

Note on the 33rd IARP International Conference : IARPIC-2018

Indian Association for Radiation Protection (IARP) arranged a five day International Conference (IARPIC-2018) during January 16-20, 2018 at DAE Convention Centre, Anushaktinagar, Mumbai. The theme of the conference was **“Developments towards Improvement of Radiological Surveillance at Nuclear Facilities and Environment”**. The conference was inaugurated by Shri S.A. Bhardwaj, Chairman, Atomic Energy Regulatory Board (AERB) and Dr. Roger Coates, President, International Radiation Protection Association, was the guest of honour. Dr. M.S. Kulkarni, Secretary and Head, RSS, RSSD, welcomed the delegates and briefed them about IARP activities and the IARPIC-2018 conference. He welcomed the participation of research scholars and professors from universities and other institutes to this conference. He spoke about IARP and its affiliation to International Radiation Protection Association (IRPA).

Dr. K.S. Pradeepkumar, President IARP and Associate Director, Health Safety & Environment Group, BARC addressed the delegates to the conference and briefed on the technical programme of IARPIC-2018. The conference was attended by about 400 scientists, including Radiation Protection professionals from various DAE institutions, Students and Professors from universities and Radiation Safety Officers (RSO) of Hospitals and Industry. Scientific Secretary, Chairs of ICRP committees, President, IRPA, Former Chairman, UNSCEAR; Experts from National Nuclear Security Administration, USA delivered invited talks and participated in the discussions during the conference.

In his conference inaugural address, Dr. S.A. Bhardwaj, Chairman, AERB highlighted the Regulatory structure and the radiation safety practices being followed at Nuclear facilities, Industries and Hospitals in India, and also touched up on the Linear No Threshold theory. He emphasized on the regulatory steps initiated at Nuclear Reactors in India following the Fukushima Nuclear Accident. He also dwelt upon the miniscule doses (< 5% of dose limit) that are received by the members of the public in the vicinity of Nuclear Reactors in India due to their operations. Dr. K.S. Pradeepkumar, President, IARP, in his address, elaborated on the theme of the conference and the aptness of topics chosen for the conference. Dr. Pradeepkumar spoke on the non observance of effects of radiation on the residents of Kerala, the known high background radiation area in India and dwelt upon how he used the occasions of UNSCEAR meetings to put forward his thoughts. Dr. Roger Coates, President, IRPA was the Guest Honour and in his address mentioned the existence of impressive talent pool of Indian radiation protection professionals and the need of their increased contributions internationally and to IRPA. He hoped for a successful interaction of delegates with the experts from ICRP, IAEA, UNSCEAR and other professional bodies.

IARP also celebrated its Golden Jubilee year and Dr. A.K. Ganguly (the founder of Health Safety Programme in India) Birth Centenary Year during the conference. Dr. A.K.

Ganguly Birth Centenary programme was arranged at Vashi (Navi Mumbai) on first day of the conference at 4 p.m. and was inaugurated by Dr. Anil Kakodkar, Former Chairman, Atomic Energy Commission. The highlight of these celebrations was the release of book of "Compendium on memoirs of Dr. A.K. Ganguly" and "Nostalgia of footprints of Dr. A.K. Ganguly Photo Album". These celebrations were marked by the presence of former colleagues and students of Dr. A.K. Ganguly (fondly known as Ganguly School), the contributors to the of book of compendium, former Directors of HS&EG, former Heads of Divisions of HS&EG, a few former members of IARP EC and the family members of Dr. A.K. Ganguly. Dr. Anil Kakodker inaugurated the special session on Dr. A.K. Ganguly & Golden Jubilee celebrations and spoke on the occasion. He recalled several instances of his interactions with Dr. A.K. Ganguly on Health Safety programmes of Department of Atomic Energy. Dr. M.R. Iyer, the author of Compendium of Memoirs of Dr. A.K. Ganguly and Dr. Pradeepkumar K.S., President, IARP also spoke on this special occasion. The family members of Dr. A.K. Ganguly, former colleagues of Dr. A.K. Ganguly and Directors & Heads of Divisions of HSEG were felicitated on the occasion.

The scientific deliberations of the IARPIC-2018 conference included latest developments in radiological surveillance at nuclear facilities and environment, assessment of radiation exposure to the public from natural radiation, environmental radioactivity, radiation dosimetry, nuclear forensics and emergency preparedness. The conference deliberations included 24 invited talks, 36 oral presentations, 265 poster presentations and a panel discussion on 'Radiation protection of workers and addressing concerns on radiological safety'. There were several invited talks on the work carried out internationally by the speakers from abroad, notably on the radiation effects by Dr. Werner Ruom, Chair of ICRP Committee 1, Dr. Christopher Clement, Scientific Secretary, ICRP, on ICRP activities, Dr. Abel J. Gonzalez, former chairman UNSCEAR, on the scientific background for dose limits of radiation for workers and public, Dr. Roger Coates, President IRPA, on the radiation protection culture in Nuclear Facilities, Dr. Daniel J. Blumenthal from USDOE, USA on structure and implementation of emergency preparedness procedures; Dr Musolino of USDOE on the communications with public and professionals from other than radiation industry.

The panel discussion on 'Radiation protection of workers and addressing concerns on radiological safety' on the concluding day of conference was well received by the delegates. The panellists included Dr. Abel J. Gonzalez (UNSCEAR), Dr. Roger Coates (IRPA), Dr. Cristpher Clement (ICRP), Dr. Werner Ruom (ICRP), Dr. K. Highley (ICRP), Dr. V. Berkovskyy (ICRP), Dr. Pradeepkumar K.S. (BARC), and Shri S. Krishnamony (ex. BARC), Daniel Blumenthal (USDOE).

Opening the discussion, Dr. Abel Gonzalez mentioned that UNSEAR or ICRP are not the agencies for defending the Nuclear power producers, users of radiation or any others but

only to present the scientific facts and thereby to derive the radiation dose limits. He initiated the panel discussion by requesting opening remarks from all the panellists. Dr. Pradeepkumar in his opening remarks talked on the danger of the immediate risk of living in fear of radiation rather than the risks of radiation health effects, which are insignificant. He requested the members from ICRP/UNSCEAR to have a re-look at the introduction of a threshold dose for radiation protection purposes. Dr. Roger Coates stated that the best starting point with public as part of communication is to use the existing natural radioactivity distribution and the variability of natural doses world over. The panellists have addressed several questions from the delegates.

The important outcome of the five days conference was:

- i) ICRP and UNSCEAR recognised the fact that India has enormous amount of data (epidemiological and biological) on the effects of radiation on the residents of high background regions of Kerala.
- ii) Willingness of ICRP/UNSCEAR to use such data in their future deliberation at Task Group levels.
- iii) Establish communication channels with IRPA for increased participation of Indian radiation protection professionals in IRPA and other international activities.
- iv) Accrual of scientific knowledge by the delegates from the presentations of ICRP/UNSCEAR experts on the radiation protection policies.

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