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# Spatial Prediction of Deep Strike-Slip Earthquake and its Consequences

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**Abstract:** Causes of deep earthquake is still not very much clear to the scientific community till now. In the present paper we have tried to develop a mathematical model to understand the possible mechanism of such deep strike slip earthquake. We know that due to the pressure and temperature gradient, the rigidity of the material of the Earth gradually increases up to a certain depth from the free surface and then decreases suddenly to zero at the outer core. In the present paper the lithosphere-asthenosphere system is considered up to a depth of 200 km. from the free surface where rigidity is assumed to vary linearly with depth. We have tried to develop a model to investigate the effect of this variation of rigidity with depth on stress and strain accumulation in the lithosphere-asthenosphere system due to the movement across the long strike slip fault assumed to be situated in the elastic half-space and is assumed to be surface breaking. The associated boundary value problem is numerically solved by finite difference method in presence of discontinuity and a MATLAB program is developed. It is found that the continuous change of rigidity with depth has considerable effect on the nature of stress-strain accumulation /release in the system as compared to the elastic half-space and elastic layered model and the stress is accumulated/ released at a greater depth causing a deep strike slip earthquake.

**Keywords:** Aseismic Period, Depth Dependent Rigidity, Tectonic Process, Deep Strike-slip Earthquake, Spatial Prediction.

## I. INTRODUCTION

The cause of Deep Earthquake is not still known to the scientific community [16]. In this paper we have investigated the possible reason of such deep strike-slip earthquake and its consequences.

In the half-space elastic representation of the lithosphere-asthenosphere system the rigidity of the material of the earth is assumed to be constant throughout, where as in the layered model the rigidity or the viscosity of different layers were taken to be different with a suitable boundary condition at the interface. But the sudden changes of the parameters were not well explained. And also, it is observed in experimental result that the rigidity of the Earth crust continuously changes with depth.

In this research, one long strike-slip fault is chosen, located in an elastic half-space whose rigidity is continuously increasing with depth. A sudden slip occurs across the fault when accumulated shear stress exceeds certain threshold value of the local frictional force. The motion across the fault is driven by forces generated by mantle convection or similar tectonic processes.

A finite difference scheme for the corresponding Neuman boundary value problem in presence of discontinuity has been developed with suitable values of the model parameters for its numerical computational works. The spatial variation in stress-strain accumulation and release for both before and after movement across the fault are obtained using the observed data in [7], [17]. Also, the associated MATLAB program is developed.

The convergence and stability analysis of the associated finite difference scheme have also been done. Higher dimensional interpolation (Lagrange's Interpolation) and higher dimensional numerical differentiation are used for stress and strain calculation. The solution shows a significant change both in quantitative and qualitative behavior in the nature of displacement, stress and strain field as compared to the elastic half-space and elastic layered model.

In our present paper we have shown that the continuous change of rigidity of the Earth material may be one of the possible reasons for intermediate as well as deep Earthquake.

Also, spatial prediction of earthquake has been done.

In the earlier models, the Earth was represented by an elastic half space [3]-[5], [22], [23], [6], [40], [35], [31], [38], and/or elastic layer [41], [42], [32], [37], and/or elastic layer over viscoelastic half-space [30], [27], [9], [29], [12], [36], [26], [19], or viscoelastic layer over viscoelastic half-space [11].

## II. FORMULATION

One long, strike-slip, surface breaking, vertical fault  $F$  and width  $D$  is considered to be located in an elastic-half space with linearly increasing rigidity. Since the affected area, particularly for moderate earthquake is small as compared to the radius of the earth, a Cartesian coordinate system is chosen by selecting a point  $O$  on the strike of the fault as the origin,  $Y_1$  axis along the strike of the fault, the  $Y_2$  axis is as depicted in Figure 1 and the  $Y_3$  axis is directed vertically downward, the fault is therefore represented by  $F: (y_2 = 0, 0 \leq y_3 \leq D)$ . Let  $u$  be the displacement component along  $Y_1$  axis,  $e_{1j}, \tau_{1j}; j = 2, 3$  are the shear strain, shear stress components connected to strike slip motion and  $\mu(y_3)$  is the effective rigidity which is a continuous function of depth  $y_3$ , let  $\mu(y_3) = \mu_0(1 + k_e y_3)$ ,  $\mu_0$  is the rigidity of the free surface and  $k_e = 0.0016/\text{km.}$ , (the value of  $k_e$  is estimated by least square method).

