

Report

NATIONAL CONFERENCE ON “PALEOGENE OF THE INDIAN SUBCONTINENT”

April 23–24, 2015, BSIP, Lucknow, India

THE Paleogene Period (~65–23 Ma) is one of the most important intervals in the Earth’s history as it encompasses several climatic and biotic events of global significance, beginning with the Cretaceous–Paleogene boundary mass extinctions followed by abrupt transient warming events during the early Eocene and cooling event at 45 Ma. Perturbations in the global geochemical cycles, biotic turnover in the oceanic realm, major extinctions, evolution and dispersal of plants and appearance of modern terrestrial

mammals are amongst the most significant biotic and abiotic signatures associated with these events. The collision between India and Asia, one of the most profound tectonic events in the Earth’s history, also took place during this interval. This major event resulted in the closure of the Tethys Sea to the north of the Indian Subcontinent, leading to the formation of Himalayas and the subsequent Indian monsoon system. Several global warming (hyperthermal) events such as the Paleocene Eocene Thermal Maximum (PETM) at ~55.5 Ma and the Second Eocene Thermal Maximum (ETM2) at ~53.7 Ma were also experienced during the Paleogene time.

In order to highlight the significance of the Paleogene time period, a two day national conference entitled “Paleogene of the Indian Subcontinent” was jointly organized by



Birbal Sahni Institute of Palaeobotany (BSIP), Lucknow and Geological Survey of India (GSI), Lucknow, on April 23–24, 2015. The conference was inaugurated in the gracious presence of Padma Bhushan Prof. K.S. Valdiya (Chief Guest), Shri Harbans Singh (Director General, GSI), Prof. Sunil Bajpai (Director, BSIP, Lucknow), Shri Siddharth Swaroop (Deputy Director General & HoD, GSI, Lucknow), Prof. D.M. Banerjee (President, INSA–IUGS) and Dr. S.C. Tripathi (Director, CRDHG, GSI–Northern Region, Lucknow). A total of six sessions were conducted with eight key–note lectures and a session on IGCC 2020. Three sessions including fifteen oral presentations were held at GSI, Lucknow on the first day and the next three sessions including twenty–one oral presentations were organized at BSIP, Lucknow on the second day. Separate poster sessions were also conducted at BSIP and GSI, Lucknow on April 23–24, 2015 with 12 posters on each day.

Delegates from organisations across the country such as CSIR–NGRI, Wadia Institute of Himalayan Geology, University of Delhi, AMD–Hyderabad, BSIP, ONGC Dehradun, GMDC–Ahmedabad, Kurukshetra University, RGIPT–Rae Bareli, BHU–Varanasi, Manipur University, DGM–J & K, Panjab University, UPES–Dehradun, Durgapur Government College–West Bengal, Presidency University, University of Calcutta, PDPU–Gandhinagar, Nagaland University, Tribhuvan University–Nepal, Gauhati University–Assam, PRL–Ahmedabad, IIT Roorkee, Government Institute of Science–Aurangabad, IIT Bombay, Bangalore University and GSI participated in the conference.

The first session on the Cretaceous–Paleogene boundary events started with an invited talk by Dr. O.P. Pandey (NGRI, Hyderabad) on “K–T boundary asteroidal impact, crust–mantle structure and geodynamics of the western continental margin of India: geophysical perspective”. The second session focussed on the energy and mineral resources from the Indian

Paleogene, and included a key–note lecture by Dr. Sudhir Shukla (ONGC) on the petroliferous basins of India. The theme for the third session on the first day was geodynamic evolution and sedimentation pattern of the Paleogene sediments from the Indian Subcontinent. Prof. B.P. Singh (BHU) in his key–note talk in this session discussed the sedimentation pattern and transgression–regression events during the Paleogene, while another key–note lecture in this session entitled “Paleogene basin forming and modifying tectonics as revealed in seismic section of Arabian Sea and Bay of Bengal” was delivered by Dr. K.S. Misra (UPES, Dehradun). On the second day, the fourth session of the conference began with a key–note lecture by Dr. O.N. Bhargava on the Paleogene of the Lesser Himalaya and related controversies. The fifth session was on palaeoclimatic and palaeoenvironmental signatures derived from biotic and geochemical proxies. A key–note lecture in this session was delivered by Dr. Jyotiranjjan S. Ray (PRL, Ahmedabad) who presented the geochemical provenance of Paleogene sediments in the Andaman forearc. The sixth session focussed on issues related to Paleogene biochronology and biogeography with a key–note lecture by Prof. Ashok Sahni who shed light on Cretaceous–Paleogene biogeography of the Indian Subcontinent. The conference provided scientists, academicians and research scholars working on Paleogene sequences of the Indian Subcontinent an excellent platform to discuss and debate the present and future challenges in exploring the Indian Paleogene sequences. A special session was also organized on “IGCC 2020” during which Dr. D’Souza highlighted the efforts of the Indian geoscience community for this major event to be held in New Delhi in 2020.

Vandana Prasad

Birbal Sahni Institute of Palaeobotany,
Lucknow

Erratum

In the article “Oldest South Asian tapiromorph (Perissodactyla, Mammalia) from the Cambay Shale Formation, western India, with comments on its phylogenetic position and biogeographic implications” published in *The Palaeobotanist* v. 64(1) pp. 95–103, the receiving and acceptance dates should be read as September 22, 2015 and September 26, 2015, respectively.