

IMnI 2008 Conference Welcome Speech: Chairman Alastair Stalker

It is a great pleasure for me to welcome you to the first International Manganese Institute Conference ever to be held in India. My special thanks go to two of our Indian members, notably MOIL and Sarda Energy for having helped us organize the Conference and also to IFAPA for their facilitation effort. Also warm thanks to Maithan Alloys and Sarda Energy for sponsoring part of the entertainment programme.

We have all been aware of India's manganese industry for many years but to a large extent it was self contained -- from time to time we would see increases in Mn alloys exports but it was never really an important market for Western producers of ore or alloy or a very significant supplier to world markets.

How times have changed!

As one of the so-called BRIC countries, India is going through an economic transformation. GDP growth of 9% and 9.6% over the last two years has been impressive and although experts are revising 2008 growth to a mere 7%, in the light of the global economic problems this is not to be sneezed at.

Of course, this GDP growth with the concomitant spend on infrastructure has fuelled steel demand and domestic production has already passed 53 Mill tpa. Analysts are predicting that by 2020 this steel production could surpass 200 Mill tpa. And of course, where there is increasing steel production there is an increased requirement for manganese.

India already has a substantial manganese industry. Mn ore production is approaching 3 Mill tpa and Mn ore imports will probably reach 700kt this year. Mn alloy production will be in excess of 1.3 Mill t. However, where will India's Mn come from in the future and how will India integrate with the rest of the World's industry?

This is where the IMnI can play a role. This annual conference is recognized as the premier Mn event worldwide where major Mn industry players and invited experts discuss the issues affecting and influencing our industry. With our increasingly sophisticated statistics service and our initiative with regard to Mn sustainability we can provide the Indian Mn industry with the tools and information to make the correct decisions for the future.

So sit back and enjoy the conference where we will discuss India and its steel and manganese industries in depth as well as other topics of importance. And going forward we at the IMnI look forward to welcoming more Indian producers in addition to the seven who are already members.