



## Hot choice

This academy believes that youth must see welding as a good job opportunity

*Advani and Kumar want to transform youth and bring them into welding*

**W**elding is an exciting career. This is the message the Pune-based Ador Welding Academy (AWA) wants to put across to achieve its objective of creating a pool of welders, welding technicians and managers. "India is privileged to have a young workforce; therefore, we want to be there in transforming these young people and bringing them into welding," says Aruna Advani, executive chairman, Ador Welding Ltd.

The group's Ador Institute of Welding Technology (AIWT), which has over five decades of knowledge and experience in welding, having trained around 60,000 professionals till date, aims at skilling around 100,000 people, who will be employed at various levels of companies. It will also build a national-level vocational university, which will provide a diploma programme and build a consulting practice, to help improve the quality of welding practices among Indian manufacturers and bring them up to global standards.

Over the years, however, with every stakeholder demanding more value (be it students who want employability skills, industry skills and placement guarantees, or corporates who are looking for holistic solutions to their welding problems instead of one-off training sessions), Ador felt that the concept of AIWT needed to undergo a radical change.

Ergo, the new academy, with a different name and logo, to provide pre-service, in-service, consultancy and post-graduate programmes. The four are defined as those in which students can be sponsored, or employment-linked courses provided; getting employers to work together and go ahead; providing impactful solutions to customers; and part-time programmes for senior employees.

"We want to provide diploma courses so that we can achieve a breakthrough pan-India," says Advani. The aim is to train provide 200 courses, join with a college so that they have the possibility of expanding and get at least 15 consulting assignments, with the objective of becoming India's best welding academy. "With global competition coming in, enough welders are not available and cost is an important factor – so, a level of competence is necessary," says academy chairman Raman Kumar, former managing director, Ador Welding. "Therefore, an academy is important in this industry."

### Gaining importance

The academy has been around for 50 years, says Nilesh Unarkat, head, marketing services & communications, Ador Welding. The company, earlier known as Advani Oerlikon, has just rebranded and relaunched it. And, it is not run on any grant from

NSDP or other government bodies.

The goal of the academy is to train 1,200-plus welders in the first year and more than 5,000 plus welders by the third year. To achieve this, it has started with an initial investment of ₹3 crore. "The land is free as the government is encouraging educational programmes," Kumar points out. With vocational learning having gained importance as the youth wants to get earning, this is an exciting phase, he feels.

With government estimates putting the need of skilled workers at 500 million, the welding industry alone requires 300,000 welders every year, according to J.K. Nanda, a member of the academy's board of governors and former vice-president, L&T group, as well as CEO, Ewac Alloys Ltd (a joint venture between L&T, India, and the German Messer Eutectic Castolin group, which makes special welding electrodes). "This includes proper supervision, for which the academy is required," he adds.

Says fellow governor Dipak Chandiramani, principal consultant, Lloyd's Register Asia: "The only way to ensure good welding is to do additional tests and understand the design and the process because this will help us to invest in future plans." Adds Anant Sardeshmukh, executive director general, Mahratta Chamber of Commerce, Industry & Agriculture: "Joining with small and medium enterprises will prove good for us. Quality, quantity and the product is our focus."

AWA's stated objectives are to become an 'institute of significance' to promote welding as an exciting professional career and a pride of nation-building contribution for the youth; supplement the fabrication industry's efforts to create a pool of welders, welding technicians and managers; and build a consulting practice which will be a 'thought partner' to the industry and help improve the quality of welding practices in India. To add an academic tone to its board of governors, G.L. Datta, vice-chancellor, KL University, Guntur, has also been brought in as a member.

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