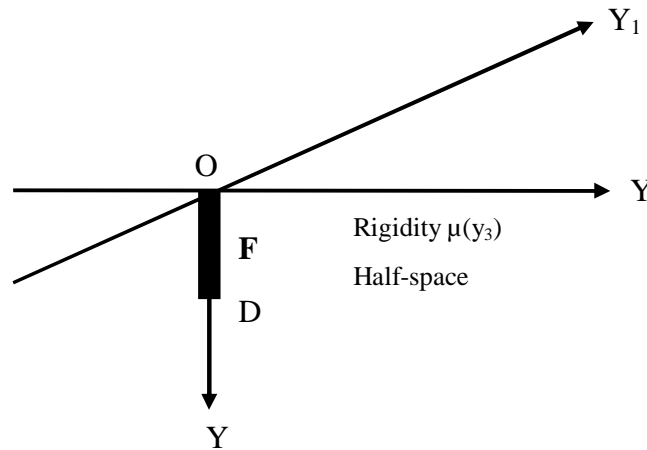


Fig. 1 The coordinate system with fault.

The constitutive equations associated with long strike slip movement for an elastic medium are taken as follows:

$$\tau_{12} = \mu(y_3)(e_{12}) = \mu(y_3) \left( \frac{\partial u}{\partial y_2} \right) \quad (1)$$

$$\tau_{13} = \mu(y_3)(e_{13}) = \mu(y_3) \left( \frac{\partial u}{\partial y_3} \right) \quad (2)$$

The governing stress equation: (assuming the deformation is quasi-static state, with inertia terms ignored and body forces are excluded since the motion is of strike-slip type).

$$\frac{\partial}{\partial y_2} (\tau_{12}) + \frac{\partial}{\partial y_3} (\tau_{13}) = 0 \quad (3)$$

We specify the boundary conditions assuming  $t = 0$  indicating a moment when the region is in aseismic state.

$$\tau_{12}(y_2, y_3) = \tau_{\infty}(t) \text{ for } |y_2| = d, y_3 \geq 0, t \geq 0 \quad (4)$$

On the free surface,  $y_3 = 0, (-\infty < y_2 < \infty, t \geq 0)$

$$\tau_{13}(y_2, y_3) = 0 \quad (5)$$

Also, as  $y_3 \rightarrow \infty (-\infty < y_2 < \infty, t \geq 0)$

$$\tau_{13}(y_2, y_3) = 0 \quad (6)$$

[Here  $\tau_{\infty}(t)$  represents the driving force resulting from mantle convection or other ongoing tectonic process acting at a large distance  $d$  from the fault].

## III. NUMERICAL SOLUTIONS

### A. Solutions before fault movements/dislocation:

Using equations (1) & (2) in (3), we get the boundary value problem

$$\nabla^2 u + \frac{k_e}{1+k_e y_3} \frac{\partial u}{\partial y_3} = 0 \quad (7)$$

We want to solve the boundary value problem (7) with the boundary conditions (4) to (6) by finite difference method.

We have the finite difference scheme as

$$\begin{aligned} & \left( 2 + 2 \frac{h^2}{k^2} + \frac{h^2}{k} \frac{k_e}{1 + k_e y_j} \right) u_{i,j} \\ = & u_{i+1,j} + u_{i-1,j} + \frac{h^2}{k^2} (u_{i,j+1} + u_{i,j-1}) + \frac{h^2}{k} \frac{k_e}{1 + k_e y_j} u_{i,j+1} \\ & x_i = ih, i = 0, \pm 1, \pm 2, \dots \dots \dots \pm 300 \\ & y_j = ik, j = 0, 1, 2, \dots \dots \dots 600 \end{aligned} \tag{8}$$

where h=step length along  $Y_2$  axis and k=step length along  $Y_3$  axis.

Boundary conditions before dislocation:

$$u_{i+1,j} - u_{i,j} = \frac{\tau_\infty(t)}{\mu_0(1 + k_e y_j)} \tag{9}$$

for  $i = \pm 300, j = 0, 1, 2, 3, \dots \dots \dots 600$

$$u_{i,j+1} - u_{i,j} = 0 \tag{10}$$

for  $i = 0, \pm 1, \pm 2, \dots \dots \dots \pm 300, j = 0, 600$

using the boundary conditions (9) & (10) in finite difference scheme (8) we get the modified finite difference scheme as

$$\left( 1 + \frac{h^2}{k^2} \right) u_{i,j} - \frac{h^2}{k^2} u_{i,j-1} - u_{i-1,j} = \frac{\tau_\infty(t)}{\mu_0(1+k_e y_j)} \tag{11}$$

Numerical solution shows that  $\tau_{12}$  increases over time and approaches to  $\tau_\infty(t)$  as  $t$  approaches to  $\infty$ , whereas  $\tau_{13}$  approaches to zero.

