

WEST ZONE CONFERENCE

‘Sustainable Development Strategies for Climate Change’



Souvenir being released by Shri Sanjay Kumar, IAS, Secretary (Revenue) Government of Goa; present on dais (on left) are Prof. Dr. D. S. Meshram, President, ITPI; Shri Pradeep Kapoor, Secretary General, ITPI; Shri James Mathew, Chairman, Goa Regional Chapter, (on right) Shri Swayam Choudhary, CEO, Imagine Panaji Smart City; Shri Milind B. Patil, Vice President, ITPI; and Shri Vinod Kumar, Secretary, Goa Regional Chapter

The West Zone Conference was organized by Goa Regional Chapter of ITPI during 29 – 30 February, 2020 at the Ferm, Kadamba, Goa, on the theme ‘Sustainable Development Strategies for Climate Change’.

In his inaugural address Shri Sanjay Kumar, IAS, Secretary (Revenue), Government of Goa, traced the relevance of climate change in India. He noted that if we are experiencing the change in the average temperature and if we feel it is warm, the question arises, is it due to climate change? Similarly, have we witnessed big draughts during the last 25 years? If the answer is yes, then certainly we are experiencing climate change? He stressed that such issues are required to be noticed, addressed, and studied in depth.

Shri Sanjay Kumar congratulated the ITPI for publishing the 4 ITPI Journal issues and 4 Planners’ Newsletter every year since 1951 on a regular basis. He said that such journals should not only be circulated among the planning community but should be also circulated to the policy makers and urban managers. He also raised the issue of planned and unplanned habitations and pointed out that nobody likes to live in unplanned habitations. He argued that these citizens are compelled to occupy such habitats due to lack of affordable housing. He also pointed out that since density of our cities is increasing, we should make efforts to densify the existing towns and cities to accommodate ever increasing population, if not we should attempt to depopulate the existing areas. All such issues need to be revisited in collaboration with all the stakeholders.

With reference to development plans, he highlighted the fact that these documents are important for all citizens but majority of people don’t understand the technical language of planners. He proposed that development plans should be written in such a manner that a majority of the people can understand. Shri Sanjay Kumar, also released the colourful souvenir printed on this occasion comprising messages of the dignitaries besides some technical papers.



Prof. Dr. D. S. Meshram, President, ITPI lighting the Ceremonial Lamp during Inaugural Session; present on dais (on left) are, Shri Sanjay Kumar, IAS, Secretary (Revenue) Government of Goa; Shri Swayam Choudhary, CEO Imagine Panaji Smart City; Shri Pradeep Kapoor, Secretary General, ITPI; Shri James Mathew, Chairman, Goa Regional Chapter, (on right) Shri Milind B. Patil, Vice President, ITPI; Shri Vinod Kumar, Secretary, Goa Regional Chapter

Shri Swayam Choudhary, CEO, Imagine Panaji Smart City, in his key note address stated that industrial revolution has created the challenge of greenhouse gases, while use of fossil fuels in transportation generated more carbon dioxide which has exposed cities to the climate change. In fact cities are facing the impact of climate change due the ever increasing population, and consumption of already depleting resources also increases. Yet another big challenge is the production of unprecedented amount of wastes. How we deal and manage the solid wastes is also threatening local bodies and city authorities to collect, transport and dispose of the wastes, both liquid and solid. Among the extreme challenge of hunger, we are also experiencing the wastage of food. Goa with 60 percent of urbanization rate is also experiencing dwindling mining and tourism activities and facing the challenge of updating and upgrading the infrastructure while resilience and sustainability remains unattended.

Prof. Dr. D. S. Meshram, President, ITPI, in his presidential address mentioned that climate change generally refers to the change in averages and extremes in the climate of a region over time. It is measured by changes in temperature, precipitation, wind, storm and other weather indicators. It has been predicted that the climate change is likely to increase the frequency, intensity and duration of extreme events in unpredictable ways and will require cities to adopt strategies that enable decision makers to manage the variabilities and uncertainties. The heat waves also play a major role in the climate change specifically its frequency and power. In India during 2019, the temperature rose to 50.6 degree Celsius and 36 people died. Rise in temperature takes place due to melting of the glaciers which ultimately result in the rise of sea level, threatening the very existence of low lying coastal settlements. Indian climate regions range from tropical to temperate climate in south and alpine in north Himalaya creating snow fall.

Global warming is also the after effect of climate change which rises in average surface temperature on earth and gases such as carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases due to the use of fossil fuels. In India the percent level of pollution noticed amounts to 51 percent caused by industries; 27 percent caused by vehicles; 8 percent by burning of crops; and 5 percent by fireworks. As a consequence, 2 million people die prematurely every year in India, which calls for adopting sustainable planning and development strategies to mitigate the challenge of climate change. He also raised the important question: are our cities sustainable?

