INAUGURAL CEREMONY OF XXIII ISSCT CONGRESS
22 FEBRUARY 1999

INAUGURAL ADDRESSES

Address of Mr. R.P. Sinha, Secretary, Sugar and Edible Oils, GOI

Address of Mr. Dhruv Sawhney, Chairman, Executive Committee ISSCT

Address of Mr. Surjeet Singh Barnala, Union Minister, Food and Consumer Affairs

Address of Mr. Atal Behari Vajpayee, Prime Minister of India.

Vote of Thanks by Mr. Vinay Kumar, General Secretary Treasurer, ISSCT

Address of Mr. R.P. Sinha, Secretary, Sugar and Edible Oils, GOI

Honourable Prime Minister, Minister of State for Food & Consumer Affairs, Shri Shivajirao Patil, distinguished guests, delegates, ladies & gentlemen:

At the outset I must express gratefulness to the Honourable Prime Minister who has so kindly agreed to grace this occasion and agreed to inaugurate this conference. The Government of India (GOI) has fully supported the conference. It is an important meet with representation from a large number of sugar-producing countries in which a wide range of subjects is going to be discussed including productivity enhancement and the challenges and opportunities of globalisation. Sugar industry provides a link between the farmers and the consumers by converting an agricultural crop into an important product of universal and everyday consumption. The sugarcane produced in India is processed in over 450 sugar factories and a large number of khandisari and gur manufacturing units. India now is one of the largest producers of sugar in the world.

The sugar industry is regarded as highly sensitive and has been subjected to a considerable degree of control in India. However, recently a thorough study has been made of the entire sugar scenario by a high-powered committee, commonly known as the Mahajan Committee, whose recommendations are under examination by the government. Through several measures, the GOI has tried to encourage modernisation and development of the sugar industry. A sugar development fund has been set up which is utilised for giving loans on soft terms for cane development programmes, expansion and modernisation of the sugar mills. Grants in aid from this fund are also given to research institutes. Besides the government has also set up the Sugar Technology Mission which has been undertaking technology upgradation and introduction of newer technologies in sugar mills. The initiative taken by the government and the entrepreneurs in the sugar industry have shown positive results in modernising the sugar industry in India. This has resulted in introduction of micro-processor controlled automation of cane feeding, hydraulic drives, continuous pan and falling-film evaporators etc. Some of the sugar mills have also started using high pressure-boilers and matching turbines to effect steam economy. The use of extensive vapour bleeding on the evaporators has also resulted in maximising steam economy.
But there are units, which are still operating with very old machinery and outdated technologies. In the present era of global competitiveness, we have to be at the leading end of the technology. Technology gaps need to be identified & corrected. Some of the areas in which technology gaps are evident in the Indian context are the development of high-sucrose sugarcane varieties at low cost, and extension practices, better harvesting and transportation practices, process automation and eco-friendly process techniques, on which this Congress may deliberate. It has been realised that technology is the most important input for any wealth-generating activity. The other reality is that the rate of obsolescence of technology is also becoming faster and newer technologies are generated in all the fields of industrial activity, quickly. It is often seen that improvements in technology lead to a greater visibility of the deficiencies and gap areas. This leads to further growth of technologies till we reach a point where a new generation of technology emerges. I am sure this conference is going to deliberate on newer technologies and problem-solving methods with the objective of improving the sugar scenario in the world.

On behalf of the GOI, I wish all the delegates who have come from other countries, a comfortable and enjoyable stay in India, and hope that they will return with a feeling of intellectual and emotional enrichment. Thank you.

Address of Mr. Shivaji Rao Patil, Chairman of the Congress Organising Committee

Honourable Prime Minister, Honourable Union Minister Shri Surjeet Singh Barnalaaji, Honourable Minister Of State for Food and Consumer Affairs, Shri Satpal Singhji Judav, Chairman Executive Committee Shri Dhruv Sawhney, Chairman of the Technical Co-ordination Committee of the ISSCT Dr Peter Rein, Dr. Almazan, Secretary Food and other distinguished guests, the dignitaries on the Dais, friends, ladies and gentlemen:

It gives me great pleasure to welcome the Hon'ble Prime Minister and other eminent technologists on this historical occasion of the XXIII Congress of ISSCT.

