

ANNUAL REPORT

LIGHTS

SUMMARY OF ACTIVITIES

UNDERTAKEN

DURING

1, APRIL 2023- 31 MARCH 2024

Runup to SaGAA 7

Since SaGAA 7 was being organised in the physical mode after four years, the 2020 edition being held in the online mode, we had to ensure maximum participation of scientists, policy makers, academia, researchers from India and abroad. The SaGAA Secretariat consisting of five researchers, web designers, graphic designers had made QR enabled badges and all of their information was digitised for seamless entry and participation. Representatives from NSCS and Norway embassy came for meetings, while the SaGAA team visited MoES, Canada and Iceland embassies to bring them on board and appraise them of the progress. the SaGAA team also prepared a book of abstracts and SaGAA people for the kit bag.

SaGAA 7 (27th and 28th April, 2023)

The seventh edition of SaGAA, was organised on 27th and 28th April, 2023. The inauguration saw Dr. Sulagna Chattopdhyay, President, SaGAA, giving an overview of the Journey of SaGAA, followed by a welcome address by Dr. Rasik Ravindra, Chairman Organising Committee and the former Director of NCPOR. The session was graced by the Guest of Honour, Mr. Hans Jacob Frydenlund, Ambassador of Norway to India, Special Guest, Shri Sanjay Verma, Secretary (West) MEA, Distinguished Guest, Ambassador Pankaj Saran, former deputy National Security Advisor, Government of India, Chief Guest, Dr. M Ravichandran, Secretary, MoES, and Prof, NC Pant delivered the vote of thanks. It was followed by two technical sessions chaired by Dr. M N Rajeevan, former secretary, MoES and Dr. Shailesh Nayak, Director, National Institute of Advanced Studies, Bangalore, respectively. These sessions were co-chaired by Dr Gopal Iyengar, *Scientist G*, Advisor, Ministry of Earth Sciences, and Dr. R Krishnan, Director Indian Institute of tropical meteorology, Pune

The second day witnessed three technical sessions chaired by Dr. Thamban Meloth, Director NCPOR, Goa, Dr Parvinder Maini, *Scientific Secretary*, Office of Principal Scientific Advisor, Govt. of India and Ambassador Pankaj Saran. These sessions were co-chaired by Dr Nalan Koc, *Research Director*, Norwegian Polar Institute, Norway, Dr N C Pant, *Co-Chairman SaGAA, Former Professor, Department of Geology*, Delhi University and Dr M V Ramana Murthy, *Advisor*, MoES; *Director*, National Centre for Coastal Research, Chennai.

A total of 37 papers were presented and three panel discussions were held. The first panel was chaired and co-chaired by Dr M Ravichandran and Dr Satheesh Shenoi, *Former Director*, Indian National Centre for Ocean Information Services, Hyderabad. The second panel was chaired and co-chaired by Major General B K Sharma, *Director*, United Service Institution of India (USI) and Dr M Sudhakar, *Former Director*, Centre for Marine Living Resources and Ecology, Kochi. The third panel comprised of Ms Tiina Jortikka-Laitinen, *Ambassador (Polar Issues)*, Head of the Antarctic Treaty Consultative Mechanism Host Country Secretariat, Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland, as the chair and Dr Koteswar Rao, *Advisor*, MEA as the co chair. Each panel also consisted of 4-5 discussants.

The valediction saw a summary presentation by Dr. Rasik Ravindra, followed with comments by Dr. Nalan Koc, Mr. Gundi Bragason, Ambassador of Iceland to India Dr. KJ Ramesh, Former Director General, IMD, Dr. M. Sudhakar, Former Director CMLRE, Kochi and Dr. B Meenakumari, Former Chairman, National Biodiversity Authority. The Conference was concluded by a vote of thanks by Dr. Sulagna Chattopadhyay.

The governing body of LIGHTS met at 2:00 PM on 28th April, 2023. The attendees were Dr. Rasik Ravindra, Senior Vice President, Dr. Sulagna Chattopadhyay, Secretary General, Dr. Narmadeshwar Prasad, Treasurer, Dr. KJ Ramesh, Member, Dr. B. Meenakumari, Member, Dr. M Sudhakar, Member and Prof. NC Pant. the signatures of those who had virtually attended due to Covid 19, were taken for the submission of papers/documents to the Registrar of Societies.

