

**RECORD NOTES OF WORKSHOP ON
STRENGTHENING INDUSTRY-ACADEMIA INTERFACE (SIAI)**

April 19, 2016

A one-day workshop on Steel Industry-Academia Interface (SIAI) was organized on April 19, 2016 by RDCIS, SAIL, Ranchi, which was attended by 33 organisations/institutions representing leading Indian steel makers, Academia and Research Laboratories both from Public and Private Sector.

The workshop was chaired by Mrs. Aruna Sundararajan, Secretary, Ministry of Steel and convened by Shri S. S. Mohanty, Director (Technical), SAIL. Secretary, Ministry of Steel pointed out that Indian Industry and Academia have, for long, been operating in different “silos” of disjointed working without supplementing and complementing one another. Although, in the last few years, there have been sporadic attempts at bringing some synergy through cooperative working and collaborative research programs aided by Steel Development Fund (SDF) or internal MoUs/ MoAs, there has been no structured cooperation owing to a lack of a National-level platform for sustainable interactions. She emphasised the strong and impending need for putting in place a robust Industry-Academia Interface to benefit steel industry and society, at large. In particular, she cited the frequently-drawn comparison between “compartmentalized working” of Boston-based East Coast companies vis-à-vis the “open innovation” approach of Silicon Valley in North America and how it has benefited the Silicon Valley in the long run.

The workshop featured extensive deliberations between the Indian steel industry experts, academicians and scientists, who presented their expectations from the interface and shared their ideas on enhancing synergy, roadmap for future collaborations and conception of National-level platform. It was for the first time that many experts representing the Steel Industry, Academia and Research Organisations had convened under one roof for a close tripartite interaction.

At the end of the workshop, Mrs. Aruna Sundararajan, Secretary, Ministry of Steel directed the gathering to draft an approach note to facilitate the following:

1. To establish a sustainable National level platform for enhanced scientific/ technological cooperation and exchange between Steel Industry, Academia

and Research Organisations with support from Ministry of Steel, Government of India.

2. To conceive strategies for evolving

- National Programs of relevance to steel industry and society, at large.
- Indigenous disruptive technology development programs through closer involvement of academia, industry, engineering organisations and R&D laboratories for prototype development and upscaling to pilot/ industrial scale.
- Small projects/ initiatives of specific relevance to industry similar to incumbent Industry-Academia collaborations but in a more structured and institutionalised manner.
- Initiatives to improve synergy between industry and academia through periodic structured meetings, faculty visits to plants for plant scale exposure, technical talks by industry & academia, attracting M.Tech. and Ph.D. scholars for steel industry through sponsorships & employment opportunities, student internships/ scholarships etc.

A coordination team comprising following members was constituted to guide the preparation of the draft approach note for SIAI platform:

- Prof. Ranjit K. Ray, IEST, Shibpur
- Prof. N. B. Ballal, IIT Bombay
- Prof. P. K. Ghosh, IIT Roorkee
- Prof. T. A. Abinandanan, IISc Bangalore
- Dr. S. Tarafder, CSIR-NML, Jamshedpur
- Dr. T. Venugopalan, Tata Steel, Jamshedpur
- Dr. Marutiram Kaza, JSW Ltd., Bellary
- Mr. Deepak Gupta, Essar Steel, Hazira
- Dr. S. Chatterjee, MECON Ltd, Ranchi
- Dr. B. K. Jha / Dr. Ramen Datta, RDCIS, SAIL, Ranchi (Convenor)



(Dr. Ramen Datta)

Convenor, SIAI

21st April 2016