

ISSDA Facilitating Stainless Steel Growth

Indian Stainless Steel Development Association (ISSDA) was formed with the explicit objective of diversifying the applications of stainless steel in India and increasing usage volumes in the country in the year 1989 by leading stainless producers. At the point of formation, the main visible application of Stainless Steel in daily life was essentially household kitchenware. Through the focused efforts of ISSDA and its member companies, there has been tremendous growth of stainless steel applications in the Architecture, Building & Construction (ABC) and the Automotive, Railway and Transportation (ART) sectors.

The technical strength of ISSDA is derived from its close association with the Nickel Institute, the International Stainless Steel Forum and close collaboration with more than 20 national stainless steel development associations (SSDAs) around the world. Through this worldwide network and access to vast technical resources, we provide free information to material specifier, architects, designers, fabricators and end-users from different sectors.

Rohit Kumar is a post-graduate in metallurgy from Indian Institute of Technology, Kanpur. He is currently holding the post of Deputy Director of Indian Stainless Steel Development Association. Prior to joining ISSDA, he was associated with M/s Sunflag Iron & Steel Ltd for over three years in various capacities. He has also served in M/s Jindal Stainless Ltd, in the Research & Development section for more than four years. Mr. Rohit Kumar brings with him a wealth of experience in various aspects of the stainless steel industry.

“The per capita consumption of stainless Steel has strong co-relation with per capita GDP and India is expected to more than double its per capita income over next 10 years, providing positive impetus to the industry growth”, says **Rohit Kumar, Deputy Director of Indian Stainless Steel Development Association** in an exclusive interview with **Steelworld**. Excerpts:



How has the growth of Stainless Steel been in India?

- Even in early 90's, more than 90% of stainless steel in the country was used in kitchenware and utensils but over the last two decades, stainless steel has undergone tremendous changes in perception and its increasingly growing end use application in areas such as architecture building & construction (ABC), automotive railway & transport (ART), process and engineering sector and so on.

In 2012, the world Crude Stainless Steel production has been estimated at 35.4 million tons. The world production has grown at a CAGR of 5.2% pa over the last 10 years. Asia has strongly emerged as both the world's



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**- ROHIT KUMAR, Deputy Director,
Indian Stainless Steel Development Association**

largest stainless steel producer and user. Although China dominates the production of stainless steel accounting for almost 45% share of world production, India has been a part of this impressive growth with its production reaching 3 million tons in 2012 making it the 4th largest producer after China, Europe and Japan. India has outpaced the global growth rates consistently over last several years. The average growth in India has recorded a CAGR of almost 11.5 % over the last 10 years which is more than a double the world average growth during the period.

There has been some decline in growth rate over the last 2 years. The less than expected growth in consumption of stainless steel over the last two to three years between 6.5% to 8.5% from earlier high growth of above 10 to 12% has been due to poor overall performance of the Indian economy over last couple of years considering the fact that even after recovering to a growth of 9.2 per cent in 2009-10 and 2010-11, growth of value added in industrial sector comprising manufacturing, mining, electricity and construction sectors, slowed to 3.5 per cent in 2011-12 and to 3.1 percent in the current year.

What are the new applications and grades of Stainless Steel being developed?

- Different Stainless Steel grades are suited for different applications, so one has to be very careful while selecting the grade for a particular application. Popular 300 series of grades such as 304 and 316 have been the workhorse of the stainless steel family. Chromium and Nickel are two prime elements in Stainless Steel. Due to high volatile prices of Nickel in international market (300 series grades being high in nickel content) Indian producers have been forced to innovate some new grades of 200 series and many newer application based alloys has been designed to suit the purpose. These 200 series grades have wide range of applications in relatively milder corrosive environments. There has been lot of substitution to ferritic grades which were

earlier not produced in the country. Recently some duplex grades have been developed which are popular in various applications demanding high strength coupled with good corrosion resistance.

Indian has been constantly focusing on developing new applications of Stainless Steel. Over the past few years we have seen a tremendous growth in sectors like Architecture, Building and Construction (ABC), Automotive, Railways and Transport



(ART), process engineering etc.

What are the activities of ISSDA and future plans?

- At the point of formation of ISSDA the main visible application of Stainless Steel in daily life was essentially household kitchenware. ISSDA started its effort to break this mindset by holding a large number of workshops across the country explaining the good engineering properties of stainless steel. The wide spectrum of use of stainless steel and its associated benefits in architecture, building & construction, automotive transport and engineering industry were explained to professionals. ISSDA with its efforts over the years was able to dispel the notion that stainless steel is very durable material and its maintenance is minimal over the design life of decades for the products made of it. ISSDA introduces the concept of

Life Cycle Costing (LCC) explaining how stainless steel can turn out to be a less costly than other competing materials.

ISSDA is focusing its efforts to ensure the use of Stainless Steel in infrastructure be made mandatory by planning commission and specified in the related standards. ISSDA will continue its efforts to create awareness among designers, specification writers about the benefits of stainless steel to reduce the level of ignorance about the material and thus, create new application areas using the life cycle cost benefits of specifying material. ISSDA has also started an online course free of charge to impart the knowledge on stainless steel in community of engineers, students and people working with stainless steel. Whole world is looking at India becoming the next growth story after China and ISSDA is confident that with a collective effort we will be able to realize the true potential of growth of stainless steel in the country in coming future.

How do you see the future of Stainless steel in India?

- The potential growth of stainless steel in India is enormous considering the fact that the per capita consumption at 1.9 Kg is still much lower than world average of almost 4.85 Kg. The per capita consumption of stainless Steel has strong co-relation with per capita GDP and India is expected to more than double its per capita income over next 10 years, providing positive impetus to the industry growth.

Depending upon the future GDP growth scenario, the CAGR of stainless steel consumption in the country is expected to grow up by 7.7% to 10.1% over the next 10 years. Factors like global economic instability, lack of investments and tighter monetary policy that weighed on India's growth over the last couple of years are expected to change for good from this year. Passage of policy reforms such as Land Acquisition Bill, Creation of National manufacturing Zones as well as resolution of mining related issues will lead to higher investments and strengthen the growth momentum in the following fiscal (2014-15). Beyond 2014 GDP will most likely grow between 6.5% to 7.5% supported by high investment in infrastructure and Industry and increased Exports and domestic consumption. In addition increased urbanization, high demographic dividends with 68% working age population by 2030 augurs well for the future growth of the stainless steel in India.