

India hosts the Jurassic Congress in 2014

József PÁLFY¹
(Chairman of ISJS)

Where next after Erlangen, Lisbon, Poitiers, Mendoza, Vancouver, Palermo, Kraków and Shehong of Suining? – this was the question of the year for Jurassic conference goers.

At several previous occasions, the venue of the next congress was decided and announced before the current meeting was over. Prior to this year's congress in Sichuan, the ISJS executive was approached by two prospective host countries for the 9th International Congress on the Jurassic System: India and Mexico. As usual, the current meeting was used to win over colleagues for one or the other venue. The poster session featured an introduction from both prospective hosts, and Mexico distributed a CD and a professionally prepared brochure to present their plans. The open business meeting of ISJS provided an opportunity for both prospective hosts to make a presentation about what one could expect from a conference in one place or the other. Indeed, both Dhirendra Pandey from India and Ana Bertha Villaseñor from Mexico came forward with informative and well-designed presentations. Delegates of this year's conference were shown what to expect from Jaipur or San Luis Potosí, for conference facilities, scientific focus of the meeting, field trip targets, and cultural as well as touristic attractions. The Mexican proposal was especially well-designed portraying San Luis Potosí and environs as a tourist magnet, whereas the University of Rajasthan in Jaipur and Jurassic sedimentary basins of Kachchh and Jaisalmer were featured as important centres of Jurassic research and focus of field studies.

The ISJS executive, sensing beforehand that it would be a difficult choice between two well-prepared candidates and two exciting venues, formulated a new protocol to make a selection. The ISJS announced in Sichuan that it was interested to hear the popular opinion about the candidates but wanted to put the responsibility of decision in the hands of the Subcommittee's voting members. Thus a straw poll was conducted after the presentations in the open business meeting. And what an amazing result we had from the poll! It was a near perfect tie, with 51 delegates for Mexico and 50 for India.

The result was duly submitted to the voting members, about half of them present in China, along with the electronic files of the Indian and Mexican proposals. The voting members carefully considered which of the two exciting proposals would translate into a better choice for our community for 2014. After all the 23 voting members cast their votes, India came out as a winner with 14 votes in favour, as opposed to 9 for Mexico.

Fully acknowledging their merits, I heartily thank both teams for their effort in producing proposals of such high quality. It is encouraging to see that our conference series is successful enough that there is now repeatedly real competition for hosting the next Jurassic meeting. I hope that Ana Bertha Villaseñor's team will take courage from the popularity of their proposal and submit it anew four years later. I congratulate Dhirendra Pandey and his team for their winning bid. After two unsuccessful attempts, the dedication of our Indian colleagues bears fruit. I wish them best of luck for the preparation of a successful 9th International Congress on the Jurassic System in India. The ISJS will do everything it can to help stage another world-class conference.

See you all in Jaipur in 2014!

¹ Hungarian Natural History Museum, Budapest, Hungary; e-mail: palfy@nhmus.hu

