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Monsoon

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Tracking monsoon at Amrita varsity campus

Arun P Mathew, TNN Aug 28, 2013, 06:47AM IST

Tags: Monsoon | ISRO

COIMBATORE: To collect data regarding the monsoon dynamics of the area, the Indian Space and Research Organisation (ISRO) in association with Amrita University has been sending balloons fitted with a 'GPS Radiosonde' from Monday to Thursday to the atmosphere. The balloons fitted with sensors and electronic gadgets transmit data regarding the various climate parameters of the atmosphere to the station below.

S Mahadevan, chairman, Department of Sciences, Amrita University, said that the balloons are sent four times a day. "This project which is conducted by the ISRO studies the monsoon dynamics of the region. With the said information we can analyse the possible changes in the climate and related aspects," he said. Similar studies are being done in four places across the country. They are at Thiruvananthapuram, Kochi, Goa and besides at the Amrita University campus.

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The two-metre diameter balloon filled with hydrogen and fitted with a 'GPS Radiosonde' sends various data that enables researchers to study the monsoon parameters of the region. "The data and analysis are published later," Mahadevan added.

The GPS Radiosonde which has sensors and electronic devices will keep sending information to the station below. The balloon will rise up and above 30 kilometre in the air. The data is despatched for about an hour and half after which it float further up and/or burst. The balloon is not tracked beyond a duration of one and a half hour.

The data sent from the balloon to the transmitter below are related to four significant meteorological parameters including temperature, pressure, humidity and wind flow.

A researcher with ISRO said such experiments in previous years have provided significant data. "Many of these studies helped to establish that the tropical tropopause layer was shrinking," he said. The data is consolidated after the completion of the experiment and scientists who analyse them may publish it, he added. (The tropopause is the boundary in the Earth's atmosphere between the troposphere and the stratosphere. At this layer, air ceases to cool with height and becomes completely dry).

The study programme started at the Amrita campus and will end on Thursday.

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