

SEARCH at NITK, a cutting-edge emergency response hub

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE

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NATIONAL Institute of Technology Karnataka (NITK), Surathkal, unveiled a dedicated System for Emergency Assistance, Response, and Communication Hub (SEARCH) which has emergency response capabilities, particularly tailored for the coastal areas of Dakshina Kanada. A press release from NITK said SEARCH, anchored by its Control and Command Centre within portable container cabins, integrates cutting-edge UHF/VHF/HF radio stations and autonomous aerial/marine vehicles. Born out of a transdisciplinary project led by the Centre for System Design at NITK Surathkal, SEARCH redefines the landscape of emergency management.

“SEARCH stands out as a pioneering achievement globally. It seamlessly integrates autonomous marine vessels, aerial ve-



The SEARCH has emergency response capabilities, particularly tailored for coastal areas

hicles and HAM radio stations within a single hub housed in portable containers. This groundbreaking integration showcases a revolutionary approach to disaster management, emergency response, and communication systems,” said the release. While designed for disaster response, SEARCH has broader applications, its scope has expanded to include a vari-

ety of applications such as monitoring water and air quality, observing patterns of coastal erosion and accretion, and assessing the health of mangroves. It also supplies vital coastal data to Coastal Regulation Zone officials upon request. HAM Radio operations are being supported by Mangalore Amateur Radio Club along with Manipal, highlighting the collaborative efforts

of regional clubs in ensuring effective communication during emergencies.

Dr Pruthviraj U, project head of SEARCH and professor in Charge of Transdisciplinary R&D, played a pivotal role in the conceptualisation and implementation of SEARCH. Other key faculty members, including Prof. K. V. Gangadharan, Dr Mohit P. Tahliliani, and Dr. Sreevalsa Kolathayar, contributed significantly to making SEARCH a true transdisciplinary project.

NITK alumni, through their generous donations to SEARCH, demonstrate a commitment that transcends philanthropy. These contributions have been instrumental in making SEARCH a reality. Prof B Ravi, director, NITK Surathkal, dedicated SEARCH recently in the presence of Rangan Ramasamy, an alumnus from the class of 1983, and Yajnanarayana Kammaje, chairman of the Sona Group and NITK alumnus from 1971.