



The CSIR Foundation Day lecture at NGRI was delivered on 26 September by the Chief Guest of the function Dr. Shailesh Nayak, Secretary to the Government of India, Ministry of Earth Sciences (MoES). The title of his talk was ‘Societal Benefits of Earth System Sciences’.

In his presentation, Dr. Nayak illustrated in a lucid way how this branch of science is playing a very crucial role in serving the society, particularly in the Indian context. He also highlighted the role of MoES in the Indian earth science scenario. He explained that the Ministry’s mandate is to look after Atmospheric Sciences, Ocean Science & Technology and Seismology in an integrated manner, and thereby providing services in forecasting the monsoons and other weather/climate parameters, ocean state, earthquakes, tsunamis and other phenomena related to earth systems.

Dr. Nayak dealt at length how various earth science research programs have helped the society. Recent successes in short term weather forecasting in big cities, including air quality forecasting during the ensuing 2010 Delhi Commonwealth Games, was specifically mentioned by him. He also spoke of resources exploration, and mentioned about exploration and deep sea mining program for polymetallic nodules. Low temperature desalination at a reasonable cost was another achievement for the society, as told by him.

Dr. Nayak made special mentions of the initiatives that NGRI is playing leading roles in programs like the futuristic Gas-hydrate exploration and exploitation, Legal Continental Shelf mapping, Antarctic expeditions, Tsunami Warning, Earthquake Hazard Assessment etc. He also informed the audience that India is shortly becoming a partner in the International Continental Drilling Programme, and a 8-9 km deep bore hole will be

drilled in Koyna to understand Reservoir Triggered Seismicity. He concluded his talk by congratulating NGRI for its pioneering role in solid-earth science research, and assuring continued and increased support from his ministry.