ISPRS Workshop on Digital Preservation of Archaeological Heritage

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The Workshop on Digital Preservation of Archaeological Heritage was jointly organized by IIT Kanpur, ISPRS WG V-2 and University of Allahabad during 18 – 19 October 2010 at IIT Kanpur, India. The workshop attracted participants from India and neighbouring countries. In total there were around 40 participants. The workshop was structured on the line of presentations by experts so the participants can learn new technologies and their use for archaeological investigation, documentation and preservation. Currently, in India not many archaeologists are employing modern tools in their work and, therefore, this mode of workshop fitted well to the need of the country.

The invited experts made presentation during the workshop in a wide ranging technological tools with case studies in archaeology. Prof. Gary Lock from the University of Oxford made two presentations on the Cultural Resource Management and on the use of GIS for archaeological investigation. Besides several other modelling approaches he also introduced the movement model that is helping now to locate the tracks used by historic people. Dr. R S Fonia, Director National Mission on Monuments and Antiquities outlined the ambitious project initiated by the Government of India for documenting all secondary archaeological resources. Prof. Bernard Frischer from the University of Virginia made presentation using skype. Few hiccups in internet connection were suitably compensated by the excellent and comprehensive presentation by Prof. Fisher. He demonstrated how the "Rome Reborn" project took shape and how various information which were available in the form of physical models; paintings and sketches were integrated in the virtual model that was developed under this project. Use of procedural modelling technique was especially interesting. Prof. Holly Rushmeier from Yale University demonstrated the use of short range scanners and photography for documenting small artefacts, using the examples of Peta, Parthenon and others. There were several other presentations like on Photogrammetry by Prof. R S Tiwari, Laser Scanning by Prof. Bharat Lohani, Ground Penetration Radar by Prof. Javed Mallik and rapid prototyping by Dr. A Chatterjee. Few selected participants also made presentation on their research work.

Finally the workshop ended with a panel discussion where the members agreed on the need of more interaction among the technologists and archaeologists in India and countries with

similar settings. The members were unanimous that the archaeology should drive technology rather than being vice-versa. Also, it was noted that, while a few Geomatics tools like GIS and remotely sensed data interpretation can be learnt by the practicing archaeologists, the more specialized technologies like GPR or laser scanning should be used in collaboration with subject experts.