

## **17<sup>th</sup> Indian Science Communication Congress – A Brief Report**

Coverage of science in the media is dismal and has been declining over the years, said Dr. Narender K Sehgal, the noted science communicator and UNESCO Kalinga Prize Winner who chaired the inaugural session of the 17<sup>th</sup> Indian Science Communication Congress in New Delhi. Prof. K. G. Suresh, Director-General, Indian Institute of Mass Communication delivered the keynote address. He said that to reach the masses, scientists have to be communicators as well. Welcoming the gathering Dr. Manoj Kumar Patariya, Director, CSIR-NISCAIR said that the Indian Science Communication Congress has over the years emerged as a platform for brainstorming and engaging in discussions on various facets of science communication. R. S. Sangwan, Director, Academy of Scientific and Innovative Research (AcSIR) was the chief guest.

Nearly 300 delegates including science communicators, scientists, researchers, science fiction writers, science enthusiasts and students participated in the science communication congress on the theme ‘Communicating India’s Scientific Wisdom: Changing Paradigms’ held on 21-22 December at Indian Institute of Mass Communication.

The 17<sup>th</sup> edition of the Indian Science Communication Congress was jointly organized by CSIR-National Institute of Science Communication and Information Resources (CSIR-NISCAIR), Indian Institute of Mass Communication (IIMC), Indian Science Writers’ Association (ISWA), Vigyan Bharati (ViBHA), Society for Information Science (SIS) and Indian Science Communication Society (ISCOS).

Spread across 10 parallel scientific sessions including a poster session, nearly 100 presentations and talks were delivered by the experts and delegates on the various facets of science communication focusing on India’s scientific wisdom.

A popular science book “Disasters. Short Stories, Essays & Anecdotes” authored by Dr. R. K. Bhandari and published by the National Book Trust was released at the inaugural function.

The various sessions discussed on the emerging worldview on India's scientific wisdom, science communication, health communication, agriculture communication, and environment and risk communication. Various speakers noted that India's scientific wisdom; particularly the ancient scientific wisdom is not being effectively communicated, especially in foreign languages.

The scientainment programme that included magic and puppet shows in the evenings on both the days saw the delegates and the general audience enjoying and understanding some scientific concepts.

A round table discussion on 'India's scientific wisdom: communication strategies' had many experts including Prof. Krishan Lal, Dr. C.M. Nautial, Mr. Rajkumar Bhardwaj and many other noted science communicators brainstorming on various communication strategies for spreading India's scientific wisdom. The two-days event concluded with Dr. Manoj Patariya, Director, CSIR-NISCAIR summing-up the two days event.

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