

current events

This section carries events of interest to the synchrotron radiation community. Works intended for this section should be sent direct to the Current-Events Editor (s.hasnain@dl.ac.uk).

SOLEIL gets new directors

From 1 August, SOLEIL welcomed its new directors following the simultaneous retirements of the previous team: Dennis Raoux, Roger Fourme and Michèle Sauvage-Simkin.

Michel van der Rest takes up the post of Director General; the Life Sciences Director's position went to Jean-Pierre Samama, while Paul Morin, already at SOLEIL, became the Physical Sciences Director.

Synchrotron SOLEIL, which operates SOLEIL, is set up as a non-commercial company by the CNRS and the CEA, which hold 72% and 28% of its shares, respectively. It was founded on 16 October 2001 and achieved a major milestone last year when President Jacques Chirac inaugurated SOLEIL on 18 December 2006. The board of directors of Synchrotron SOLEIL had announced the appointment of Michel van der Rest as the company's Director General at the end of January 2007. At the time of his appointment, he was the Scientific Director of the Life Sciences Department at the CNRS, and since January he has been acting as a special advisor to the Director General of the CNRS with respect to Synchrotron SOLEIL.

Michel van der Rest is trained as a biochemist and has made significant scientific contribution in the field of collagen biochemistry. He spent an important part of his research career as Professor at the McGill University in Canada. He started his studies in Louvain (Belgium) and obtained his MSc and PhD in Biochemistry from the University of Montreal in 1971 and 1974, respectively. He was head of the Life Sciences Department at ENS (École Normale Supérieure), Lyon from 1992 to 1995, and was Director of the Institut de Biologie Structurale (IBS) in Grenoble from 1994 to 2001 at a time when important developments in the partnership programme in biology took place in Grenoble. In parallel, during 1997 to 2003 he headed the Molecular and Structural Biology Department at CEA-Grenoble. He became Scientific Director of the Life Sciences Department at the CNRS in October 2005.

Jean-Pierre Samama is at IGBMC (Institut de Génétique et de Biologie Moléculaire et Cellulaire) in Strasbourg, which is one of the



Michel van der Rest.



Jean-Pierre Samama.

leading European centres of biomedical research devoted to the study of higher eukaryotic genomes and to the control of genetic expression as well as the analysis of the function of genes and proteins. Jean-Pierre is a familiar face in the synchrotron radiation community and has extensively made use of synchrotron radiation crystallographic and solution scattering methods.

Paul Morin has been at SOLEIL since the beginning. His scientific interest is in the photoionization processes, particularly the relaxation processes, which occur on femtosecond timescales. In this context he has set up an optimized coincidence experiment (EPICEAAA) in order to simultaneously detect several charged particles (electrons-) and analyze their mass, energy and emission direction.



Paul Morin.

Australia and Taiwan sign an MOU

John Brumby, the Australian Minister for Innovation, and Taiwan's Minister Chien-Jen Chen, Chairman of the National Science Council of Taiwan, recently signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to promote scientific collaboration between the Australian Synchrotron and the National Synchrotron Radiation Research Centre (NSRRC) in Taiwan.

"Collaboration is increasingly crucial to advances in research, and building international partnerships will be a key part of the Australian Synchrotron's agenda", Mr Brumby said. "This agreement with NSRRC will enable both facilities to advance synchrotron techniques and form international teams to explore scientific issues of global significance." Minister Chien-Jen Chen said he was keen to build on existing relationships between Taiwanese and Australian scientists, "This bond between Taiwan and Australia will benefit both nations, and advance development of synchrotron techniques and technology".

Mr Brumby added that co-operation and collaboration were increasingly important to achieving scientific breakthroughs, "As science becomes more complex and more costly, enhancing Australia's global science links is essential", Mr Brumby said.

NSRRC Director Dr Keng Liang said the current Taiwan synchrotron was a lower energy machine than the Australian Synchrotron, so the MOU would facilitate reciprocal use of beamlines. "An Australian soft X-ray experimental station is currently installed at NSRRC and will be relocated to the Australian Synchrotron", Dr Liang said. "The new 3 GeV synchrotron being planned by Taiwan will also offer opportunities for collaboration with Australia."

current events

Synchrotron radiation shines at the 32nd Nathiagali summer college

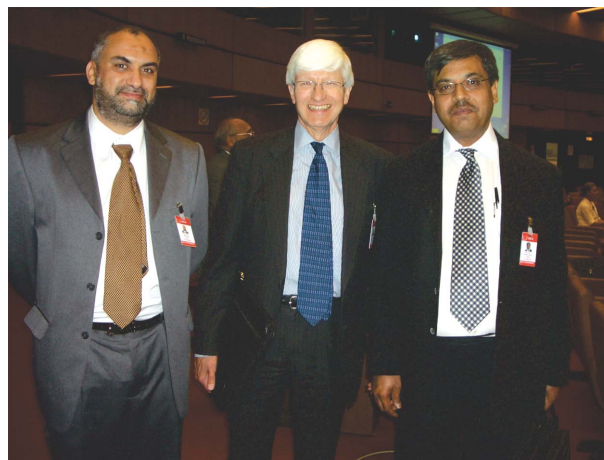
At 10000 ft the quiet resort of Nathiagali in the north of Pakistan was the venue of the 32nd summer college, which dedicated one week to synchrotron radiation production and utilization. The local organizing committee had selected some 50 of the most talented young scientists from the country as the college students. The synchrotron radiation experts included Swapan Chattopadhyay (Daresbury and Liverpool, formerly of Jefferson Laboratory), Janos Kirz and Zahid Hussain from Berkeley, and Paul Dumas from SOLEIL. A senior official from the Pakistani Government's planning commission outlined the plans for a synchrotron facility in Pakistan expected to be built by 2015. A 2–2.5 GeV storage ring with a circumference of 250–300 m and an emittance of 10–20 nm rad were considered to be the important outline parameters. A steering group comprising national and international experts has been set up, which is expected to provide the detailed outline specification in 12 months.



Participants and speakers at the 32nd Nathiagali summer college.

SESAME welcomes new team

At the tenth council meeting of SESAME (<http://www.sesame.org.jo/>) held at the IAEA headquarters in Vienna, the progress of the project was reported. The building will be ready for occupation within the next few months. Professor Herwig Schopper, who has been the founding President of the Council, will be stepping down next year and the council gave approval for the appointment of his successor, Professor Sir Chris Llewellyn Smith, FRS. Professor Smith is currently the Director of Culham Laboratories in Oxfordshire and has previously been the Director General of CERN. Council also approved the appointment of a new machine director (Amor Nadji, currently Accelerator Physics group leader at SOLEIL). At the previous Council meeting, it had given approval to the appointment of Science Director Hafeez Hoorani from Pakistan. The council was informed that the bending magnets of the storage ring will be tendered next February, a key milestone in reaching the target date of September 2011 for the start up of the machine.



Professor Sir Chris Llewellyn Smith, FRS (centre) is flanked by Amor Nadji (left) and Hafeez Hoorani (right).