



## Whither Welding Industry ?

In the backdrop of the unprecedented and much talked about global "recession" and "meltdown", it is interesting and heartening for us to know that there has been 100% stall booking in the "Weld India Expo 2009" exhibition being held in Mumbai on 4-7 February 2009 being organized by our institute.

The application of the welding process is increasing day by day. In India, the welding industry is estimated to be a more than Rs 1,000 crore business today, characterized by the presence of a large number of small players as well as some big manufacturers, including international companies. It is estimated that there are around 1000 odd players in the industry out of which around 30% are quite active.

Even if the global recession has hit the welding industry in India, perhaps the export oriented organizations are more affected, whereas the domestic demand and growth are not greatly hit. There were not many projects coming up during the last few years. Now the situation looks like improving as some projects are coming up in refinery & power and infrastructural sectors like Railways and Roadways which involve lot of welding are doing reasonably well.

Most important however, is that the welding product manufacturers and service providers look confident that things will look up and up and that perhaps explains the interest of the exhibitors.

However, in order to take full advantage of the emerging opportunities the local industry will need to meet a number of challenges to ensure its competitiveness. These challenges include keeping abreast of international trends and developments in welding technology, processes and materials, and proactively tackling the serious skills shortage in welding.

Our institute is addressing all the issues in a big way. First of all a 5 year strategic plan has been drawn up, and firm steps have been initiated in the important area of training and certification. **Recent appointment of the first ATB near Kolkata and the first ATI near Bhubaneswar can indeed be considered to be significant milestones in this respect.** Around 150 welding professionals have already acquired International Welding Diplomas through transition arrangements of ANB India and every year around 15-20 persons are qualifying for the AMIIW degree recognized by the ministry of HRD. Also, hundreds of welders are being trained by the different branches of our institute. However we are now trying to streamline and consolidate the activities, and take the challenge of meeting the requirement of technical and skilled manpower of the industries. This is also being done by partnership of private institutes and collaboration with international societies and it is hoped that our institute will succeed in our role as the premier professional institute of the country.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "P. K. Das". The signature is fluid and cursive.

**P. K. Das**

Editor

Email: iwjedit@rediffmail.com