In the 75 years of life of the ISSCT, it is meeting for the second time in India, the first being in 1957 when it was inaugurated by the then Honourable President of India in the Central Hall of Parliament. Today it is our good fortune that this Congress is being inaugurated by the Honourable Prime Minister of this country.

Established 75 years ago, the ISSCT has become one of the most effective organisations of the sugar cane technologists and scientists of the world meeting once in three years. ISSCT provides a forum for presentation of technical papers from eminent sugar cane technologists and scientists in the fields of sugar agriculture, engineering, processing, manufacturing and co-products. Detailed discussions and deliberations on the technical papers provide a glimpse of the technical advancement that has taken place during the preceding years. Conclusions drawn after deliberations of the papers provide a guideline to the sugar sector for the adoption with a view to improve their productivity. With the concept of globalisation, and the market economy being accepted widely and with the establishment of the WTO, sugar sector has to be more competitive by adopting modern methods of technology, bringing the cost of production to the minimum. The guidelines thus emerging out of the deliberations of the ISSCT Congress will help the sugar sector to achieve that objective. The Congress also provides opportunities to face challenges before the sugar cane sector.

This conference will be the last one in the century. It will have to think of progress and the course of action of the next millennium. It is particularly satisfying that such a significant Congress is being held in the country which is the largest producer of sugarcane and sugar in the world. All of us are aware the sugar industries around the world many challenges to face - these are vagaries of nature, competition with the artificial and other sweeteners, competition with other crops, low price of sugar in case of overproduction etc. I would expect from this Congress to focus attention on these matters and devise ways and means to maintain competitiveness and make sugar a viable proposition. Suitable technologies related with the increase of productivity in the field of factory, energy conservation, cogeneration, pollution control, manufacture of
development of better varieties of sugar and sugar complexes to be discussed and specific, valuable recommendations to be given for the benefit of the sugar sector all the world over.

Sugar is the second biggest industry. Happenings on the sugar front have an enduring impact on a vast section of the population. 45 million sugarcane growers, who supply cane to 450 sugar mills, 2 million workforce employed in the sector, about 460 sugar mills with an annual turnover of 4740 million dollars and vast multitudes of sugar consumers are directly affected. Therefore the development of the sugar industry in India assumes significant importance. The government, the farmers, the scientists, technologists and multitude of workers and the entrepreneurs have to join hands for the betterment of the industry. The outcome of this conference would provide a guideline to all this. I agree that the job is tremendous for this Congress. But you have a background of 75 years. Your sincere dedication towards the development and improvement of technologies of producing sugar and sugarcane, your rich experience in research and development, will enable the sugar industry in India and the world to grow uninterruptedly in the years to come.

Friends, I know this is a formidable task to organise a congress of this magnitude with hundreds of eminent technologists and scientists coming from all over the world. To provide essential facilities for all the deliberations and discussions and also a reasonably comfortable stay, we’ve tried our best to see that all your needs are fulfilled. There’s a saying in India “ajitho atithi deva bhava”, that is, we treat our guest as a god. In spite of all efforts, with all that in mind, we may have still some lapses. And I only request you gentlemen to bear with us if there is anything short.

When the last Congress entrusted this task to India and accepted me as the Chairman of the Organising Committee, I, with my colleagues, the industry leaders, sugarcane technologists and the government and particularly the Ministry of Food and Consumer Affairs tried to do their best to make this Congress a great success. I once again welcome you to India, an ancient country, with 5000 years of culture and 950 million people. I express my gratitude to the Honourable Prime Minister, and Shri Surjeet Singh Barnala, for sparing their valuable time to come for this Congress.