The climate change scenarios projected by the Ministry of Environment and Forest, Government of India indicates that by 2030 net increase in annual temperature with respect to 1970, will change between 1.7 – 2.2°C with extreme temperature increasing by 1.4°C, with maximum increase in coastal regions. Sea level along Indian coasts will also rise in consonance with global sea level rise, and change is also projected in forest sector or vegetation. He called on the planners to plan climate change resilient cities and also to adopt disaster risk reduction measures. He also referred to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) to which India is also signatory, which contain 17 SDGs with 169 targets and are based on the principles of 'leave no one behind'. In fact SDG-11 focuses on making cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient, and sustainable.

In the inaugural session welcome address was delivered by Shri Pradeep Kapoor, Secretary General, ITPI and a vote of thanks was extended by Shri James Mathew, Chairman, Goa Regional Chapter.

The Technical Session – I was chaired by Prof. Dr. D. S. Meshram in which presentations were made by Prof. Dr. Saswat Bandopadhyay, CEPT University, Ahmedabad, on 'Climate Resilient Planning Framework for Indian Cities', and also by Shri Saurav Choudhary from IGBC on 'Green Cities'.

The Technical Session – II was chaired by Prof. E. F. N. Ribeiro, former President, ITPI, in which presentations were made by Ms. Namrata Kashyap, Town Planner, on the theme 'City Level Policy Guidelines to Mitigate Climate Change Effects' and also by Shri Sujeet Kumar Dongre, Scientist, CEE on 'Coastal Zone Management Plan, Goa'.

The Technical Session – III was chaired by Shri K. S. Akode, former President, ITPI, in which presentations were made by Shri Pradip Sarmokadam, Member Secretary, Goa Biodiversity Board, on 'Importance of Planning in dealing with Climate Change' and by Shri Digvijay Desai, GWMC on 'Implementation of Waste Management Rules in Goa'. Both speakers stressed that the task of planning in present scenario of climate change is very challenging, including waste management specifically for small towns, which not only requires foresight but also actions on ground within the parameters of prevailing rules and regulations. He also raised the issue of bringing into fold unplanned towns because nobody would like to live in unplanned towns, and this calls for improving the quality of life in small and medium towns.

In his Valedictory address Shri J. Ashok Kumar, IAS, Secretary, Health and Sports, Government of Goa, sharing his experience of planning and waste management noted that these are very challenging issues and need to be addressed with sensitivity. To clarify his point he quoted the example of Lakshadweep where infrastructure of any kind was not in place for collection, conveyance and disposal of solid wastes as even vehicles were not available. Use of plastics in a daily life was a big challenge not only for planners but also for policy makers and managers in urban areas as most of it is non-degradable. He also emphasised the fact that we should decrease the production of wastes and also recycle the wastes particularly those that are not degradable. The segregation of dry and liquid wastes should be segregated at household level, which would ease the task of solid waste disposal. He then underlined the challenges of waste produced due to building construction and called on the planners to enforce the ECBC and green building norms so as to reduce the pollution to mitigate the challenge of climate change.

Shri Sanjit Rodrigues, Commissioner, CCP, in his address pointed out that practices of town planning and waste management require foresightedness and of course the will to enforce rules and regulations for making our towns and cities sustainable. The provision of landfill sites for disposal of wastes is required to be made in the development plan as nobody wants the collection of waste sites next to their houses i.e. 'not in my backyard'. Where will waste be dumped? This question remains answered.

Prof. Dr. D. S. Meshram, President, ITPI in his concluding remarks highlighted that the increase in population in towns and cities beyond its bearing capacity demand provision of more infrastructure in addition to update and upgrade both in terms of quality and quantity. However, at the same time, resources are very limited. Therefore, there is a need to achieve a balance between consumption and conservation of available resources, which calls for sustainable development. He also mentioned that the use of plastics has also increased substantially in our daily life resulting in increasing the proportion of plastic content in the garbage, which we produce. Therefore, it would be more appropriate to recycle the plastic wastes. Lest, it gets dumped in landfill sites or ends up polluting streams or ground water resources. While concluding he underlined that plastic waste directly or indirectly affected living organisms, including marine life. So, it is pertinent to reduce the use of plastic in our daily life.

In the Valedictory Session, the welcome address was delivered by James Mathew, Chairman, Goa Regional Chapter and at the close of the Session the vote of thanks was extended by Shri Vinod Kumar, Secretary, Goa Regional Chapter.