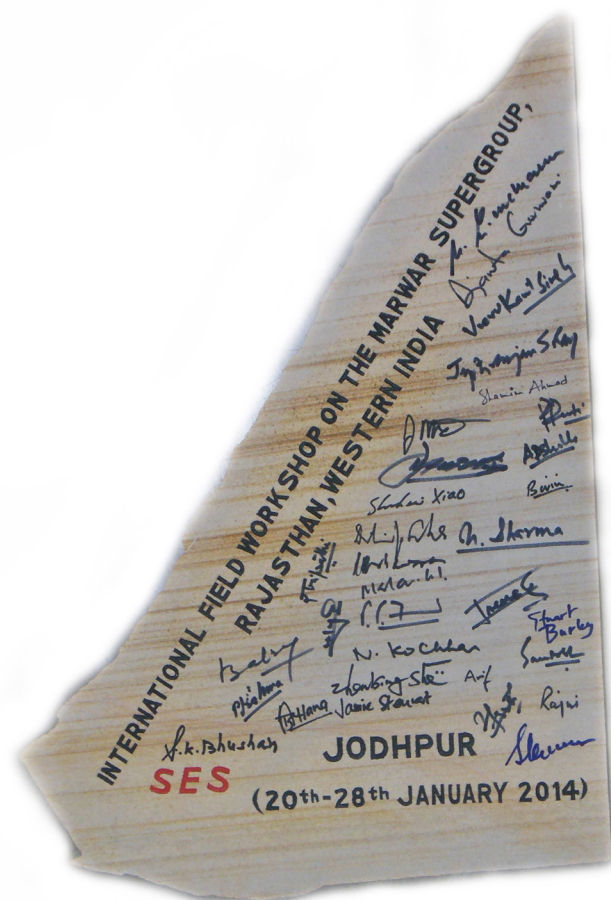


Reports

INTERNATIONAL FIELD WORKSHOP ON THE MARWAR SUPERGROUP, RAJASTHAN, WESTERN INDIA

20–28 January, 2014

Field workshops have special significance in earth sciences as they give a unique opportunity to address and resolve differences of opinion especially on field related problems/observations in the field itself rather than having long and lengthy discussions in the seminar rooms without



any tangible results. In the light of this, a nine days field workshop was organised by the *Society of Earth Scientists* on the Marwar Supergroup of western Rajasthan from 20th to 28th January, 2014. In recent years, the Marwar Supergroup has acquired a special status in the Indian Geology for several reasons; it has Ediacaran to Lower Cambrian age successions with Precambrian–Cambrian boundary within the Marwar Basin, and has a good economic potential not only in having building stone, limestone and evaporite deposits but potential for the discovery of hydrocarbons. Recent discovery of Ediacaran fossils, microbial mats and trace fossils add global importance and interest in the Marwar deposits. In this light, Society of Earth Scientists and Birbal Sahni Institute of Palaeobotany took a lead and did a commendable job in organising the field workshop which attracted 34 participants including researchers from Argentina, Germany, Oman, Spain, U.K. and USA. Different scientific institutions from India, i.e. NGRI, PRL, ISI, BSIP, ISI and IIT–Roorkee, and universities of Lucknow, Delhi, Panjab, Jodhpur and Jaipur were represented in the field workshop. Oil Companies were also represented by ONGC, Oil India, Cairn India and Shell. A redeeming feature of the workshop was the participation of young research scholars who were encouraged to interact with senior workers for which the Organising Committee is to be commended. The workshop was inaugurated in the evening of 20th January by Prof. B.S. Rajpurohit, the Vice Chancellor of the Jai Narain Vyas University, Jodhpur in the premises of it's Geology Department. Inaugural function was followed by a curtain razor, which was also organised in the department,

consisting of technical papers on the different aspects of the geology of the Marwar Basin. Dr. S.K. Bhushan, Prof. Shuhai Xiao, Prof. Joe Meert, Dr. Mukund Sharma, Prof. Ulf Linnemann and Prof. S.C. Mathur made the presentations.

The geology of the Marwar Basin including the basement rocks was introduced to the participants through a well prepared coloured guide book authored by M. Sharma, S.K. Pandey and S. Kumar. The guide book also included 25 sites which were to be visited during the field workshop. These sites were referred as 'Stops' in the guide book. The stops covered all the important stratigraphic horizons of the Marwar Supergroup and the basement rocks. Selection of stops was done meticulously which were well marked in the field. Such well marked stops were well appreciated as they are seldom seen in most of the field workshops. Sufficient time was given for discussion on each stop. Due to scanty exposures in a desert setting on many occasions participants have to travel a long distances for observations. But selection of excellent outcrops helped overcome the fatigue of the journey.

The field work commenced on the morning of 21st January and ended in the evening of 27th January. Each day the work started at 9 AM and ended only in late evenings. No doubt the field work was very tiring but nevertheless very fruitful and rewarding. Logistics were very meticulously planned and well executed. The workshop not only gave academic input but also gave glimpses of local setting including a camel ride to sand dunes, cultural heritage of Rajasthan including dance and music and a visit to famous Havellies of Jaisalmer. The valedictory session was held in Hotel Rajputana, Jodhpur



Standing first row from left: Bivin George; Arif H. Ansari, Dilip Saha, Joseph G. Meert, Daniel G. Poiré, Mukund Sharma, Balram Bhadu, Arjun S. Rathore, Jamie Stewart, **Standing 2nd row (banner row) from left:** Pitamber Pati, Ramson Asher, Rajesh Awasthi (Attendant), Rajni Tewari, Zhenbing She, S.D. Burley, Shamim Ahmad, Ulf Linnemann, **Sitting 1st row from left:** Ajanta Goswami, Uday Bhan, Veeru Kant Singh, S Kumar, S.C. Tripathi, Shuhai Xiao, Bandana Dimri, **Sitting 2nd row from left:** Pranjal Saikia, Irene Gomez, S.K. Pandey. **Venue:** Pokaran Boulder Bed, Gafur Khan Ki Dhani, Pokaran, Jodhpur

which was presided over by Prof. S. Kumar in the morning of 28th January. Every participant invariably praised the leadership of Dr. Mukund Sharma and his team from the Birbal Sahni Institute of Palaeobotany, Lucknow for the overall arrangement and manner in which the workshop was conducted during the entire period. With excellent interaction during the workshop among the participants, many agreed to join hands in joint research projects related to the Marwar Supergroup. It is felt by many workers that more research inputs, especially in the fields of sedimentology and palaeontology are needed for understanding the evolution of the Marwar Basin. It is also suggested that such field

workshops should be regularly organised after a gap of four or five years to update the available information. It is a matter of great appreciation that inspite of difficulties the *Society of Earth Scientists* extended full support for the participation of a few young research students and senior scientists in the field workshop.

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