PRESS RELEASE

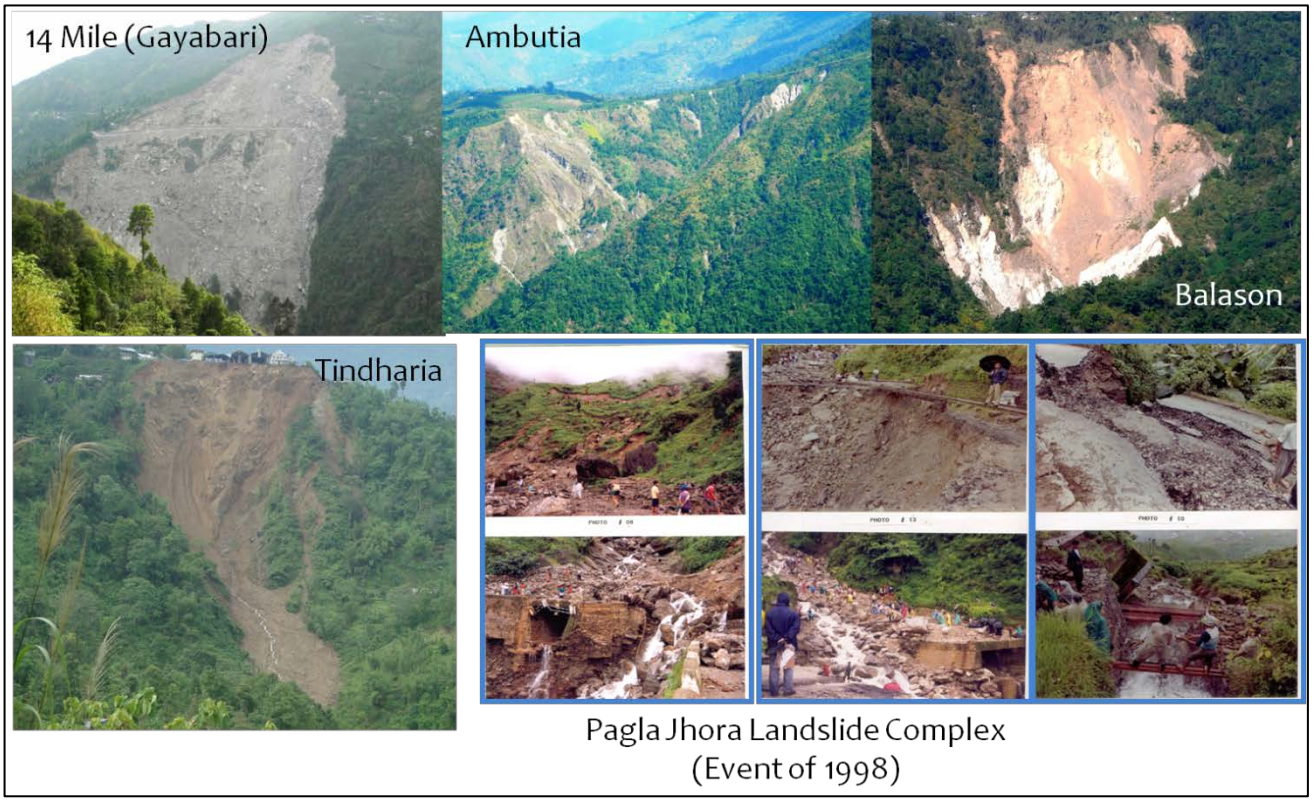
LANDSLIP

20th January 2017

International research collaboration for landslide risk reduction in India

Physical scientists, engineers and social scientists from nine organisations in the UK, Italy and India are collaborating to improve the assessment of landslide risk, early warning systems and the preparedness of local communities likely to be affected by landslide hazards in India. This will help to protect lives, livelihoods and the local economy of vulnerable landslide-prone communities in India.