**B. Solutions after the movements/(dislocation) across the fault:**

With  $t = 0$  indicating the re-establishment of the aseismic state, stress accumulation resumes and after that the stress continues to accumulate and when  $t=T_1$  the stress component  $\tau_{12}$  (which governs the strikeslip motion) exceeds the local critical value  $\tau_c$ , the fault F begins to slip, thus we have a further condition is applied to characterize the resulting dislocation in displacement  $u$  caused by the slip as:

$$[u]_F = \nabla U f(y_3) H(t_1) \tag{12}$$

here,  $H(t_1)$  is the Heaviside function,  $t_1 = t - T_1$ ,  $\nabla U$  (slip across the fault) is taken to be constant,  $f(y_3)$  is the slip function which satisfies (A) and  $[u]_F$  is the discontinuity of  $u$  over the fault F represented by:

$$[u]_F = \lim_{(y_2 \rightarrow 0^+)} (u) - \lim_{(y_2 \rightarrow 0^-)} (u) \tag{13}$$

$(y_2 = 0, 0 \leq y_3 \leq D)$

Assuming geological conditions and fault properties are so that the shear stress component  $\tau_{12}$  exceeds a critical threshold value  $\tau_c$  (which depends on local frictional force) where  $\tau_c < \tau_\infty(t)$ , the fault F begins to slip.

For the resulting stress and strain to remain bounded, the slip function must obey the restrictions, described by [Mukhopadhyay et al. [1980]as:

- (B<sub>1</sub>) The slip reaches its maximum value at the free surface.
- (B<sub>2</sub>) The magnitude of the slip diminishes to zero as we approach to the lower edge of the fault ( $y_2 = 0, y_3 = D$ )

The slip function  $f(y_3)$  must fulfill the conditions stated above.

The solution of the modified boundary value problem is taken as,

$$\begin{aligned} u &= (u)_1 + (u)_2 \\ \tau_{1j} &= (\tau_{1j})_1 + (\tau_{1j})_2 \\ e_{1j} &= (e_{1j})_1 + (e_{1j})_2 \end{aligned}$$

where  $(u)_1, (\tau_{1j})_1, (e_{1j})_1$  respectively are displacement, stress, strain before the fault dislocation satisfying equations (1) to (6) and  $(u)_2, (\tau_{1j})_2, (e_{1j})_2; j=2, 3$  respectively are displacement, stress, strain after the fault dislocation satisfying the modified boundary value problem (12), (13) & (14).

The reformulated boundary value problem becomes

$$\nabla^2 (u)_2 + \frac{k_e}{1+k_e y_3} \frac{\partial (u)_2}{\partial y_3} = 0 \tag{14}$$

where  $(u)_2$  satisfies 2-dimensional Laplace equation (14).

With modified boundary conditions (12) & (13) and the rest of boundary conditions remains unchanged.

A finite difference approach is employed to solve the resulting boundary value problem (finite difference method with discontinuity) and get the modified finite difference scheme as:

$$\left(2 + 2\frac{h^2}{k^2} + \frac{h^2}{k} \frac{k_e}{1 + k_e y_j}\right) (u)_{2ij} = (u)_{2i+1, j} + (u)_{2i-1, j} + \frac{h^2}{k^2} [(u)_{2i, j+1} + (u)_{2i, j-1}] + \frac{h^2}{k} \frac{k_e}{1 + k_e y_j} (u)_{2i, j+1}$$

$$x_i = ih, \quad i = 0, \pm 1, \pm 2, \dots, \dots, \pm 300$$

$$y_j = jk, \quad j = 0, 1, 2, \dots, \dots, 600 \tag{15}$$

with the modified Boundary conditions after dislocation as:

$$(u)_{2i+1, j} - (u)_{2ij} = 0$$

for  $i = \pm 300, j = 0, 1, 2, 3, \dots, 600$  (16)

$$(u)_{2i, j+1} - (u)_{2ij} = 0$$

for  $i = \pm 1, \pm 2, \dots, \dots, \pm 300, j = 0, 600$  (17)

$$(u)_{2i, j+1} - (u)_{2ij} = \nabla Uf(y_j)$$

for  $i = 0, j = 0, 1, 2, 3, \dots, \dots, 600$  (18)

Using the boundary conditions (16) to (18) in(15), we get

$$(u_2)_{i, j} = \frac{1}{(1+\frac{h^2}{k^2})} [\nabla Uf(y_j) + (u_2)_{i-1, j} + \frac{h^2}{k^2} (u_2)_{i, j-1}] \tag{19}$$

### C. Analysis of Stability and Convergence:

Considering the linear partial differential equation

$$f_1 u_{y_2 y_2} + f_2 u_{y_3 y_3} + f_3 u_{y_2} + f_4 u_{y_3} + f_5 u = f_6 \text{ for a region } R,$$

