

# CSIR-NEERI celebrates 66th Foundation Day

## ■ Staff Reporter

CSIR-National Environmental Engineering Research Institute (CSIR-NEERI) celebrated its 66th Foundation Day on April 8, 2024. Various programmes were organised on this occasion. Dr Upendra Kumar Singh, Distinguished Scientist & Director General-Life Sciences, Defence Research & Development Organisation (DRDO), Ministry of Defence, Govt. of India was the Chief Guest, and Prof B N Goswami, SERB Distinguished Fellow, Department of Physics, Cotton University, Guwahati was the Distinguished Guest.

While addressing the audience, Dr Singh briefed them about the challenges and technologies linked to the advancements anticipated in 2047. He emphasised that flagship programmes are essential to bolster the nation and society. Dr Singh highlighted that India currently ranks as the fifth-largest economy in terms of GDP, stressing the need for structural and institutional reforms to achieve a target of \$30 trillion by 2047. He stated that India has a potential to ascend to the position of the world's third-largest economy by 2030, a milestone coinciding with the parity of rural and urban incomes. Describing India's first 2G ethanol plant installed at Panipat, Haryana, Dr Singh elucidated the process of converting agricultural waste into ethanol, bitumen, and aviation fuel. He also commended the One Health concept, which aims to sustainably balance and optimise the health of people, animals, and ecosystems.

Delivering a lecture on 'The Climate Change and Sustainable Development', Prof. Goswami expressed concern over climate change, and said that we need to save environment as we have already reached the tipping point. We need to first address local issues to resolve global issues, he added.

Prof Goswami said that it is moral and legal responsibility of all to save the environment, as environment and climate are interconnected. He described the iconic hockey stick graph devised by Michael Mann, which illustrates global temperature trends spanning the last 2000 years and unveils a notable pattern of temperature fluctuations. He pointed out that over the past 200 years, human activities have significantly disrupted the natural balance.

Prof Goswami informed that the current level of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere is 423 ppm and methane is 1921 ppb, which are alarming. He stated that India has contributed much less to global warming than other large countries on a per capita basis.



Dr Upendra Kumar Singh, Director General-Life Sciences, DRDO, addressing the audience at the CSIR-NEERI Foundation Day

He suggested that extracting carbon from the ocean is a better option than from the atmosphere, as it is also much cheaper. He advocated for a change in the development model and increased social awareness.

Dr Atul Vaidya, Director, CSIR-NEERI, outlined the genesis of the Institute in his welcome address. He informed that the institute has positioned itself to address the challenges posed by the environment. He described various parameters on which CSIR-NEERI is performing well, including technological developments and planning aligned with the vision for 2047 to ensure sustainable development.

A Science Models Competition was organised and prizes were awarded to the winners. In the first category (5th to 7th standards), the first prize was conferred upon Lalitha Public School, Wardhaman Nagar, Nagpur, for their presentation on 'Use of Science & Technology in Village and City'. In the second category (8th - 10th standards), the first prize was awarded to PM SHRI Kendriya Vidyalaya, O F Chanda, Bhadravati, for their model on 'Garbage Bogie for Waste Management', the second prize went to The Royal Gondwana Public School, Shankarpur, for their model on 'Waste Flower Management'; and the third prize was conferred upon TBRAN'S Mundle English Medium School, for their model on 'Agriculture Sustainability and Integrated Farming System'.

In the third category (11th to 12th standards), the first prize was awarded to

Sandipani Junior College, Hazaripahad, for their presentation on 'Vehicle Pollution Controller.' CSIR-NEERI officials were awarded the Foundation Day Awards for their outstanding contributions.

Dr Lal Singh, Principal Scientist, received the Best Senior Scientist' award, and Dr Debishree Khan received the Best Junior Scientist' Award. Dr G Hippargi, Technical Officer, was honoured with the Best Technical Officer' award. P Bhattacharya and Madhuri Urkudkar jointly received the Best Technician Award, Atik Uddin, Priya Patil, P G Kelapure, and Swapnil Meshram were each presented with certificates of appreciation for their commitment, dedication, and support as best support personnel. Srinidhi S. was posthumously awarded the Late Shri P S Dutt Memorial Award for Best Young Researcher'. The Divisional Excellence Award was conferred upon the Sophisticated Environmental Analytical Facility.

Dr Kavita Gandhi, Principal Scientist, conducted the proceedings, and Prakash Kumbhare, Senior Principal Scientist, proposed the vote of thanks.

Approximately 1,200 students from schools and colleges visited the institute, where they observed practical demonstrations and interacted with CSIR-NEERI scientists in the laboratories.

A voluntary blood donation camp was organised by the CSIR-NEERI Staff Club in association with the GSK Blood Centre, at CSIR-NEERI as part of the CSIR-NEERI Foundation Day celebrations.