Landslides affect a large area of India from the Himalayas in the north, the sub-Himalayan region in the north-east, the Western Ghats in the south and the Konkan Plains in the west. Landslides are triggered by intense rainfall, snow melt, earthquakes and the impact of developments such as transport routes, mining and farming. Landslides have a direct impact on dense settlements, particularly hill towns, National Highways, strategic trade corridors and UNESCO world heritage sites located in these fragile mountain terrains. Landslides can cause fatalities, destruction of property, damage to infrastructure and disruption of livelihoods. This has a disproportionate effect on vulnerable sections of the communities in these areas.



Landslides and damage in Darjeeling, Himalayas, India

Research will be carried out through the LANDSLIP (LANDSLIde multi-hazard assessment, Preparedness and early warning in South Asia) project, which is funded as a part of the UK NERC/ DFID SHEAR (Science for Humanitarian Emergencies and Resilience) programme. The LANDSLIP team will work together to develop enhanced landslide risk assessment and monitoring methods using two study areas: Darjeeling-East Sikkim districts in Eastern Himalayas, in the States of West Bengal and Sikkim as well as the Nilgiris District of the

Western Ghats in the State of Tamil Nadu. LANDSLIP will help to develop landslide risk assessment and early warning systems, and the best means of disseminating this information to those who need it in India. The methodologies developed through this project will be replicable to the landslide-prone areas elsewhere in India (e.g. Uttarakhand) and South Asia.

The project consortium of 36 scientists and engineers is co-led by Dr Helen Reeves from the British Geological Survey (BGS) and Professor Bruce Malamud from King's College London (KCL) with the other project partners from the Amrita University, Consiglio Nazionale delle Ricerche (Research Institute for Geo-Hydrological Protection), the Geological Survey of India (GSI), Newcastle University, UK Met Office, Practical Action Consulting India and Practical Action Consulting UK. LANDSLIP will support the risk reduction concerns of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction (SFDRR) which has been endorsed by more than 180 countries in the world.

LANDSLIP is a 4-year project that will be formally launched on Friday 20th January 2017 at an inception meeting to be held at the Vivekananda International Foundation in New Delhi, and will be attended by members of the LANDSLIP consortium and senior officials from the Government of India and other key organisations.

Dr Helen Reeves, Science Director for Engineering Geology, British Geological Survey said:

"I believe that LANDSLIP is providing a unique and exciting opportunity for UK, Italian and Indian scientists and engineers. It will provide new knowledge and information on landslide risk reduction in India and South Asia, supporting India's contribution to the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction".

Professor Bruce Malamud, King's College London said:

"I am looking forward to working with this intellectually stimulating and passionate group of Indian, Italian and UK colleagues. I believe that LANDSLIP will improve risk assessment and early warning systems for landslides in two very diverse regions of India."

Dr Saibal Ghosh, Director (Geology), Geological Survey of India

"I am very happy that Geological Survey of India, being the nodal department of landslide studies in India is an integral part of this scientific endeavour and would work together for LANDSLIP with eight other expert institutions of the world to develop improved knowledge, methodology and information for landslide risk reduction in India. I am confident that under the able leadership of Dr Helen J Reeves, BGS and Prof (Dr) Bruce D Malamud, KCL (two Co-PIs), this multi-institutional consortium will achieve its desired goal in LANDSLIP Project."

Dr Maneesha Sudheer, Director of Amrita University's Center for Wireless Networks and Applications said:

"In recent history there have been more landslides in Asia than in the rest of the world. Dramatic climate change is only making things worse. When you couple this with unregulated development, it can lead to significant loss of life and infrastructure. As such, multidisciplinary-approach programmes like LANDSLIP are urgently needed."

Ends

For further details or to arrange media interviews please contact:

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Notes for Editors

The following are available for interview:

- Dr Helen Reeves, Science Director for Engineering Geology, British Geological Survey
- Professor Bruce Malamud, King's College London
- Professor Vinod Menon, Founding Member, National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA), Government of India

For additional information go to: http://www.landslip.org/

Photographs are available from our ftp server: ftp://ftp.bgs.ac.uk/pubload/bgspress/LANDSLIP

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