

BOOK REVIEW

NATIONAL GEOLOGICAL MONUMENTS. Geological Survey of India, Kolkata, Special Publication No.61, 2001, pages vi+97; Price: Rs. 525/US\$ 28/£ 20 (ISSN-0254-0436)

As per the tenth article in the charter of the functions of the Geological Survey of India (GSI), this organization has to hold, as a custodian of geological material of national and international interest and make arrangements for protection and preservation of such materials as National Geological Monuments and Parks. There are 26 such monuments and parks. These are: (1) Natural Arch, Tirumala Hills, (2) Eparchaeon unconformity, Tirumala-Tirupati Road, (3) Bedded Barytes, Mangampet in Andhra Pradesh, (4) Marine Gondwana Fossil Park, Mahendragarh, Chattisgarh, (5) Eddy Current Markings, Panchmahal District, Gujarat, (6) Siwalik Fossil Park, Himachal Pradesh, (7) Peninsular Gneiss at Lalbagh, Bangalore, (8) Columnar Basaltic Lava, St. Mary's Island, (9) Pillow Lava, Maradihalli, (10) Pyroclastic Rocks, Peddapalli, Karnataka, (11) Laterite, Angadipuram, Kerala, (12) Lonar Lake, Maharashtra, (13) Pillow Lava, Nomira, Orissa, (14) Nepheline Syenite, Kishangarh, (15) Senara Granites, (16) Jodhpur Group-Malani Igneous Suite contact, (17) Barr Conglomerate, (18) Welded Tuff, Jodhpur, (19) Akal Fossil Wood Park, (20) Great Boundary Fault at Satur (21) Stromatolite Park, Bhojunda, (22) Gossan, Rajpura-Dariba, (23) Stromatolite Park, Jhamarkotra, Rajasthan, (24) St. Thomas Mount Charnockite, (25) National Fossil Wood Park, Tiruvakkarai and (26) National Fossil Wood Park, Sattanur, Tamil Nadu.

The publication was brought out to commemorate the 150th anniversary celebrations of the Survey by the Airborne Mineral Surveys and Exploration Wing (AMSE) of GSI located at Bangalore.

The locations of all the monuments and parks are clearly described and supported by as many as 36 well drawn location maps. The text provides lucid and adequate description of these geological features. There are 76 coloured and one black and white photographs; most of them are eye-catching.

Though these monuments and parks have been described

and depicted by photos in several pamphlets and articles, it is for the first time that all these have been combined in one publication. The publication will be valuable to all geoscientists, who can leisurely leaf through it again and again, often with personal memories of visits to these monuments and parks.

The book is almost a good coffee table book that will go well with connoisseurs and collectors. But, all geologically important and significant features are not photogenic. For example, photos of St. Mary's Island columnar basalts, the blue waters of Lonar lake, the Fossil Parks provide a visual treat but the Tirumala Arch, visuals of pillow lava of Mysore Mines, Nepheline Syenite, Kishangarh fall flat on the nose. To be a real coffee table book, that would attract people outside geoscience circles more editing and photographing would be needed. But then, some geologically significant features would get down-sized or even left out.

There is a general feeling that many of the monuments are not adequately preserved and publicized to attract general public and that comparatively geoscientists are inbred with minimum public exposure. This publication of GSI can play a very important role in popularizing geology at the high school level. The book should be made available in all schools so that teachers can arrange excursions to the nearest geological monuments/parks in collaboration with GSI.

T.R. Anantharamu, Deepak Bellur, A.A. Bhasker, the compilers; R. Sundaram, Coordinator; K.S. Rao and S.V.G. Krishna Rao (all of the AMSE Wing) who guided the team that processed and edited the manuscript deserve our warm felicitations for bringing out such an attractive publication.

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