The difference scheme is of the form

$$\beta_0 u((y_2)_i, (y_3)_j) + \beta_1 u((y_2)_i + h_1, (y_3)_j) + \beta_2 u((y_2)_i, (y_3)_j + h_2) + \beta_3 u((y_2)_i - h_3, (y_3)_j) + \beta_4 u((y_2)_i, (y_3)_j - h_4) = (f_6)_{ij} \tag{20}$$

where  $f_1, f_2, f_3, f_4, f_5, f_6$  are continuous functions of  $y_2$  and  $y_3$  and following [14], we get coefficient values as:

$$\beta_0 = (f_6)_{i, j} - \left[ \frac{1}{h_1 h_3} \{2(f_1)_{i, j} + (h_3 - h_1)(f_3)_{i, j}\} + \frac{1}{h_2 h_4} \{2(f_2)_{i, j} + (h_4 - h_2)(f_4)_{i, j}\} \right]$$

$$\beta_1 = \frac{2(f_1)_{i, j} + h_3(f_3)_{i, j}}{h_1(h_1 + h_3)}, \quad \beta_2 = \frac{2(f_2)_{i, j} + h_4(f_4)_{i, j}}{h_2(h_2 + h_4)}$$

$$\beta_3 = \frac{2(f_1)_{i, j} - h_1(f_3)_{i, j}}{h_1(h_1 + h_3)}, \quad \beta_4 = \frac{2(f_2)_{i, j} - h_2(f_4)_{i, j}}{h_2(h_2 + h_4)} \tag{21}$$

Applying difference scheme (8) at every node in the defined domain yields an algebraic system with an equal number of equations and unknowns, representable as a matrix equation.

$$AX=B \tag{22}$$

Under the following conditions

$$2(f_1)_{i, j} > \max[h_3 |(f_3)_{i, j}|, h_1 |(f_3)_{i, j}|]$$

$$2(f_2)_{i, j} > \max[h_2 |(f_4)_{i, j}|, h_4 |(f_4)_{i, j}|] \tag{23}$$

$$\text{We have } \beta_0 < 0 \text{ and } |\beta_0| > \beta_1 + \beta_2 + \beta_3 + \beta_4 \tag{24}$$

i.e.the coefficient matrix A has positive off-diagonal entries, negative diagonal entries, and is diagonally dominant. Therefore, matrix A is irreducible, and these properties lead us to assume that the converging nature of the algebraic system.

In our linear partial differential equation given by (7), we have  $f_1=f_2=1, f_3=f_5=f_6=0$  and  $f_4 = \frac{k_e}{1+k_e y_3}$  for square grids  $h=k$ .

So,the condition (23) is fulfilled for all values of  $y_3$  and  $k_e=0.0016/\text{km}$ .

An important point is that the elliptic equation approach based on support operators (which have applied in this finite difference scheme) that automatically gives the stability of the finite-difference schemes [39].

#### IV. NUMERICAL CALCULATIONS

Based on [1] and newer studies on rheological nature of crust and upper mantle of the Earth by [17], [35].

The model parameter values are taken as:  $\mu_0 = 3 \times 10^{10} \text{ N/m}^2$ .

$D = 10 \text{ km}$  (Fault depth from free surface; most major earthquake faults are found a depth of approximately 10 to 15 kilometres).

$\tau_\infty(t) = \text{Constant} = \tau_\infty = 2 \times 10^7 \text{ N/m}^2$ . [post-seismic data indicate that in most cases, the stress released during major earthquakes is around  $2 \times 10^7 \text{ N/m}^2$  or less; in rare instances, it may reach up to  $4 \times 10^7 \text{ N/m}^2$ ].

We take the slip function  $f(y_3) = (1 - \frac{3}{D^2}y_3^2 + \frac{2}{D^3}y_3^3)$  with  $\nabla U = 0.01 \text{ m}$ , fulfilling the restrictions described above in  $(B_1)$  to  $(B_2)$ .

MATLAB program

```

clc; clear; close all;
% Define grid parameters
i_min = -300; i_max = 300; % Range for i
j_min = 0; j_max = 600; % Range for j
h = 1; % Step size in x-direction
k = 1; % Step size in y-direction
% Grid size
Nx = i_max - i_min + 1;
Ny = j_max - j_min + 1;
% Initialize U(i,j) matrix with zeros
U = zeros(Nx, Ny);
% Define y_j values
yj = linspace(j_min, j_max, Ny); % Creates y-values in range [0, 600]
% Precompute constant term
r = (h^2) / (k^2);
% Finite Difference Iteration
for i = 2:Nx % Loop over i (x-direction)
for j = 2:Ny % Loop over j (y-direction)
% Compute source term
source_term = h * (2/3*1000) * (1 + 0.0016 * yj(j));
% Compute u(i,j) using the finite difference scheme
U(i,j) = (r * U(i,j-1) + U(i-1,j) + source_term) / (1 + r);
end
end
% Display computed matrix
disp('Computed U(i,j) values:');
disp(U);

```

#### V. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

##### A. Spatial variation before movement across the Fault

##### 1) Causes of Deep strike-slip Earthquake:

The reason of deep and intermediate strike-slip Earthquake is not clear to the seismologist [16]. From the Figure 2, it is observed that as we move down to earth the shear stress continues to accumulate at the greater depth. We thus may conclude that the continuous variation of rigidity with depth may be a possible reason of such deep-Earthquake.