The SaGAA Team on the sidelines of the Conference on 27-28 April had interviewed some experts on different issues viz. Sea level rise, energy transition, blue economy, Climate Change and Himalayan Cryosphere, which will be converted into a documentary for wider viewership. The work on this is in progress.

LIGHTS represented by Dr. Sulagna Chattopadhyay was invited as LIGHTS representative to speak at National Conference on Polar Sciences (NCPS), National Center for Polar and Ocean Research (NCPOR) on *Efficient Science Communication for Good Policy*, May 2023.

On May 2nd, 2023, Dr. Sulagna Chattopadhyay, President, SaGAA appeared on TV under the programme titled "The Gist" telecast by Strat News Global, where she explained the intricate connections between the Arctic, climate change, and geopolitics.

SaGAA Report, 27th May 2023

The SaGAA 7 Report 2023 was released on May 24th, at the Meghdoot Hall, Prithvi Bhawan, which included a ministry wise targeted recommendations for action. The speakers at the event included Dr. Ravichandran, Secretary, MoES, Shri Sanjay Verma, Secretary (West) MEA, Ambassador Pankaj Saran, and Dr. Rasik Ravindra, Chairman, SaGAA 7. The presentations made at SaGAA 7 were used as a source to prepare a synopsis, organised into eleven chapters, towards furthering domain knowledge.



At the release of the SaGAA 7 Report in May 2023

On 29th May, 2023, as part of the outreach activities, LIGHTS organized a talk on "Fighting for our Rivers and Glaciers" at Centre for Study of Regional Development (CSRD), Jawaharlal Nehru University. Major Gen Brajesh Kumar of Atulya Ganga, Dr Rasik Ravindra on behalf of SaGAA and Dr Bhaswati Das, Member. LIGHTS participated in the discussion. Around 100 scholars attended the lectures.

ANNUAL GENERAL BODY MEET, 31ST July, 2023

The 20th Annual General Body Meeting was called for electing the team of new office bearers for the period of 2023-2025. It also saw presentation of audited accounts for the financial year, 2022-23, activities of the financial year and current financial year (2023-24).

Following Office Bearers and Members of LIGHTS were present:

1. Shri S. Bal Shekar, President
2. Dr. Rasik Ravindra, Senior Vice President
3. Dr. Sulagna Chattopadhyay, Secretary General
4. Dr. N. Prasad, Treasurer
5. Dr. K.J. Ramesh, Member
6. Prof. Veenu Seth, Member
7. Prof. Sartaz Alam, Member
8. Dr. B. Meenakumari, Member
9. Dr. M. Sudhakar, Member
10. Prof N. C. Pant, Member
11. Dr. P.S. Goel, Member
12. Ambassador Pankaj Saran, Member
13. Prof. Bhaswati Das, Member
14. Dr. Abul Amir Khan, Member
15. Shri Ishaan Gera, Member

The President shared his experiences as Chief Course Director, of Parliamentary and Administrative Research Institute (PARI) wherein he devised many courses on Parliamentary Procedures, Protocol and Privileges of MPs/MLAs etc, Vigilance courses, Public policy managements etc. for Govt. officers and in fact mid to senior level officers belonging to over 150 government organisations have been trained so far by PARI. He specially mentioned the joint international leadership courses on Public Policy Management, Mental Health Systems Development and Public Health policy Administration in collaboration with School of Population and Global Health, Melbourne University, Australia and Dods parliamentary communications, London, the UK. He also pointed out that two courses on Vigilance related issues namely, the Preventive Vigilance and Vigilance Management under the able guidance of Shri J. Vinod Kumar who served the Central Vigilance Commission for nearly 4 decades and is an esteemed Member of LIGHTS, have been extremely successful and played a complementary role to CVC in

sensitising the government officers to vigilance preparedness. He also mentioned that the visit of the Ambassador of the Royal Norwegian Embassy to LIGHTS's Office was a highpoint.