It gives me particular pleasure to welcome the Prime Minister who just came back from a triumphant bus tour, which he undertook for creating a peaceful and brotherly atmosphere between the people of India and Pakistan. (applause). Can you imagine a Prime Minister of such a country taking a bus ride? But he took it, and that indicates his anxiety to solve this problem. I pray to God that all his efforts will bear fruit.

I once again congratulate the Prime Minister and all the delegates and hope that this Congress will ultimately guide the sugar sector in the world for times to come. Jai Hind.

Address of Mr. Dhruv Sawhney, Chairman, Executive Committee ISSCT

Honourable Prime Minister, Shri Vajpayee, Honourable Minister for Food and Consumer Affairs, Shri Barnala, honourable Minister of State, Shri Yadav, Shri Sinha, Shri Shivaji Rao Patil, Dr. Rein and my colleagues from the Executive Committee, members of the Technical Panel, councillors and fellow delegates.

I’m especially privileged and honoured to be here on two accounts. The first, is as chairman of this august body of technologists and the second, is as chairman of a world Congress, that is being held in my home country.

On behalf of ISSCT, and on my personal behalf, I would also like to offer, my grateful thanks to the Prime Minister, for having spared the time to be with us today, he has an extremely tight schedule, he has to be in Parliament, in literally a few minutes.
IASSC® is a driving organization to give more prominence to our institution. We have set up a permanent of us, which is a part of this process.

The global stage manager has also changed and with the completion of the Language Round, we have a world all alike, where everyone can communicate and better serve our customers. With these declarations of our Congress, a central part of insuring that the world is better, among others, sponsors is an integral part of this process.

We have managed to achieve and establish a great world order and must say well, the housing and food.

Whoever, who has read from a physics and part breaks its life to explain.
formulated a new mission statement, which I will not read now for shortage of time, but I would encourage all delegates to please adopt it very quickly. There are many harbingers of doom for the sugar industry saying that we are out of touch with the public’s requirement for health and cost-effective commodities. I would like to take this opportunity of expressing, most strongly that nothing could be further from the truth. We have our problems, but we have a vibrant and efficient industry and our technologists are certainly up to the task of modifying our products and processes to meet customers’ changing requirements.

I welcome the technologists, both old and young, who are attending the Congress for the first time. We hope you remain active and contribute to our development.

The organizing committee, which is so ably led, has organized an exciting program of cultural and social events and day tours. I’d like to compliment the outstanding efforts made by them and I’m sure they will give us a more successful Congress. May I ask all fellow technologists from 60 countries, who are here to participate in the proceedings, deepen friendships, make new friends and enjoy the gracious hospitality of our hosts. I suppose I am prejudiced but I feel sure that after this Congress you will remember the Indian Sugarcane Industry and return often.

Mr. Prime Minister, may I once again say, how honoured we are by your gracious presence at this inaugural ceremony and we wish you well. Ladies and gentlemen, thank you very much for your attention.

Address of Mr. Surjeet Singh Barnala, Union Minister, Food and Consumer Affairs.

Honourable Prime Minister, Shri Shivaji Rao Patil, Shri Dhruv Sawhney, Shri B.B. Ramaiah, Dr. Peter Rein, my colleague Satpal Singh Yadav, Shri Sinha. I extend my warm greetings to the distinguished delegates and participants of the 23rd Congress of the International Society of Sugarcane Technologists. I thank honourable Prime Minister, who has, in spite of his very heavy schedule today, spared some time to be present here. Your presence, sir, will give added importance to this Congress.

I understand that the last time our country hosted a conference of the International Society of Sugarcane Technologists was in the year 1956. At that time, the sugar industry in India was on the threshold of growth and development. During the 1955-56 sugar season, India’s sugar production was about 1.8 million tonnes. Today India’s sugar production during the 1998-99 sugar season is estimated to be 15 million tonnes. This has been possible due to the contributions made by the sugarcane farmers, the sugar and sugarcane technologists and the sugar industry. The combined efforts made by them have resulted in India becoming the largest producer of sugar in the world. On this development, I must complement their own pledge by the sugarcane technologists and the sugar technologists.

