

FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

"Time and tide wait for none...". Those wise words could be relevant in connection with welding education in India. The need for skilled personnel is pressing in industries as also in the centres of learning. Obviously, it only makes sense when trained personnel take over the wheels whether in industries or in the class rooms.

Post-independence developments in the country as a result of industrialisation, along with the emergence of a few centres of academic excellence generally have brought into focus a chronic shortage of skilled manpower for the development programmes undertaken. This has more or less been the situation during the past half a century. One particular industry, namely the fabrication industry, with a pivotal role to play in all industries, probably has suffered the most. It has been hit hard due to the shortage of skilled personnel.

Welding engineers and technologists, much as the 'man with the torch in hand' are not only in short supply for the existing demand, but their spectrum of skill, both theoretical and practical, is also disparate being not uniform in regard to their conceptual knowledge of the subject. This is mainly due to the absence of a standard uniform curriculum of the subject matter of Welding Technology. Individuals today, in the main, are just 'trained for the job' which is quite different from being 'qualified for the job', which is what should be the objective of a national curriculum.

In his paper "Developing a National Skill and Professional Welding Education Standard in India", the author Sri Subhendu Chaudhuri (featured in this issue of IWJ) has highlighted the need for a uniform, standardised national curriculum at different levels in Welding Technology. Sri Chaudhuri has elucidated the recent developments in Welding education worldwide while investigating in depth the current inadequacies in welding education in our country at large. It is worthwhile to note the available facilities in our country, as described in the paper, in contrast with the recent global developments, so that a conceptually biased standard & uniform Welding education programme could be initiated. 'Parity' with the educational and training programmes going on in the industrially developed countries would be necessary. To gain access to the global market-place and to retain it, the essential improvement in product quality could only come from our parity in the education and training programme with that of the developed West.

Sri Chaudhuri's projected idea for the development of Welding education taking a national perspective calls for our consideration with the seriousness it deserves. From our experience, limited as it is, there may be bureaucratic hurdles (in the name of 'regulation') to overcome towards accomplishment of the programme, which may make the task rather unenviable. But it nevertheless deserves all the support we in the IIW can provide. It is quite a long-shot perspective and the Indian Institute of Welding has to initiate the programme now, rather than lament later for letting time slip by.

An apology : On this page of the January issue of the IWJ we inadvertently missed mentioning something important, for which we apologise. We now take this opportunity to felicitate Sri A. K. Mukherjee who was elected as the Hony. Secretary of The Indian Institute of Welding. We look forward to a dynamic year with Sri Mukherjee's guidance.

Sd/- Dr. P. Majumdar
Editor