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AU experts to help evolve accurate weather forecasting

K Sandeep Kumar
Allahabad, September 12

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A TEAM of Allahabad University (AU) experts is likely to soon join in an international effort to evolve better and more accurate seasonal weather forecasting that has the potential to usher in yet another green revolution in the country.

If all goes as per plans, weather experts and physicists of India, Nepal, China, South Korea, Bangladesh as well as Trinidad and Tobago will jointly undertake a mega-exercise to refine existing weather models and work hand-in-hand to come up with accurate seasonal weather prediction to help in the management of hydrological and agricultural resources in the region.

"With most weather models requiring inputs from almost the entire region for accurate forecasts, an effort is being made to group together the experts from various countries of the region and have them working in this direction with the Abdus Salam International Centre for Theoretical Physics (ICTP) acting as the facilitator," informed Dr Avinash Chandra Pandey of AU Physics department.

He along with his four-member team— Dr Suneet Dwivedi, Ravi Prakash Shukla, Shailendra Rai and Krishana Chandra Tripathi— recently returned to India after participating in a Targeted Training Activity on 'Predictability in Tropical Regions: Research and Applications' organised by ICTP at Trieste in Italy.

"Founded in 1964 by Nobel Laureate Abdus Salam, the ICTP operates under a tripartite agreement among the Italian Government and two United Nations Agencies, UNESCO and IAEA. Its mission is to foster advanced studies and research, especially in developing countries. While the name of the Centre reflects its beginnings, its activities today encompass most areas of physical sciences including applications," said Dr Pandey who is an associate of ICTP.

He said that today the country is using statistical based techniques for forecasting weather. "This system has great potential of errors and even a minor error in an input can result in a totally off-key predictions. However, we want to refine and use dynamical prediction techniques using sophisticated models wherein the state of the weather is modelled using equations describing the state of weather in terms of some mathematical equations and coming to a predictions with the help of computational equations and calculations," he explained.

Dr Pandey said that if successful, scientists will be able to make seasonal weather forecasts to help end users like the farmers and help them produce the highest yield of their crops. "The plan is to have a team that can provide inputs for the models from all across the regions, irrespective of the physical and political divides, and work together to remove existing errors and biases in techniques and models. If we succeed in our endeavour, the initiative can prove extremely beneficial for an agricultural country like India," he added.

Dr Pandey said that efforts are also being made to rope in Pakistan where the meteorological research and predictions are defence controlled as it will be a good boost to the endeavour.

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