India is a country of diversities. These diversities extend to its climatic zones too. We have sub-tropical areas as well as tropical areas. The modern sugar industry was first developed in the sub-tropical areas of the country. At a later stage, after India’s independence, sugar factories were also set up in the tropical areas. Today we have about 202 sugar factories in the subtropical and 258 in the tropical areas. Our experience shows that the cane yields and the sugar recoveries in the tropical areas are better than in the subtropical areas. I’m told that with proper technological inputs, the cane yield and sugar recoveries in the sub-tropical areas also can substantially improve. I’m told that the difference in yields in demonstration and commercial plots of sugarcane cultivation is over four times. Through the usage of improved cane varieties, better harvesting and transplantation techniques, improved factory equipment and processes, sugar recoveries in the subtropical areas have the potential of increasing by about one percent. Similar situations may be prevailing in other countries also. This is a matter in which the sugarcane and sugar technologists can interfere and help in
increasing sugar and sugarcane production in our country. In India the sugar industry has been under process of modernization with its emphasis on energy conservation and improvement in productivity, yet we have to go a long way in reducing energy consumption and steam consumption in the sugar industry. Considering the need to preserve energy and reduce the cost, I hope this matter will also receive your focus of attention, in this conference.

I would like to touch upon another issue of significance in technology development of sugarcane, that is the issue of cane milling, which is one of the most important areas of sugarcane processing. During the 80’s the Indian sugarcane industry has seen the introduction of better cane preparatory devices and pressure feeding of prepared cane to the mills. This has resulted in the lowering of energy consumption to some extent. However, more work needs to be done in this area. The cost-effective technology for generation of power, based on bagasse is also another significant area meriting deliberation in this conference. I’m told that under the current technology, a number of energy and steam saving measures can increase the saving of bagasse, so as to provide for larger capacity power plants. In this regard the technology in power generation equipment, needs to be popularized. At the same time, thrust should be given on development of newer technologies. The state of technology available to an industry is intimately related with the research and development activities. I feel there is a need to lay increased emphasis on research and development of sugarcane. Improved and newer varieties of sugarcane, which would be immune to pests, are required to be introduced on a large scale. In food grains, the introduction of high yielding varieties brought about the Green Revolution in India. Such a revolution in sugarcane is yet to be brought about. I feel that this is an issue of paramount importance and requires the combined effort of the research and development institutes. The sugarcane technologists, sugarcane farmers and the sugar industry, I believe, with your whole hearted support, the cane revolution that is the revolution in sugarcane production will be a possibility in the next decade.

In today’s world, the farmers weigh the economic gains and losses in selecting the crop to grow. Therefore sugar growing must be made economically profitable to the farmers. In relation to growing of other cash crops, the involvement of sugarcane farmers in this strategy, is all the more important and the extension of newer farm technologies is an inseparable aspect of this strategy.

I would like to mention here that the world today has realized the importance of environmental protection for sustainable development. Technologies which do not promise environmental safety will become unacceptable. It is therefore important that the evolution of all new technologies should be done, keeping this important factor in view and the industry must take necessary steps required to reduce both air and water pollution.

The challenges for the sugar technologists the world over are immense. They are required to find technical solutions, to maintain the sugar sector healthy and competitive and at the same time meet the demands of the society in terms of environmental preservation. Creativity and teamwork, based on exchange of information between organizations of the different countries are required.

There is no better way to obtain this goal, than the forum to exchange ideas and knowledge to make personal contacts that ensure years of future collaboration to submit the latest advances of testing in other countries and to realize that our sugar producers, our common interests are much stronger and more powerful than our differences.

A large number of participants and the many countries represented here today would confirm these ideas. All of you here are a living demonstration that sugar technologists of the world wish to work together. I trust this Congress will stimulate free and frank exchange of observations, information, and ideas, which will eventually result in further development and progress and better understanding, not just in sugar technology, but for the entire industry.

