

## **CONVENOR'S REPORT OF IWC'99**

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The International Welding Conference (IWC'99) was held in the India Habitat Centre, Lodi Road, New Delhi between 15th - 17th February 1999. The Conference was organised by the Indian Institute of Welding (IIW) and was supported by Confederation of Indian Industry (CII).

The inauguration of the Conference took place on 15th Feb. '99 at the main auditorium in presence of Mr. C. R. Prasad, Chairman & Managing Director, Gas Authority of India Ltd. (GAIL), New Delhi, who inaugurated the Conference. Besides Mr. Prasad, Mr. M. K. Mittal, Director-Engg., R&D, BHEL, New Delhi was present as a Guest of Honour. The lighting of the lamp for the occasion and eloquent addresses by the dignitaries in presence of about 500 invitees & delegates made the inaugural session highly inspiring and set the tone for the subsequent sessions. Awards were presented to recipients of NWS'97. After the inaugural session, Keith Hartley Memorial Lecture - '99 on "Advanced Material and Joining Processes for Boiler & Pressure Vessel Applications" was presented by Mr. V. K. Gopinath, General Manager - Incharge, BHEL, Trichy, followed by Sir L. P. Mishra Memorial Lecture - '99 on "Human Resources Development in Welding Technology - Some Issues & Strategies for the next Decade" presented by Prof. Dr. G. L. Dutta, IIT, Kharagpur. Both the speakers of the Memorial Lectures covered their respective areas adequately, which was extremely informative.

The Technical Sessions started in the afternoon of 15th Feb. '99 in the main auditorium at Jacaranda and Silver Oak Halls of India Habitat Centre (IHC). The Technical Session Committee had prepared a program schedule in a booklet form which was handy for delegates to carry and select the venue in which he / she was interested to participate. There were 119 technical papers, out of which 98 were selected for oral presentation in the Technical Session, while 21 were selected for Poster Session.

This is the first time in India that, in the field of Welding we had so many overseas speakers from various countries in the world to present their papers. A few of the topics presented by such speakers were on rare subjects - e.g., welding & cutting in a sustainable world, a vision of IIW's role in various world regions & developing countries etc. The leading experts from various countries of the world were presenting their papers on various advanced topics. The Indian authors from BHEL-WRI, Trichy, IITs, user industries, manufacturers of welding consumable & equipment, IGCAR, Kalpakkam and many such organisations have also presented papers of high standard. The facilities for projection by computer, overhead & slide projectors with very good arrangements in the auditoriums of Habitat World has made the papers highly attractive and the delegates were benefited. In the Technical Sessions, during the tea or lunch break, there were enough deliberations between the authors and delegates and the atmosphere was truly professional.

The number of delegates attending the Conference was in excess of 350, which included the last minute registrations. All delegates were presented with two volumes of Technical Proceedings inside a briefcase; besides mementos given to authors, Session Chairmen were attractive having ethnic values. All delegates were called for a dinner on first night on 15th Feb. '99 hosted by the IIW, which was supported by a few organisations and everyone enjoyed the hospitality in open air atmosphere, which was pleasant in the mid-month of Feb.'99.

The final day program in the afternoon on 17th Feb.'99 was "Valedictory Function", which was chaired by Mr. S. Samidas, Head, WRI and Chairman of Technical Session Sub-Committee. The notable feature of the Valedictory Function was the summing-up speech by Mr. D. S. Honavar, who has complimented the Organising Committee for having done such an excellent Conference to make it a memorable one. The panel discussion consisting of experts from the industry, consultants and overseas leaders in welding answered a lot of questions & queries by the delegates, which could not be raised during the Technical Sessions. It appears that, welding cannot remain as an isolated area of Engineering Technology and today, the industry would like to know the entire area of fabrication, design, metallurgy, quality control and similar such topics. The type of questions asked in the panel reflected that we should have a wider radius of subjects in the next Conference of International standard.

All the Sub-committees have done their respective task meticulously and in particular, the work done by the Venue Sub-committee, Technical Sub-committee, Technical Session Sub-committee, Registration Sub-committee and Central Secretariat are worth-mentioning. The support by CII and staff of Habitat World in making facilities available of any kind is specially appreciated.

S. K. Burman  
Covenor - IWC'99 & President, IIW