

Imagine an august gathering of international scientists, engineers, technologists, welding professionals and acolytes, numbering well over 350, participating in brainstorming sessions on Welding science and technology spread over 3 days – and that is what you would have seen in the International Welding Conference in New Delhi on 15-17 February'99 (IWC'99). Overall, this gala occasion with the deep involvement of a large body of people was analogous to a symphony produced over 3 consecutive days.

A total of 98 technical papers presented orally with 21 more in the poster session highlighted many demanding areas of Welding technology in practice world-wide. Indeed, apparent was the perspective of this applied branch of engineering technology fast becoming the requirement of the fabrication industries in general. Though research and development furthering the frontline activities in welding science and technology dominated the papers, the exigencies for this technology felt by the industries were also underscored. The gap between demand and supply, both in regard to welding consumables and techniques of application of the technology, is an urgent issue, as Mr. D. S. Honavar has pointed out in his lively summing-up of the proceedings of the conference, in which he has predicted the share of MIG/MAG welding at 20% by the year 2000-2001, which is a pointer in the right direction. What is equally noteworthy has been articulated by Prof. G. L. Datta in the Sir L. P. Mishra Memorial Lecture - 1999 delivered by him on HRD, in which Prof. Datta identified the difficulties in the availability of trained manpower necessary for our industry to confidently progress into the next millennium; this aspect needs to be addressed adequately and now.

The role of the IIW in this regard is no different from other such institutes at home and abroad (ref: this page in Oct'98 issue). Mr. V. K. Gopinath, in his Keith Hartley Memorial Lecture - 1999 has also emphasised the importance BHEL attaches to the in-line HRD programme, which is an example for emulation by others. It is hoped that the appropriate authorities will then be moved to take necessary action. May it be that AICTE is seriously considering such a take-off ! The history of BHEL since its inception in 1956, depicted interestingly by Mr. Gopinath, has been one of following a widely appreciated path of development in tune with the times. His planning of the Value Addition Phase for a product, for example, emphasises the needs of the customer, which is a straight talk.

The delegates have had the opportunity to share a wealth of information exchanged audio-visually. This Journal, on its part, intends to selectively publish the papers presented at the conference in the coming issues of the journal, starting with April'99, for the benefit of those members who could not make it to the conference.

Globally, considerable efforts are being made by concerned researchers to improve upon diverse energy consuming technologies, and welding is no exception. In a paper on the SAW process, the authors report on the development of a simple mathematical model using known SAW variables (Circuit Voltage, wire feed rate & welding speed) - a predictive approach for different types of fillet joint welding. Their conclusion, that the model could be used with reasonable accuracy with pre-set welding parameters ultimately producing sound fillet joints in C-Mn steel plate and eliminating energy waste in the process, needs further investigation. In a paper on Brazing Review, the author reviews various metal joining practices by brazing - a time-tested technique as old as metallurgy itself. In this review, the author details brazing processes step by step, and also includes a utility based list of brazing filler metals and their application in general, which could be handy for the brazing fraternity.

With this issue bringing to you the proceedings of the just concluded IWC'99, we wish you a good reading.

Sd/-
P. Majumdar - Editor