I look forward to the results of the deliberations of this Congress. May all of you who have come from outside have a pleasant stay in our country and a very successful Congress.

Ladies and gentlemen, thank you very much.
Address of Mr. Atal Behari Vajpayee, Prime Minister of India

My cabinet colleague, Shri Barnala, Shri Satpal Yadav, Shri Shivaji Rao Patil, Shri Ramaiah, Dr. Peter Rein, Shri Vinay Kumar, Shri V.K. Goel, Dr. Oscar Almazan, Mr. D.M. Sawhney, Mr. Sinha, distinguished delegates, ladies and gentlemen.

You have invited me to this conference as I happen to be the Prime Minister of this country at the moment, but I have come as a consumer of sugar (...applause). I like sugar, I’m deeply interested in sugar, but I keep a watch on the quantity of sugar that I consume. I am pleased to be here with you this morning, to inaugurate the 23rd Congress of the International Society of Sugarcane Technologists. I am happy to know that this Congress is taking place in India after 43 years. I welcome the foreign participants and wish them a pleasant and fruitful stay.

It is believed that India is the original home of sugarcane. The earliest reference to sugarcane is traced to the Atharva Veda, one of the ancient sacred scriptures of India. There has been reference to the Buddha being known as the king of sugarcane in Buddhist literature. Alexander the Great is said to have taken sugarcane from India to the west around 325 BC. It is because of India’s long and rich tradition of growing sugarcane that thousands of Indians were taken as indentured labourers, during the colonial period, to distant lands like Mauritius, Trinidad, Tobago and Guyana. In independent India, thanks to our hard working farmers, technicians and entrepreneurs, India has become the largest producer and consumer of cane sugar. Sugar plays a very significant role in India’s agricultural and industrial economy. All of sugarcane occupies barely three percent of India’s total cultivable area; about 40 million people are dependent on sugarcane farming and the sugar industry. A unique feature of the Indian sugar industry is that more than 58 percent of the production takes place in co-operative factories. These co-operative factories are also the focal point of multidimensional, socio-economic development in rural areas. The government of India has taken a number of steps recently, to revitalise the sugar industry and enable it to reap the benefits of industrialization. I believe that the industry can grow best when it is freed from bureaucratic control. Accordingly the sugar industry was de-licensed on 1st September, last year. This will allow the faster creation of new capacity, both in the existing sugar mills and the new ones. Larger and better-equipped sugar mills will result in better quality sugar. De-centralization of decision making is another dimension of reforms in the Indian sugar industry and trade. We have given the states the freedom to decide how many sugar dealers are needed and remove the maximum stock holding limits. As a result of these and other measures, I am happy to know that the price of sugar has remained largely stable in the last one year, compared to the prices of many other commodities.

Technological development in sugarcane cultivation and sugar industry is vital for raising both productivity and prosperity in rural India. To achieve this, the government runs the Sugar Technology Mission, which has developed five new technologies, which are being applied in many factories. Some of these like low-pressure extraction cane separation system and sulphur burner have been commercialised for the first time in the world. Some of the specific areas where further research and development is needed are reducing the water consumed in growing sugarcane, capacity utilization of factories, maximizing recovery of sugar from sugarcane, energy conservation, improving the quality of sugar and minimizing environmental pollution. Use of information technology holds the major promise for the success of all these tasks. Our sustained efforts in sugarcane breeding have raised cane productivity to world levels. There is however great scope and need for further improvement.

India is a country with diverse agro-climatic zones. While cane productivity in the tropical areas has been impressive, it is lower in the sub-tropical zones. Equally important is the challenge to raise sugarcane productivity in small land-holdings. So far the impact of technology on cane cultivation by small farmers has been minimum. In most countries, experience shows that education and active involvement of farmers are a key guarantor for
the success of technology outreach programs. Development of by-products of sugar is vital for improving the industry’s financial viability. India has gained useful experience in commercializing these value addition processes. Bagasse has been successfully used in the production of newsprint and paper in India. Similarly the use of filter cake enriched by distillery effluents for composting has been successfully tried recently. There could be similar uses of other by-products.

