

World Environment Day 2015 observed at CSIR-NEIST

CSIR-NEIST and Assam Science Society- Jorhat branch joined hands to celebrate this year's World Environment Day with a special function held at Dr J N Baruah Auditorium, CSIR-NEIST on 5 June. Convened under the global theme, "Seven Billion Dreams. One Planet. Consume with Care", the function was graced by Prof B K Sarmah, Director, DBT-Centre, Assam Agricultural University, Jorhat as Chief Guest while Dr D Dutta, Scientist, Rain forest Research Institute-Jorhat was present as Guest of Honour. The function was presided over by Dr R C Boruah, President, Assam Science Society-Jorhat branch & Outstanding Scientist, CSIR-NEIST.

Delivering welcome address on the occasion, Dr D Ramaiah, Director, CSIR-NEIST emphasized the need to raise awareness on the importance of a healthy, safe and green environment. He pointed out that it is not the responsibility of only environment experts or certain regulatory bodies to protect and conserve the environment but it is something which every individual should be concerned and contribute at their own level. Prof Sarmah in his lecture entitled, 'Green Biotechnology for Green Environment', deliberated on the role of Biotechnology for food security while keeping the environment green. He particularly stressed on the genetically modified crops which gained critical attention in the past few decades. As per ISAAA report he said that during 1996-2014, a number of GM crops with insect resistant ability were adopted.

The world has also been able to protect the quality of soil due to development of microbe based formulations as fertilizers instead of chemicals, he said. As a proponent of GM crops he said that this method started long back and can be seen from the hybridization works of Scientist, Gregor Mendel during 1860s. Prof Sarmah further spoke about his work carried out in AAU for developing transgenic Chickpea which is resistant to stored grain pest. He said that In India until last year, Bt Cotton was the only approved GM crop hugely successful in the country, but now other crops such as Rice, Brinjal, Mustard and chickpea have also been approved by the new government for field cultivation. And this initiative will go a long way in meeting the food demand of the ever growing population without compromising the health of the environment, he said.



Above: Dignitaries seated on the dais (from left), Prof B K Sarmah, Director, DBT-Centre, Assam Agricultural University, Jorhat & Chief Guest of the function; Dr D Ramaiah, Director, CSIR-NEIST; Dr R C Boruah, Outstanding Scientist, CSIR-NEIST & President- Assam Science Society, Jorhat branch and Dr D Dutta, Scientist, RFRI-Jorhat & Guest of Honour.

Below: Prof B K Sarmah delivering his lecture on, "Green Biotechnology for Green Environment".



Dr D Dutta in his address spoke about the importance of sustainable exploration and consumption of natural resources. He said that as per UN estimate, the world population would be 10 billion by 2050 which will be a great threat to the planet earth. It is high time that we focus on explore and not exploit natural resources, check its depletion, check food security, check environment safety issues and so on, he opined. Sharing his message, he urged all to think of sustainability and future of mankind.

Dr R C Boruah in his presidential remarks also advocated for optimum use of resources and to surge ahead without compromising the sustenance of future generations. He shared a famous quote by M K Gandhi which says that, 'What we are doing to the forests of the world is but a mirror reflection of what we are doing to ourselves and to one another'.

The function concluded with vote of thanks proposed by Dr Jatin Kalita, Scientist, CSIR-NEIST. The function was well attended by invited guests, members from Assam Science Society- Jorhat branch and CSIR-NEIST fraternity. The function concluded with vote of thanks proposed by Dr Jatin Kalita, Scientist, CSIR-NEIST. The function was well attended by invited guests, members from Assam Science Society- Jorhat branch and CSIR-NEIST fraternity.