

First International Conference on Engineering Geophysics – E. Shaji, Department of Geology, University of Kerala, Kariavattom campus, Trivandrum - 695 581

The first International Conference on Engineering Geophysics was held at UAE University, Al AIN, United Arab Emirates during December 11 to 14, 2011. Over 170 delegates from 24 countries attended the conference organized by the United Arab Emirates University and Al Ain City Municipality in association with European Association of Geoscientist and Engineers (EAGE). Minister of Higher Education and Scientific Research and Chancellor of the UAE University HH Sheikh Nahyan Bin Mubarak Al Nahyan inaugurated the Conference.

The inaugural speech was delivered by HH Sheikh Nahyan Bin Mubarak Al Nahyan, who highly praised the conference and stressed the need for commitment to applying engineering geophysics in developmental activities. The key motivation for the conference was to access international knowledge and expertise in this field as well as getting acquainted with the latest technology and techniques in geophysics. The conference programme over four days made up of thirteen oral sessions and four poster presentations with key note speeches. Prof. Peter Styles, Keele University, UK delivered the first day keynote speech on

“Environmental geophysics and its role in planning 21st century city”. He opined that classical engineering site investigation techniques which rely heavily on ‘proving the ground’ by drilling and intrusive investigations and then potentially over-engineering to protect by brute force, cannot give enough information to give confidence for developers and financiers to undertake projects optimally. New integrated environmental geophysical techniques like micro-gravity, ground penetrating radar, seismic microtremor, electrical tomographic imaging can give enormous amounts of information on the whole subsurface which should be collected before the still essential drilling is even planned. The first day covered presentations from the Department of Municipality Affairs, Abu Dhabi on “New building code and the newly established seismology network in the Emirates”. Also, the guidelines for the new geotechnical practice in the UAE were presented by Emirates Standardization and Metrology Authority.

The second day started with a keynote speech on “Geological disposal of Rad-waste: the role of environmental geophysics”. This was followed by sessions on

engineering geophysics, engineering geology, shallow groundwater and archeo-geophysics. I presented a paper on “Slope Stability Analysis Along Adimali–Munnar Road in Idukki District, Kerala, India” in the engineering geology session.

The third day keynote address on “Geophysical project of Al Ain city” was presented by the representative of Al Ain municipality. It was followed by four different sessions on geotechnical applications, environmental geophysics and natural hazards, new approaches and data processing geophysics.

Final day began with a keynote speech on “Ground Penetrating Radars: interpretations beyond imaging” followed by sessions on engineering geophysics methods. This was followed by a panel discussion and conclusion of the proceedings with number of suggestions and recommendations about the future scope of engineering geophysics.

This conference was highly beneficial and we came to know about the role of engineering geophysics in developmental projects.