The President proposed the name of Ambassador Pankaj Saran as the new President. He also proposed the name of Dr. Rasik Ravindra as the Sr. Vice-President and Dr. Naresh Chandra Pant as the Vice-President, Dr. Sulagna Chattopadhyay as the Secretary General and Dr. Narmadeshwar Prasad as the treasurer for a period of two years. This was accepted unanimously.

Dr. Narmadeshwar Prasad, Treasurer presented the balance sheet to the members and explained in detail all the items pertaining to the income and expenditure during the period 01.04.2022 to 31.03.2023. The presentation was followed by a discussion. Mr. Ishaan Gera, Member suggested that sponsorship/advertisement revenue should be included as a separate category in ITR filing for exemption on taxes. Dr Sulagna Chattopadhyay, Secretary General presented the activities of LIGHTS during the financial year 2022-23 and the current financial year's activities and also proposed future programs.

On May 2nd, 2023, Dr. Sulagna Chattopadhyay, President, SaGAA appeared on TV under the programme titled "The Gist" telecast by Strat News Global, where she explained the intricate connections between the Arctic, climate change, and geopolitics.

LIGHTS, represented by Dr. Sulagna Chattopadhyay was invited as a Speaker, National Conference on Polar Sciences (NCPS), National Center for Polar and Ocean Research (NCPOR) on Efficient Science Communication for Good Policy, May 2023.

The National Defence College, New Delhi invited Dr Sulagna Chattopadhyay, to deliver a talk on Arctic and Antarctic in its 63rd NDC Course for Senior Officers from the Indian Armed Forces, Civil Services and Officers from Friendly Foreign Countries held on 3rd July 2023.

Dr. Acquino Vimal, Indian Ambassador Designate to Norway met Dr. Sulagna Chattopadhyay at her residence on the 13th July 2023 to understand the nuances of India's Arctic Policy and the status of India's position in the Arctic affairs.

Parliamentary and Administrative Research Institute (PARI) Activity

Dr. Narmadeshwar Prasad, Treasurer, LIGHTS and Director, Parliamentary and Administrative Research Institute (PARI) was invited by the Chairman, National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) to speak on “Recent Trends in Critical Mental Health Care Policy; International Perspective; Way Forward” in the National Conference on “Moving Mental Health beyond Institutions” organised by NHRC at Vigyan Bhawan, New Delhi on 26th July 2023.



Published 20 blog articles on SaGAA website by the SaGAA Team and others on various themes on science and geopolitics of the poles.





Meeting with Mr. Mads Frederikson, Executive Director, Arctic Economic Council, on 23 November, 2023

A meeting attended by Pankaj Saran, Dr. Rasik Ravindra, Dr. Sulagna Chattopadhyay and Dr. Narmadeshwar Prasad, to discuss building of AEC and SaGAA linkages, AEC and SaGAA 2025: forging paths together was held at the Bhikaji Cama Bhawan.



Meeting with Mr. Mads Frederikson

LIGHTS was represented by Dr. Sulagna Chattopadhyay, who was invited as a speaker to the One Planet Polar Summit, Paris, in the session titled ‘Human Stakes: Climate change in Poles and Glaciers and its Direct Impact on Populations’, November 2023.

SaGAA-LIGHTS Online Meeting with INCOIS for Science to Governance - India’s Coastal Cities Coalition Programme (CCCP), on 3rd January, 2024

The meeting was held with Shri R.S. Mahendra, Scientist, INCOIS, and the SaGAA-LIGHTS team comprised of Dr Swati Basu, Former Scientific Secretary, Office of the Principal Scientific, Advisor Govt. of India, Dr Rasik Ravindra, Vice President, LIGHTS; Advisor ATCM 2024, Ministry of Earth Sciences, Govt. of India, Dr Sulagna Chattopadhyay, Secretary General, LIGHTS; President, SaGAA and Founder Editor, GnY and Dr Narmadeshwar Prasad, Director, PARI. Dr. Sulagna made a presentation on Proposal on Coastal Cities Coalition Programme (CCCP) that was followed by a discussion on Roadmap for the CCCP.

SaGAA-LIGHTS hosted a Russian Delegation on 8th February, 2024.

