

NITK creates new setup to boost HAM radio communication network

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The National Institute of Technology Karnataka (NITK), Surathkal, has put in place a setup, which is a combination of VHF (very high frequency) digital repeaters, antenna, and other accessories, to establish a robust HAM radio communication network dedicated to disaster management in coastal Karnataka.

This new setup was developed by NITK's Amateur Radio Club (VU2REC) and SEARCH (System for Emergency Assistance,

Response, and Communication Hub), in association with the Mangalore Amateur Radio Club, as a part of the "Enhancing Disaster Management Capabilities through Amateur Radio Communication" project. Manipal Dot Net Pvt. Ltd, Manipal, has funded this project.

K.V. Gangadharan, custodian of VU2REC and coordinator of NITK's Centre for System Design, said the new setup is presently in the demo mode. "This will be fully functional in a month's time, following necessary legal

clearances," Mr. Gangadharan told *The Hindu*.

The NITK's Amateur Radio Club formed in 1982 has been closely working with the Mangalore Amateur Radio Club in the use of HAM radio technology during public programmes, emergency, and for competitions related to the use of HAM communication network. The NITK's Amateur Radio club has been using analog repeater, near Lady Hill Circle in Mangaluru.

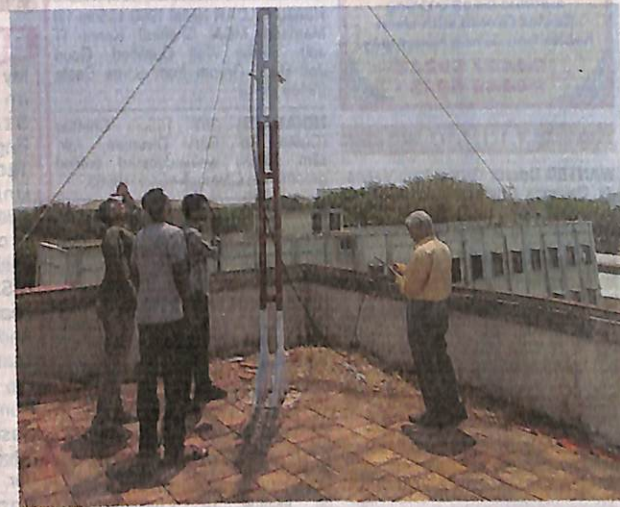
In order to establish a robust HAM communication network, the NITK has

developed the new setup, which comprises of digital VHF repeaters, a Diamond X510 antenna, trans receivers, and supporting accessories. "This new setup will give a quantum leap to disaster management communication system in the coastal region," Mr. Gangadharan said.

The new setup was tested for the past six months. Among the areas from where they communicated clearly included from peaks namely Agumbe, Kodachadri, Kudremukh, and Baba Budangiri and from St. Marys Island.

As part of the project, a workshop will be held at the institute on Sunday to make people aware about HAM radio operations and invite more volunteers to use the HAM radio network.

T. Laxminidhi, Professor, Department of Electronics and Communication Engineering, and U. Pruthviraj, Associate Professor, Department of Water Resources and Ocean Engineering and Project Head of SEARCH, were among the key faculty members of NITK, involved in the project.



The antenna installed atop the building of National Institute of Technology Karnataka's Centre for System Design. RAGHAVAM.