

Earth Day 2024 Celebration Fostering Geoscience Awareness

Introduction

Earth Day 2024 was observed on April 22nd, 2024, with great enthusiasm by the Department of Geology. As part of the commemoration, a special lecture was organized, by Dr. C. Ravi, Head, Geology Department, CRR Autonomous College, Eluru. The event aimed to raise awareness about the importance of geoscience in understanding and preserving our planet, aligning with the theme of Earth Day 2024.

Event Overview

Dr. M.R. Goutham, HoD, Geology has introduced the Chief Guest to the students. All the faculty of the department honoured him with a sapling.

The lecture by Dr. C. Ravi served as a focal point of the Earth Day celebrations. Dr. Ravi, a renowned geoscientist, delivered an insightful presentation on various aspects of geology and its significance in addressing environmental challenges. The event garnered significant interest, with 120 students actively participating.

Key Themes Explored

- 1. Sustainable Resource Management** Dr. Ravi emphasized the need for sustainable management of Earth's resources, highlighting the finite nature of natural resources and the importance of responsible utilization to ensure their availability for future generations.
- 2. Climate Change Mitigation** The lecture delved into the role of geoscience in understanding climate change phenomena. Dr. Ravi discussed the impact of human activities on the environment and stressed the importance of adopting eco-friendly practices to mitigate climate change effects.
- 3. Geological Hazards and Disaster Management** Another crucial aspect covered was the study of geological hazards such as earthquakes, volcanic eruptions, and landslides. Dr. Ravi shed light on the significance of geoscience in predicting and mitigating the impact of such disasters, thereby enhancing community resilience.
- 4. Environmental Conservation** The importance of preserving natural ecosystems and biodiversity was underscored throughout the lecture. Dr. Ravi elucidated the

interconnectedness of geological processes with ecological balance, emphasizing the need for conservation efforts to safeguard the planet's biodiversity.

The Earth Day 2024 celebration, featuring Dr. C. Ravi's lecture, served as a platform to promote geoscience awareness and highlight its pivotal role in sustainable development. Through insightful discussions and engagement with students, the event underscored the importance of collective efforts in safeguarding our planet for future generations. Moving forward, such initiatives will continue to play a crucial role in fostering environmental stewardship and promoting a harmonious relationship between humanity and the Earth.

Full Speech of Dr. C. Ravi

Dear students and faculty members,

I deem it a privilege to present before you as a chief guest for today's Earth Day 2024 celebrations. I am proud to inform you that I am an alumnus of this prestigious department during the 1970s. It always inspires me to interact with students, just as I did with geology students. I have retired 7 years ago, but still I always love to meet students.

As we gather here today on this auspicious occasion of Earth Day, we come together not just as individuals, but as the custodians of this precious planet we call "Mother Earth" and our home. Earth Day is not just a date on the calendar; it's a reminder, a call to action, a global movement that transcends borders and unites us in a shared responsibility to protect and preserve our environment for generations to come, i.e. for sustainable development.

There is a sloka in Sanskrit, which reads...

సముద్ర వసనే దేవీ... పర్వత స్తన మండలే,
విష్ణు పత్ని నమస్తుభ్యం, పాద స్పర్శం క్షమశ్వమే

The meaning of this sloka is

Oh Devi (Goddess), You have the oceans as your garments, and mountains as your bosom.
Oh Consort of Lord Vishnu, salutations to You.
Please forgive me for touching Your Holy Body with my feet.

This shloka beautifully depicts Mother Earth as a nurturing goddess, adorned with the vast oceans and mighty mountains. It also emphasizes the respect and reverence we owe to her for sustaining us.

We, the Indians were practicing this for long time, probably since the Vedic period to till the commencement of foreign regime in India.

But, are we really showing this faithfulness to the Mother Earth today? Definitely “NO”.

Being a geologist, I have a profound reverence for the Earth – not just as a home for humanity, but as a complex and dynamic system that has shaped the course of our planet's history over billions of years. Earth Day, to me, is not just a date on the calendar; it's a celebration of the remarkable forces and processes that have sculpted our landscapes, forged our resources, and sustained life on this remarkable planet.

Let me brief you now on the history of the earth day.

It may be hard to imagine that before 1970, there were no legal or regulatory mechanisms to protect our environment. During that time, a factory could emit black clouds of toxic smoke into the air or dump tons of toxic waste into a nearby stream, and that was perfectly legal. Nobody could initiate any kind of legal action against them to stop it.

This is because there was no Environmental Protection Agency, no Act for Clean Air and Clean Water.

It is because of the efforts of US Senator Gaylord Nelson who created Earth Day as a way to force this issue onto the national agenda. In December 1970, the US Congress authorized the creation of a new federal agency to tackle environmental issues, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, popularly known as EPA.

Over the past 60 years, around eight billion tons of plastic has been produced, according to a recent study in a research journal, 90.5 per cent of which has not been recycled. As a result, this year's Earth Day theme for 2024 is “**Planet vs. Plastic**”, demands a 60% reduction in the production of all plastics by 2040.

Our planet, with its breathtaking landscapes, rich biodiversity, and intricate ecosystems, sustains all life forms, including us. Yet, in our relentless pursuit of progress and development, we have often neglected the very source of our existence. We have exploited our resources, polluted our air and water, and disregarded the delicate balance of nature.

You all are aware of Bangalore water crisis now-a-days.

But today, on Earth Day, let us pause and reflect on the impact of our actions. Let us recognize the urgency of the challenges we face – from climate change and deforestation to pollution and loss of biodiversity. These are not distant threats; they are the reality we must confront today, for the sake of our planet and future generations.

However, among these challenges lies hope. Hope in the resilience of nature, in the power of innovation, and in the collective action of individuals and communities around the world. Each one of us has a role to play in this journey towards a more sustainable future.

It starts with small everyday actions – reducing our carbon footprint, conserving energy and water, recycling and reusing, and advocating for policies that promote sustainability. We can motivate our students and make them ambassadors in this holy task of safeguarding the mother earth.

But it doesn't end there. We must also hold governments and corporations accountable for their environmental impact, and push for systemic change that prioritizes the health of our planet over short-term profits.

We must invest in renewable energy, protect our forests and oceans, support sustainable agriculture, and embrace a circular economy that minimizes waste and maximizes resource efficiency. We must also prioritize environmental education and awareness, empowering future generations with the knowledge and tools they need to become environmental stewards themselves.

On this Earth Day 2024 today, let us re-commit ourselves to the cause of environmental conservation and climate action. Let us pledge to do our part, not just today, but every day, in the ongoing effort to protect and preserve our planet. Together, we can make a difference – for Earth, for humanity, and for all living beings that call this beautiful blue planet home.

I owe my gratitude to the department of Geology for giving me this opportunity, which connects me well.

Thank you!!

Gallery