Another issue, which I commend for discussion in this conference, is the financial needs of sugar factories for technological upgradation. The government operates the sugar development fund, which provides soft terms for cane development programs, modernization and rehabilitation of existing sugar mills. I would urge the management of sugar factories to increase interpal generation of surpluses for this purpose. While technological inputs are necessary to achieve efficiency, cost reduction and quality enhancement, equally important are non-technological factors such as better management. I am sure that the delegates will learn much more from each other’s experience in this critical area. Co-generation of electricity by sugar mills is a potential low cost source of energy. It is also environment friendly. There are newer technologies, which reduce the moisture content of cane, improving in the viability of Co-generation projects. These and other related technologies, must be developed and spread fast, so that the sugar industry can improve it’s energy efficiency and even earn more by selling surplus electricity.

Distinguished delegates, global co-operation in research and development is the key that unlocks the gate to global prosperity. This is true about sugar technologies too. With these words I take great pleasure in inaugurating this Congress. I wish you all success. Thank you.

Vote of Thanks by Mr. Vinay Kumar, General Secretary Treasurer, ISSCT

Honourable Prime Minister, Minister of Food and Consumer Affairs, Shri Barnalaji and dignitaries on the dais. It is my pleasant duty to propose, vote of thanks, before we conclude this inaugural session. As the General Secretary Treasurer of the 23rd ISSCT Congress I once again express my grateful thanks to the honourable Prime Minister of India, Union Minister for Food and Consumer Affairs, Shri Barnalaji, and all other dignitaries who have graced this occasion, sparing their valuable time.

During the last three years, when this Congress was allotted to us, in Colombia, we had tried to be in touch with almost every potential delegate either by correspondence or by fax or by e-mail and today we are extremely happy to see them all here. On behalf of all the 36 million sugarcane growers, 2.5 million workers of the sugar mill and all the others connected with the Indian sugar industry, I extend my thanks to all the distinguished delegates, who have come all the way from different countries. I am happy to inform that more than 650 delegates from 60 countries are participating in this conference. It is our determination to give you a very pleasant time while you are in India and render all kinds of help, guidance and co-operation. All the staff members of the ISSCT Congress, including myself are at your disposal at any time, to help you, make your stay in India a pleasant and memorable one, make you love India and come again and again.

For the Pre-Congress delegates, I hope they had a comfortable time and enjoyed the Pre-Congress tours to Pune, Coimbatore and Daurala.

It is my pleasure to extend a warm welcome to all the ladies who are accompanying the delegates, from various countries. We are arranging to take them to some important places in New Delhi and give them plenty of time for their favourite shopping of Indian Jewellery, handicrafts, woollen and cotton clothing, which we are proud of as, “Made in India”. These will remind you always, of sweet memories of India. The ladies will
Received a surprise gift from the ISSCT and we would appreciate it, if you wear it for our “Gala Dinner”, on
the 29th of February, at Hotel Taj Palace. The first lady of the ISSCT, Mrs. Rati Sawhney is also hosting a
luncheon for the ladies during this Congress.

I’d like to also express my thanks to all the Indian delegates, for participating in this Congress of the ISSCT.
I request all the Indian delegates to kindly consider themselves as the real hosts and render all help to the other
delegates.

My thanks to all the distinguished speakers, and the Ministry of Food and Consumer Affairs, Sugar Technology
Mission of India, the organizers for Pre-Congress tours, Mr. Tilak Dhar, Mr. Rane and Mr. Manickam.
I especially thank the co-ordinator, Ms. Neena Roy the other staff of ISSCT, the managers of the Taj Palace
Hotel, Taj Mahal Hotel, Ashoka Hotel, Le Meridien Hotel, Kanishka and Janpath Hotels and management