##### 2) Spatial prediction of Earthquake:

In Figure 3, assuming the value of critical stress  $\tau_c = 200 \text{ bar}$ , we see that at the nearer points of the fault for example  $y_2 = -2$  kilometers the accumulated shear stress exceeds  $\tau_c$  at a depth 93km (approx..) i.e, the Deep-earthquake may occur. Similarly, the other deep earthquake may be predicted spatially. This spatial prediction of deep earthquake well agrees the data accessed on 26<sup>th</sup> May 2025 at 03:19:44 (IST), Lat: 24.21, Long: 94.44 (Myanmar), depth 96 km. (<https://seismo.gov.in>). Similarly, the spatial prediction of intermediate earthquake is also clear from Figure 3.

3) *Symmetry /anti-symmetry nature of displacement:*

From the Figure 4, we see that the displacement is not symmetric nor anti-symmetric with respect to  $y_2 = 0$  for all values of  $y_3 \geq 0$ . i.e, physically the opposite two block across the fault does not displace in the same ways.

B. *Spatial variation after dislocation along the Fault*

1) *Shear Stress variation with depth:*

From the Figure 5 it is observed that after the occurrence of deep strike slip earthquake the shear stress accumulation pattern drastically changes. Initially it accumulates at a higher rate near the free surface then decreases up to a certain depth (120km approx..), then again continues to accumulates at higher depth. Hence the possibility of shallow and intermediate earthquake (depth 5 to 80km.) is enhanced due to the deep earthquake.

2) *Symmetry /anti-symmetry nature of displacement:*

From the Figure 6 and Figure 7, we see that the symmetry and anti-symmetry nature of displacement about the fault remain unchanged as that before the fault movement but a quantitative change is observed and the displacement gradually decreases with distance from the fault and almost vanishes at distance  $y_2 = -200$ km.

Figure 10 & 11 shows the surface displacement after earthquake in the elastic two-layered model [32]. The displacement is observed to be anti-symmetric across the fault and is of magnitude of few centimeters whereas in our model the surface displacement is not symmetric nor anti-symmetric i.e, a qualitative change is observed. Also, in our model the displacement is of order few millimeters. Therefore, a quantitative change is also observed in our model.

3) *Displacement with the Variation of depth of the fault:*

To locate the fault (specially for oceanic active buried fault) and to find its depth of the fault is a technologically challenging task but by measuring free surface strain/displacement using our scheme, we can easily do it and Figure 8 shows, the free surface displacement due to different depth of the fault. It is observed that as depth of the fault increases the displacement decreases.

4) *Variation of displacement of different values of Slip:*

From the Figure 9, it indicates that with increasing slip, displacement increases with depth and attains its maximum near the middle of the fault and then decreases attaining minimum near the bottom edge of the fault then after again increases with depth.

5) *Surface Shear Strain Variation:*

Figure 12 indicates, the magnitude of shear strain at the free surface is of order  $10^{-4}$  which well agrees with the observed data [16] and [37]. Therefore, our depth dependent model well agrees with observed ground deformation.

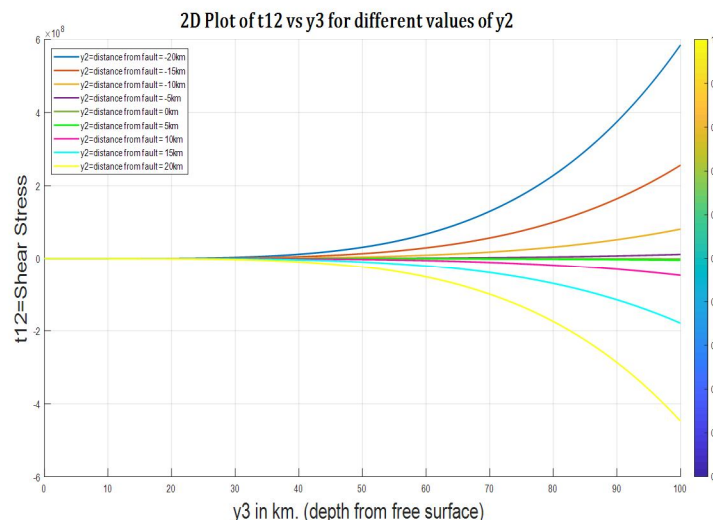


Fig. 2 Shear Stress  $\tau_{12}$  vs.  $y_3$  for different values of  $y_2$ (before fault dislocation)

