

***‘Eyjafjallajokull’ Volcano of Iceland – P. Krishnamurthy, Bangalore (Email: [gsocind@gmail.com](mailto:gsocind@gmail.com))***

The Deccan Volcanological Society, Pune, has brought out a special Newsletter (No.1, May 2010) on the recent eruptions in Iceland. It includes the following three articles which may be of interest to our readers.

The first article the ‘Eyjafjallajokull, Iceland’ Girish Hirlekar provides a brief history of Iceland since 874 AD, when the first settlers came from Norway and Ireland. Iceland located on the mid Atlantic ridge is well known for its historic and recent volcanoes including the famous Surtsey Is., which was born in the ocean in 1963 and became the youngest volcanic island. The Eyjafjallajokull volcano was dormant since 1821 and became active on the evening of 21<sup>st</sup> March 2010 with earthquake focus located about a km deep. It began quietly with the development of a 0.5 km long fissure and eruption of lava without ash. After about 20 days, there were floods in the river due to melting of huge quantities of ice from the glacier mountain of about 1000 m. Subsequently, on 14<sup>th</sup> April, powerful eruptions of steam and ash reached 8 km height. The volcanic dust spread over most of northern Europe, Scandinavia and U.K at speeds between 20-80 mph. The SE region of Iceland, due to the ash cloud, became dark during the day. About 750 tons of ash was spewing out every second from the volcano. As a result, the fishing regions of southern Iceland are very badly hit and there is a fear that this violent activity might trigger the dormant proximal crater Katla which spew ash over Europe in the 18<sup>th</sup> century. K.R. Gupta has provided spectacular photographs depicting the distribution of ash over northern Europe and the different stages and modes of its eruption.

The second article by Nitin Dixit is about volcanic eruption in Iceland and its implications on air travel narrates as how the spewing of tuff with highly abrasive glass-rich ash which is very injurious to jet engines led to grounding of more than 100,000 flights and an unprecedented disruptions of flight schedules worldwide during April 15 – 20 , with an estimated loss of about \$2 billion. Such a disruption is attributed to the unique location of the volcano directly below the jet stream which resulted in violent breaking up of the hot lava into glass rich ash.

The third article by K.S. Misra and Anshuman Misra provide a comparative study of some of the volcanic sequences of the Deccan volcanic province in western India where numerous ash beds (commonly known as red bole beds) have been traced far and wide. The authors opine that the intensity and magnitude of eruptions in the Deccan may have been larger compared to the present Icelandic example. On the other hand, lava falls which are quite common in the Iceland, are quite rare in the Deccan Volcanism.