in the form of relief after a disaster occurs to a '*culture of prevention*'. This includes various aspects to prevent disasters and if it is not possible - to prepare and minimize their effect. Disaster management includes disaster prevention, disaster preparedness or pre-disaster management, emergency management or during-disaster management and post-disaster relief and rehabilitation. Science and technology, and effective management techniques play a great role in these issues. **'Disaster management' is basically 'disaster risk management'**. We have learnt several lessons from recent disasters: 2013 Uttarkashi floods and landslides, 2011 Fukushima nuclear disaster, 2004 tsunami and so on. The most important lesson is that we need to take further action to minimize the losses by evolving better approaches on all fronts in managing the disasters. Disaster management includes Disaster prevention, Disaster preparedness or Pre-disaster management, Emergency management or During-disaster management and Post-disaster relief and rehabilitation. We may not be able to prevent occurrence of hazards but we can definitely try to eliminate disasters. He mentioned that small pox has been eradicated in India and Polio is on the way out, through regular vaccinations and immunization camps. He asked the delegates to work on the challenging task of eliminating disasters also through capacity building. Prof. Dr. S. Rajarathnam, Director, Centre for Disaster Mitigation and Management, Anna University, felicitated St. Peter's University for the timely event and briefed about the contribution of Anna University in this area. Dr. P. Partheeban, Dean (Academic), briefed about the conference and the technical program.

Dr.D.S.Ramachandra Murthy, Vice chancellor, thanked Hon'ble Dr.APJ Abdul Kalam, Former President of India, for his message of best wishes for the conference and suggestions further action required for more effective disaster management.

The proceedings of the conference was released by Prof. Dr.Achintya Haldar. The key note papers were presented by experts from India and abroad, on the following topics.

- Disaster Management – Challenges and Innovations
- Planning for disasters
- Climate change and its effects
- Indian tsunami early warning system (ITEWS)
- Tropical cyclones: causes and management to reduce their impacts
- Application of Geoinformatics for emergency management during disasters
- Simulation of vortex flows in boundary layer wind tunnel
- Seismic response control using shape memory alloy wire
- Risk and vulnerability analysis for earthquake disaster reduction
- Structural health assessment: challenges
- Safe and green nuclear power
- Fracture studies on stainless steel straight pipes under earthquake-type cyclic loading
- Spontaneous role of doctors, hospitals and association in disaster management
- Disaster management - way forward.

An unique feature of the conference was that it covered almost all the topics in disaster management. A special session on the role of medical personnel in disaster management was conducted by a delegation of senior doctors of the Indian Medical Association led its state President by Dr.M.Balasubramanian. The delegation included two doctors from the University of Sydney.

The foreign delegates included

- Prof. Dr.Achintya Haldar, University of Arizona, U.S.A.,
- Prof. Dr.Rajasekhar Bala, National University of Singapore, Singapore,
- Dr.Jayaraman Potty, Asian Disaster Preparation Centre, Bangkok,
- Prof. DR.Kathryn Currow, The Sydney Children's Hospitals Network, The University of Sydney, Australia, and
- DR.Robert Tynan, The Sydney Children's Hospitals Network, The University of Sydney, Australia.

The conference was sponsored by

- Board of Research in Nuclear Sciences, Dept. of Atomic Energy
- Science and Engineering Research Board, Dept. of Science and Technology
- Tamil Nadu Science and Technology Centre
- Indian Medical Association
- CADDCAMM Solutions



**Release of conference proceedings by Dr.Achintya Haldar, University of Arizona, U.S.A. during the inaugural function of the conference on 23<sup>rd</sup> January 2014.**

### **Preconference Workshop**

A two-day workshop on disaster management was also conducted by the Centre for Disaster Management of St. Peter's University during January 21-22, 2014. The workshop was attended by 75 participants including teachers, research scholars, officers from the Fire Services Department, students, NCC cadets and a 9<sup>th</sup> standard school student.

The workshop was inaugurated by Dr.K.R.K.Raman, Micro-contamination Scientist and Advisor, King Institute of Preventive Medicine and Research, Chennai. He highlighted the need for conducting such workshops to create awareness of disaster management among the stake holders. He requested St. Peter's University to organize more such workshops and conferences. In his presidential address, Dr.D.S.Ramachandra Murthy, Vice chancellor, St. Peter's University, mentioned that there has been several advances in knowledge on all aspects of disaster management including warning and forecasting techniques, instruments, mitigation strategies and techniques, emergency management and post-disaster relief and rehabilitation. Disaster management is a multi-disciplinary subject and there is a role for every player to contribute. The workshop will create greater awareness on the topic and bring more people to work together to make our country disaster-free and prosperous. Dr.Partheeban, Dean (Academic), SPCT, briefed about the contents of the workshop.

Keynote papers were presented on the following topics.

- Introduction to Disasters
- Disaster Prevention and Mitigation
- Cyclone Disaster Mitigation

- Emergency Management System using GIS Technologies
- Earthquake-resistant Design of Reinforced Concrete Structures
- Health Hazards during Disaster
- Post disaster recovery and reconstruction
- Effects of climate change and remedies for mitigation
- Fire safety



Inauguration by Dr.K.R.K.Raman, Micro-contamination Scientist