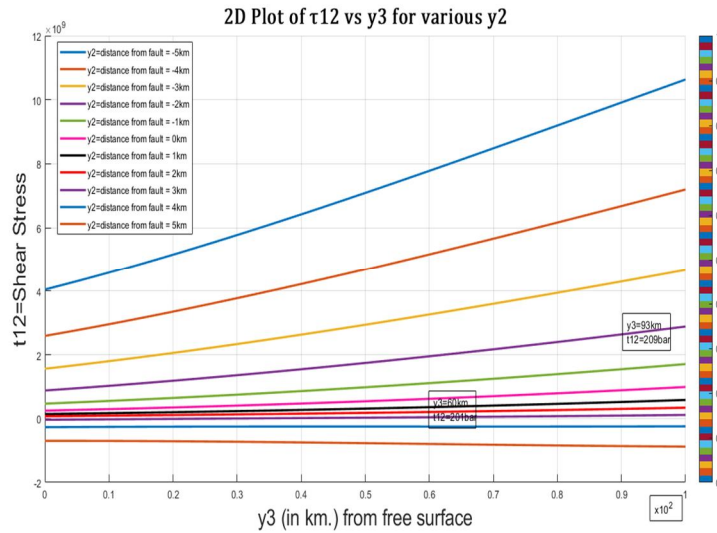


Fig. 3 Shear Stress  $\tau_{12}$  vs.  $y_3$  for different values of  $y_2$  (before fault dislocation)

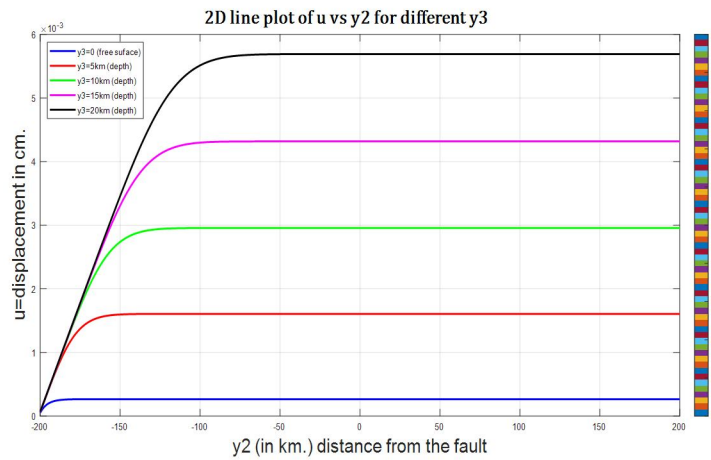


Fig. 4 Displacement  $u$  vs.  $y_2$  for different values of  $y_3$  (before fault dislocation)

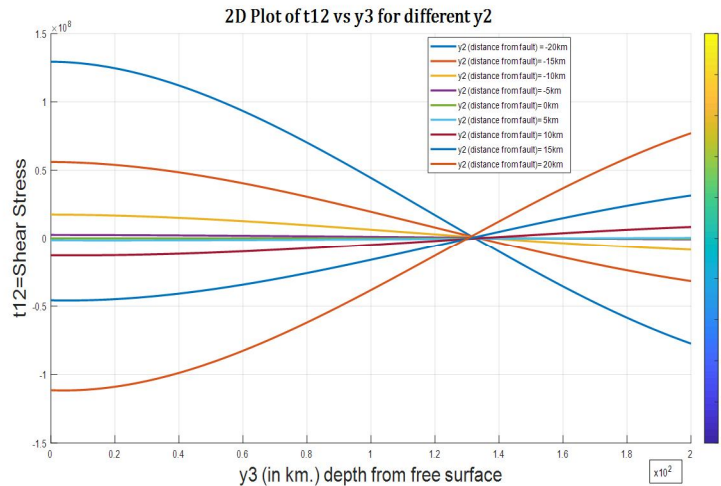


Fig. 5 Shear Stress  $\tau_{12}$  vs.  $y_3$  for different values of  $y_2$  (after fault dislocation)

