

Editorial

It is indeed a proud privilege to bring out this Special Issue of the Journal containing the Proceedings of the National Seminar on Tribology and Terotechnology (NSTT) held on March 13-14, 1987 at the Jadavpur University, Calcutta.

This National Seminar was organised by the Department of Mechanical Engineering, Jadavpur University in collaboration with the

- i) Department of Science and Technology, Government of India,
- ii) University Grants Commission, Government of India,
- iii) CESC Limited
- iv) MECON, Ranchi and
- v) West Bengal Government.

Every year large number of Seminars/Conferences/Workshops are organised in the country on different topics of Engineering and Technology. Of these only the limited ones are held regularly, for instance, the Annual Meeting of the Indian Science Congress, Annual Conference of the Fluid Mechanics and Fluid Power, All India Conference on Engineering Materials and Equipment (AICEME) etc. and are organised by the Professional Organisations/Bodies while the rest not in the regular category are usually organised by all sorts of Bodies/Organisations, For various reasons the number of the Semi-

nars/Conferences/Workshops in the second category far exceed the regular ones. The Seminar/Conference/Workshop in the second category is usually not intended to take a regular place in the professional and naturally is short lived. The picture is more or less same in the International level as well.

The papers read and discussed in those Seminars/Conferences/Workshops are often printed as Proceedings which have obviously limited circulation. There are other shortcomings of such publications. The papers are often printed without proper review or evaluation for which many of these papers hardly conform to the established norms. Often good quality contributions get mixed with papers and/or reports which have little or no permanent value in the field. The authors do not receive appropriate criticism or credit due to them for their contributions. On the part of the researchers to keep track of everything happening around is almost an impossible task not to speak of these type of almost unknown publications. On the whole very few people would benefit from these publications.

To overcome such happening which is neither desirable nor wanted some Organisers often ask the authors to present the materials of their contributions at the Seminars/Conferences/Workshops for they do not intend to publish the Proceedings. Some times they

ask reknowned experts (may or may not be from the Organisers) to prepare an authentic but brief overview highlighting the salient contributions at the Seminar/Conference/Workshop. This report is then published in the form of a scientific paper/note in existing Journals. The authors are obviously free to publish the papers according to their own choice.

Besides these two there exists another system in practice. The papers read and discussed at the Seminar/Conference/Workshop are published as a Special or Regular Issue of a Journal. A Journal in circulation is usually known among researchers and professionals. A regular Journal properly assesses and scrutinises any paper before publication. This system of publication has commonly received general acceptance.

The Organising Committee of the N. S. T. T. have decided to publish the Proceedings of the National Seminar in accordance with the last mentioned method. They have approached the Association of Engineers, India—the oldest professional Body in the country—to publish the proceedings of the National Seminar in the Journal of the Association as a Special Volume. The Journal of the Association of Engineers, India has been in circulation for well over 60 years and has a reasonably wide readership in differnt parts of the world. The authors of papers and the delegates at the N. S. T. T., welcomed the move and, in fact, even have extended their appreciations to all concerned in advance.

The Association of Engineers, India in their turn have accepted the proposal without

any hesitation since they believe, in services and works that uphold the Profession. Such a practice is definitely a better method to bring into the notice of the researchers and professionals around about the proceedings of unknown but important new Seminars/Conferences/Workshops. As a gesture of goodwill the Association have also agreed to bring out the proceedings of the N. S. T. T. as a Special Volume of their Journal on no-profit no-loss basis.

It may not be out of place to point out that authors of scientific papers/articles in the country often do not enjoy the idea of evaluation/review of their works. The trend is not only unethical but also doing much harm to the profession. Various factors and reasons are believed to be responsible for the authors to develop some sort of distaste towards review, refereeing and assessment of contribution. The prevailing practice of “research and publication” in many cases has been eroding the very base of professional confidence and trust on which progress and development of a nation depend. There cannot be any denying that crisis of confidence has engulfed the professionals(1, 2)*. No wall is hard to pierce as the attitude of complacency and false ego. The professionals and for that matter the professional Bodies in the country have to shake off their passive role and indifference to all these. The Association of Engineers, India have, in fact, called upon a number of times its Members and Professionals to consider these important issues confronting the Profession seriously. In the 15th AICEME the Association devoted a full Technical Session

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1. Bose, B : Research and Professional Bodies, Jnl. Assoc. Engineers, Proc. 15th AICEME, pp. 87-93, July, 1986.
 2. Lakshman, N : Why do our scientists commit suicide. The Illustrated Weekly of India, Dec. 14-20, pp. 14-17, 1986.

on 'Professional Ethics'. Unfortunately neither the Professionals nor the professional Bodies seem to be very serious on these issues. It would be suicidal if we fail to appreciate and realise the impacts of these problems on profession. We will have to take serious attitude to overcome 'Crisis of Confidence' and 'Lack of professionalism' before it is too late; for there cannot be any short-cut way to achieve lasting success. And either confi-

dence or professionalism could hardly be thrust upon on any.

There were sixteen papers read and presented at the Seminar. Those papers considered worth for publication after appropriate review and refereeing, are published. Abstracts of other papers read at the Seminar are also printed.