The Russian Delegation Members comprised of

Mr. Mikhail Vasekha, Chair, Offshore Exploration Department, Applied Arctic Technologies Institute, Murmansk Arctic University

Dr. Anton Kovshov, Director, Arctic Centre, Institute of Northern European and Arctic Studies Petrozavodsk State University

Dr. Ekaterina Serova, Deputy Director, The Arctic Centre, Institute of Northern European and Arctic Studies

Ms. Zhanna Vasileva, Chair, Department of Ecology and Technosphere Safety, Arctic Technologies Institute, Arctic Technologies Institute

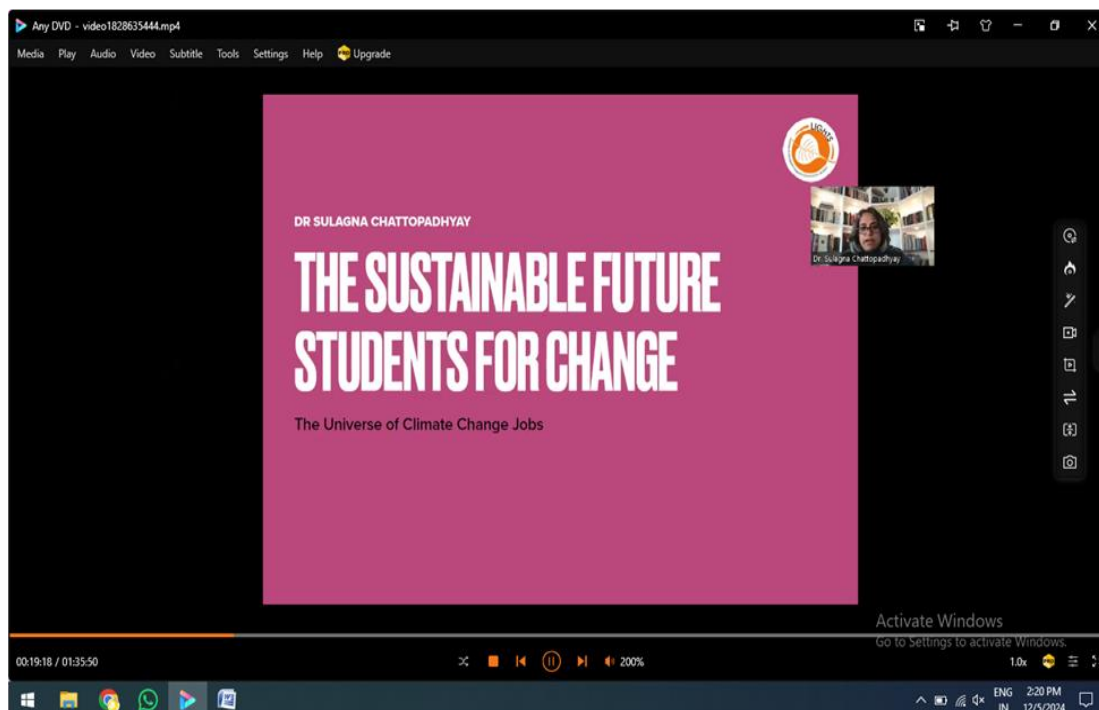
Mr. Kirill Alexandrovich Likhachev, Associate Professor, School of International Relations, St. Petersburg State University.