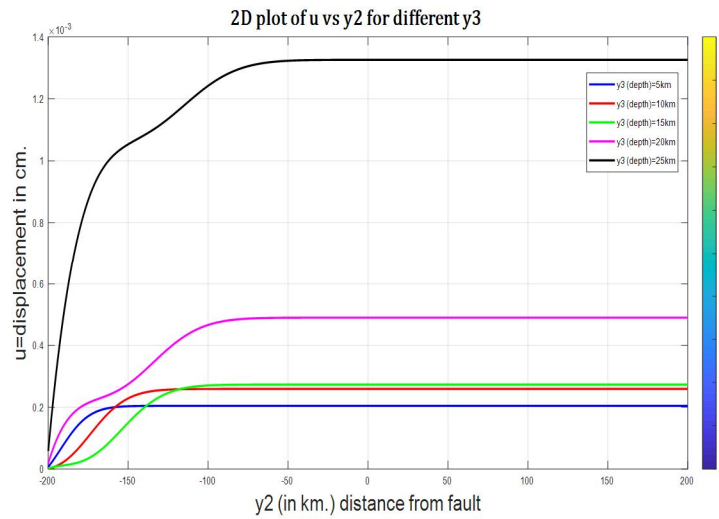


Fig. 6 Displacement  $u$  vs.  $y_2$  for different values of  $y_3$  (after fault dislocation)

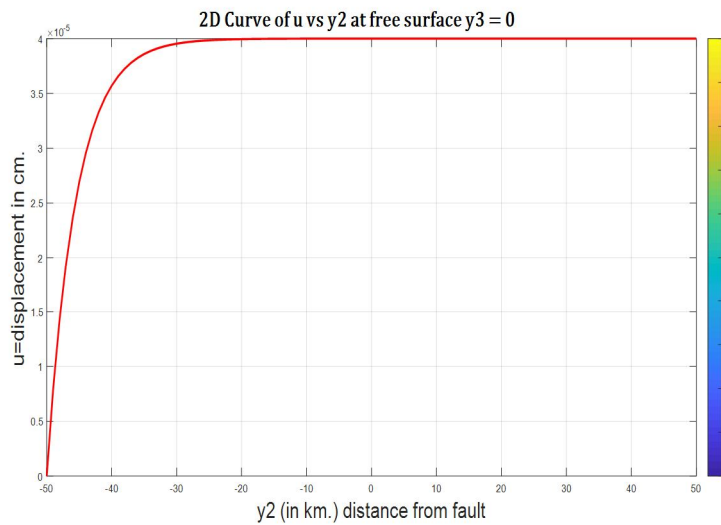


Fig. 7 Displacement  $u$  vs.  $y_2$  at free surface  $y_3=0$  (after fault dislocation)

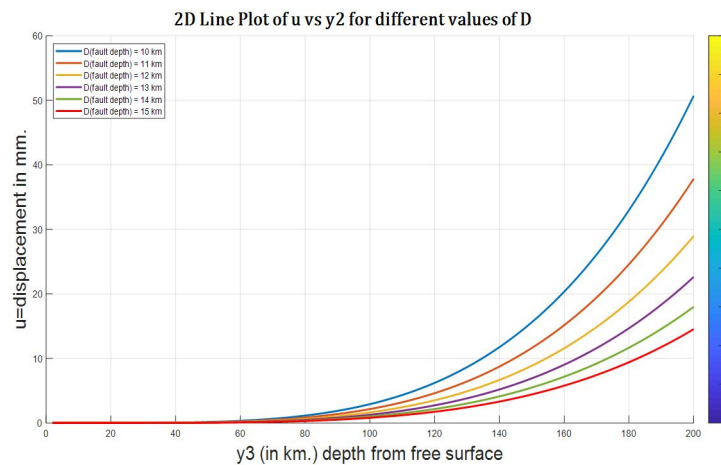


Fig. 8 Displacement  $u$  vs.  $y_3$  for different values of the depth  $D$  of the fault (after fault dislocation)

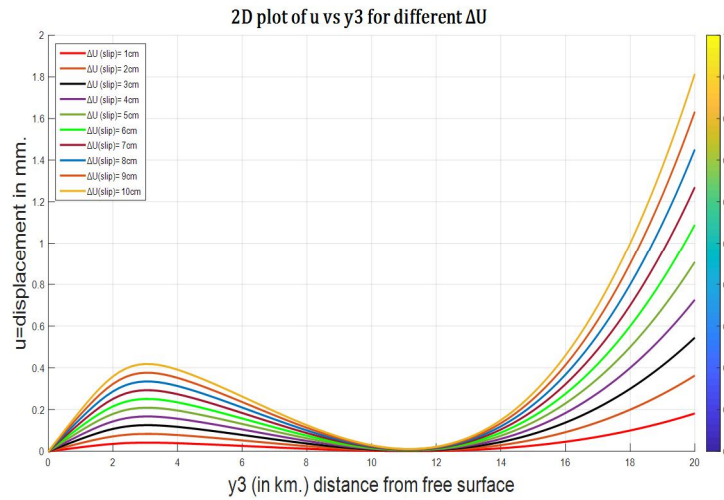


Fig. 9 Displacement  $u$  (in cm.) vs.  $y_3$  for different values of slip  $\Delta U$  (in cm).

