

Participation in the workshop on “Project opportunities in building materials” organized by the MSME Development Institute, Chennai February 19, 2009, Chennai

A workshop on ‘Project opportunities in building materials’ was organized by the MSME Development Institute (MSME-DI), Chennai at Chennai on 19 February 2009. Around 80 entrepreneurs drawn from various districts of Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka participated in the workshop. The basic objective of the workshop was to provide a platform for dissemination of project information and technological innovations in the field of building materials and their commercialization methodologies for the benefit of prospective entrepreneurs. The topics covered in the workshop included project identification, sourcing of new technologies, sourcing of machinery & equipment, and technology transfer methodologies.

Mr G Santhanam, IAS, Industries Commissioner & Director of Industries & Commerce, Government of Tamil Nadu presided over the function. Mr S.Sivagnanam, Director, MSME-DI, welcomed the guests and participants, following which Professor M. Lakshmi pathy, Head of Department of Civil Engineering, SRM Institute of Science & Technology, Chennai delivered the key note address. Chief Guest Dr Shailesh Kumar Agrawal, Executive Director, BMTPC (Building Material Technology Promotion Council), New Delhi, spoke on the technically feasible and commercially viable processes that have been developed by BMTPC which are available for commercial exploitation.

Three technical sessions followed the inaugural session. Mr N Vasudevan, Fellow, TERI, presented the possibilities and potential for technology upgradation, especially in the area of production of resource-efficient bricks such as perforated bricks, hollow blocks and fly ash bricks. Dr K G K Warriar, Scientist, IIIST (National Institute for Interdisciplinary Science & Technology, a constituent laboratory of the Council for Scientific & Industrial Research), Thiruvananthapuram described the process of developing novel building material components and the possibilities for commercialization. Dr Sukhdeo R. Karade, Senior Scientist, CBRI (Central Building Research Institute), Roorkee presented the entrepreneurial prospects in building material technologies developed by the institute. Mr J A Desai, Managing Director, J A Desai Ferrocements, highlighted the potential to use ferro cement as an alternative building material.

Dr Swapan Kumar Das, Scientist, CGCRI (Central Glass and Ceramic Research Institute), Kolkata presented technologies to manufacture cost-effective building materials utilizing industrial solid wastes, and the recent R&D initiatives undertaken by CGCRI. Professor R Malathi, Head of Department of Civil Engineering, Kongu Engineering College, Erode, spoke on ‘*paper-crete bricks*’. Dr Manu Santhanam, Assistant Professor, IIT (Indian Institute of Technology), Chennai focused on special

concretes for modern construction. Mr P Krishna Pillai, Scientist, NIIST presented developments in red clay-based building materials. The technical sessions were followed by a panel discussion chaired by the Director MSME- DI, Chennai. The event provided a platform for the participants to obtain and share information on developments in the building materials sector.