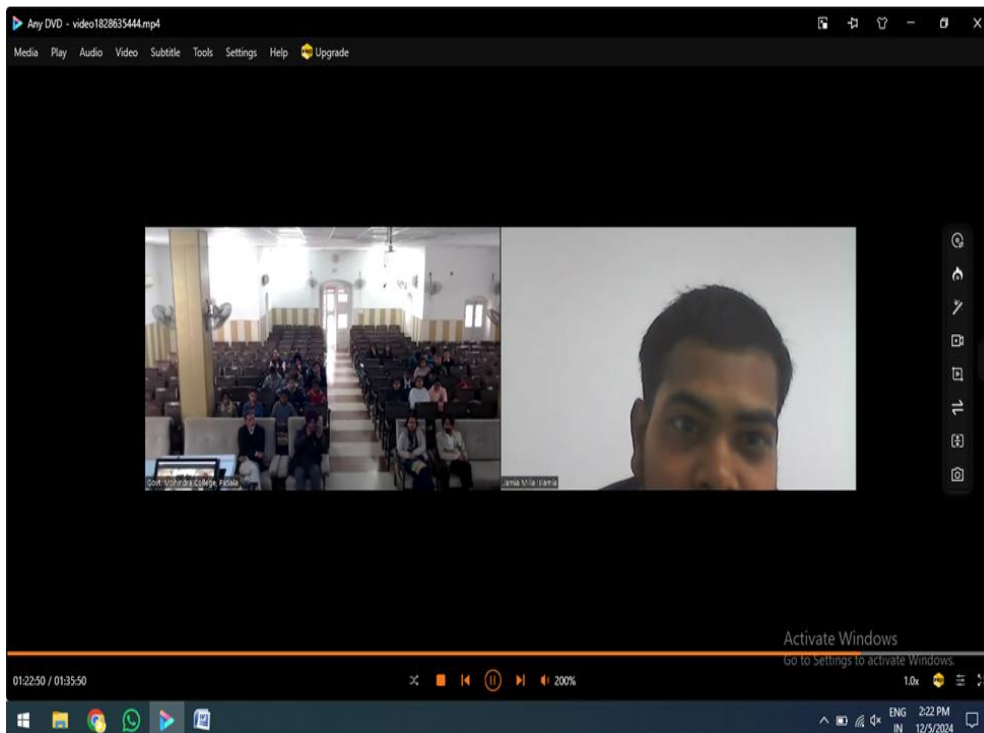
The discussions centred on issues related to environmental security and sustainable development in the Arctic, Opportunities for scientific collaboration in Arctic-related projects with a focus on the perspective of north- Western Higher education Institutions, Challenges and potential in logistics and infrastructure development within the Arctic region and the International North–South Transport Corridor, Assessing the potential for Russian-Indian small and medium-sized enterprise (SME) collaboration in the Arctic and Exploring

opportunities for advancing joint scientific and educational initiatives between India and Russia.

Online Workshop on “Sustainability courses for Climate Change Careers” on 21st and 22nd February 2024- (PARI Activity)

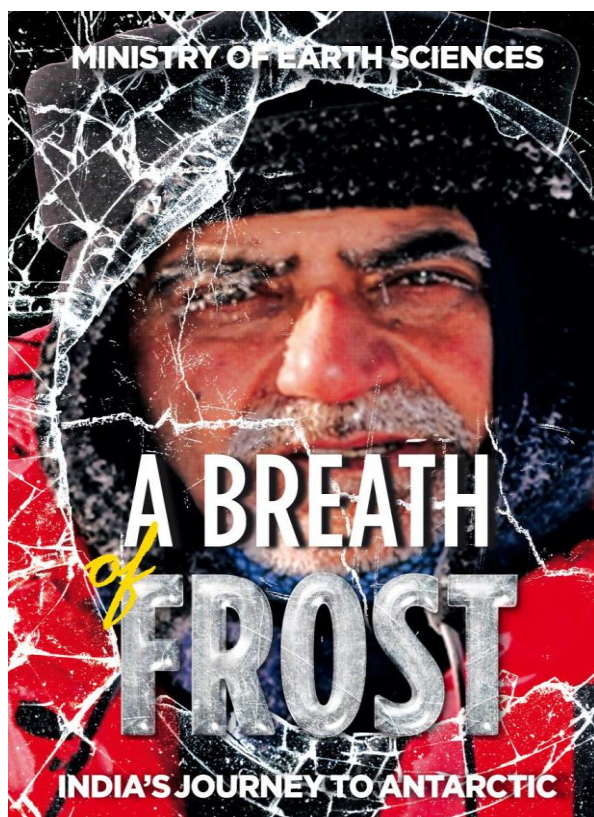
A 30 minute lecture was delivered by Lecture by Prof. Monica Singhania, Professor of Economics at FMS, University of Delhi, on Indian career perspectives for jobs related to sustainability, followed by that of Prof. Dora Marinova, Professor of Sustainability at the Curtin University, Sustainability Policy (CUSP) Institute, on International outlook and career prospects in green jobs. A 45 minute long lecture by Prof. Peter Newman, Professor of Sustainability at Curtin University in Perth, Australia, on global Climate change career needs and the international job sector, was delivered. It was preceded by Dr. Sulagna Chattopadhyay giving a sector overview of ESG (Environment and Social Governance). More than 500 students joined, and showed active participation by posing many questions. This was organized in collaboration with Prof. Azra Abidi, Head, Department of Sociology, Jamia Milia Islamia, New Delhi, Dr. Gaurav Kumar, Assistant Professor, Department of Environmental Studies, PGDAV(M), University of Delhi, New Delhi and Prof. Navjot Singh, Head, Department of Geography, Government Mohindra College, Patiala, Punjab.