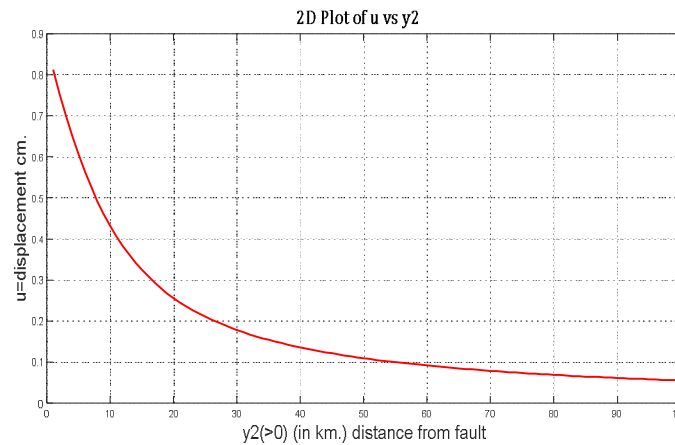


Fig. 10 Surface Displacement  $u$  vs  $y_2(>0)$  (distance from the fault) after earthquake

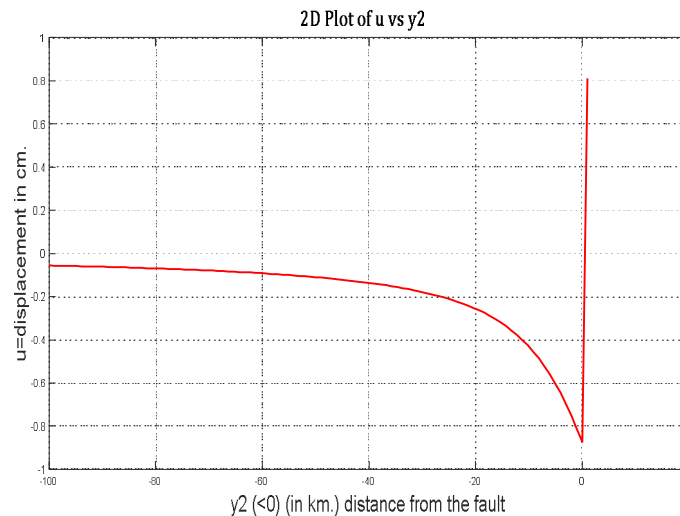


Fig. 11 Surface Displacement  $u$  vs  $y_2 (<0)$  (distance from the fault) after earthquake

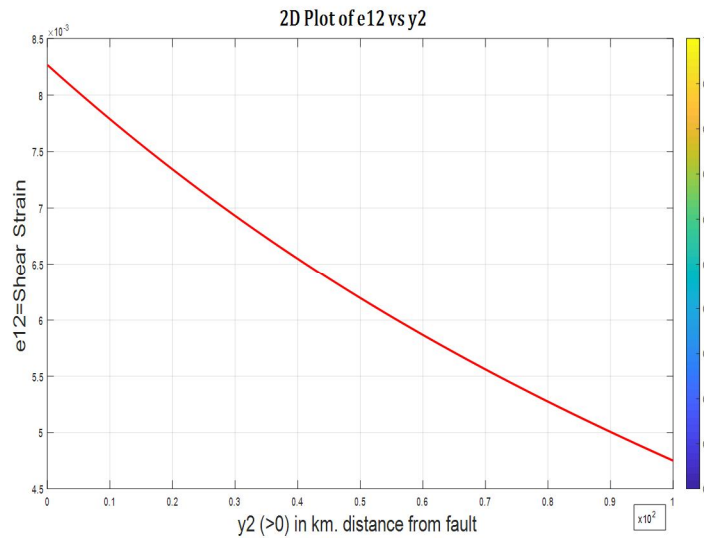


Fig. 12 Surface Shear Strain  $e_{12}$  vs  $y_2 (>0)$  (distance from the fault) after earthquake

## VI. CONCLUSION

The variation of rigidity with depth from the free surface of the Earth may be responsible for greater rate of accumulation of elastic energy at the greater depth leading to deep strike slip Earthquake and as a consequence, the deep earthquake triggers the possibility of shallow earthquakes. This spatial prediction of deep earthquake well agrees with the data accessed on 26th May 2025 at 03:19:44 (IST), Lat: 24.21, Long: 94.44 (Myanmar), depth 96 km. (<https://seismo.gov.in>). Similarly, the spatial prediction of intermediate earthquake is also clear from Figure 3.

## VII. ACKNOWLEDGMENT

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