MoES Book Project

LIGHTS also received an MoES anecdotal Book Project in February, 2024 entitled “A Breath of Frost- India’s Antarctic Journey”, of which a 1000 copies were to be published on its completion. In this regard, Baban Ignole, AK Hanjua, Col. Paramjit Singh, Amitav Sengupta, S. Jayaram, Prabhu Matondkar, Rita Kolhi, Dr. RV Iyengar, Dr. CP Vohra, Dr. NC Pant and Bhagwati Prasad were interviewed in February and March 2024.



Meeting with Sarah Jones, Director, Industry and Short Courses, University of Tasmania, Australia on 5th April 2024

Ms. Sarah Jones discussed the University of Tasmania's (UTAS) programs for graduates and young public servants regarding innovation in public policy. Dr. Narmadeshwar Prasad provided a detailed overview of PARI's domestic and international courses. The UTAS delegation took notes and asked clarifying questions. Dr. Sulagna Chattopadhyay suggested new topics for potential collaboration. Discussions explored the feasibility and accessibility of future collaborations between UTAS and PARI. Potential areas of collaboration included cybersecurity, sustainability, good governance, and attracting both students and officials to new course offerings.



CURRENT ACTIVITIES IN 2024-2025

LIGHTS have been pursuing the completion of the MoES Book project. A review copy was presented to the MoES in November, 2024, after interviewing around 70 people who have been associated with ISEA. In this regard, a study visit to National Institute of Oceanography, Goa, National Centre for Polar and Ocean Research, Goa, and the Naval War College, Goa was undertaken in the month of September, 2024.

On 17 July, 2024, an MoU was signed with the University of Tasmania. The event was graced by Professor Rufus Black, the President and Vice-Chancellor, University of Tasmania, Professor Stuart Crispin, Executive Dean, College of Business and Economics, University of Tasmania, Ms. Tristanne Scott-Durairajah, Associate Director, Learning Abroad and Partnerships, University of Tasmania.

On 10th October, 2024, Dr. Sulagna Chattopadhyay recorded a podcast with Det Moderne India, sharing her insights on India's role in the Arctic and activities done by India in the last several decades.

SaGAA-LIGHTS is also undertaking the creation of podcasts on pertinent climate issues.

Dr. Sulagna Chatopadhyay has represented LIGHTS at various national and international fora during the current year (2024-25).

- Speaker, (online) Quality of Life in the Arctic, University of Petrozavodsk, Republic of Karelia, Russia, Nov 2024.
 - Speaker, Arctic Connected: Strategic Connections between the Arctic and the Indo-Pacific, Arctic Circle Assembly, Reykjavik, Iceland, October 2024
 - Speaker, The New Superpower: India's Role in the Arctic, Fridtjof Nansen University, Oslo, Norway (nominated by MEA), October 2024
 - Speaker, The Fifth Northern Sustainable Development Forum, Scientific Seminar of the Popular Science magazine- Culture and Art of the Arctic, St Petersburg University, September 2024
 - Interaction and respondent, Naval War College, Goa, India, September 2024
 - First Capacity Building Training-cum- Workshop on UNESCO Global Geoparks, UNESCO House, New Delhi, September 2024.
 - Speaker, First Interregional Scientific Forum - The Arctic Our Global Neighbourhood, University of Petrozavodsk, Republic of Karelia, Russia, May 2024.
-

After a gap of three years has re-initiated the publication of the hindi magazine *Bhogol aur aap*.

LIGHTS also trained three interns in data collection regarding the various facets of Antarctica. Two of them also wrote papers titled 'Environmental Impact of Tourism in Antarctica' and 'Assessment of Shipwrecks in Antarctic Region.'

