

DFI of India



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There have been both good and sad developments since my last report. On the good side, interest in Deep Foundations Institute of India has increased, and news of the organization has reached almost all of the geotechnical professionals in practice and in academia. One can stay up to date on DFI of India by visiting the DFI website and clicking on “Groups” and then “Regional Chapters.” DFI, after consultation with DFI of India, created five annual individual membership categories for members living in India. Visit www.dfi.org/india for details. The purpose is to make the membership affordable and payable in Indian rupees, without making prospective members worry about the dollar-rupee exchange rates. DFI has also made it possible for corporate members to pay in Indian rupees. Two more categories are also available: one for Affiliate Members of a Corporate Member; and one for Non-Commercial Organizations. This is a major development for DFI of India, and we hope that more and more individuals and corporate members will take advantage and help make DFI of India a vibrant forum for the benefit of the country, the Indian deep foundations industry and the individual professionals.

The Deep Foundations Technologies for Infrastructure Development in India 2013 conference at IIT Bombay was a success. I have many to thank for their contributions. First, I thank Dr.-Ing. B.V.S. Viswanadham, professor, Department of Civil Engineering, at the Indian Institute of Technology, IIT Bombay (Mumbai) for agreeing to hold the conference at IIT Bombay and sparing no efforts to ensure the conference’s success. The conference was co-organized by DFI of India, Indian Geotechnical Society (IGS), IIT Bombay and The Association of Piling Specialists, Mumbai (APS). Thanks also go to Professor G.N Gandhi, president of IGS; S.R. Ambiyee, president of APS, and Viral Patel and Vikram Singh Rao of APS. Special thanks go to Dr. Sunil Basarkar, general manager -Technologies, ITD Cementation India Limited, who made enormous efforts to make the conference a success.

Many others contributed to the conference’s success: all the active members of the organizing committee, the technical committee and advisory committees who played key roles in

organizing the conference. I.V. Anirudhan, the co-founder of DFI of India, gave valuable guidance. Theresa Rappaport, DFI executive director, Mary Ellen Bruce, DFI’s technical activities manager and Satyajit Vaidya, Langan Engineering, for valuable contributions at our weekly conference calls. In addition, a big thanks to the staff at DFI and to James A. Morrison, immediate past president of DFI, and Gianfranco Di Cicco, trustee of DFI, for travelling to the conference to give their valuable advice. DFI of India is grateful to all the speakers at the workshop on Large Diameter Piles in Rock and at the conference who shared their invaluable knowledge and experience with the delegates.

More than 130 people participated in the workshop, and judging by the feedback received from 95 of them, the topics and speakers were well received. More than 250 participants attended the conference and many of them expressed their desire to become DFI members.

Shyamal Kumar Mukherjee, secretary, Public Works Department, was the chief guest at the inaugural session. He spoke eloquently about the need to adapt the latest foundation technologies in metropolitan cities like Mumbai, where lack of space and the need for high-rise buildings demand deep foundations to save space and time and the cost of construction.



The DFI of India conference was well attended

A Roadmap for DFI of India

A road map presented at the conference shows that the next DFI conference will be in New Delhi. There will be more workshops on topics specific to particular regions of India and technologies identified in order of their importance and relevance to our infrastructure development needs. Also, technology task force teams would be formed, and training programs for the front line staff would be created. To achieve these roadmap milestones, we need to increase the DFI members. Those present were urged to become DFI members and to spread the message about DFI of India.



Jim Morrison, DFI past president, speaks at the conference

We had a post conference meeting on November 16 to discuss the action plan, which focused on our proposed training program for front line construction staff. The meeting was attended by 17 people, representing the cross section of the Indian deep foundations industry, including Jim Morrison and Gianfranco Di Cicco. We hope to achieve a model for a pilot training program for bored piling equipment operators. DFI of India will work on the details and a syllabus with DFI, APS and some of the manufacturing companies with facilities in and around Mumbai. We hope to begin the first pilot training in February 2014. The success of this pilot program would pave the way for the frontline staff of the various types of foundation technologies.

Hope for Future Growth

The Indian economy is going through a tough time despite the fact that the government had taken several steps to stimulate growth, as reported in my prior reports. The foundation specialist contractors, and the construction industry as a whole, are hoping for an increased demand for construction. Slackness in demand is an especially big burden on foundation contractors who own expensive equipment. We hope that the situation will improve once the general elections for the next five-year term are held sometime in the middle of 2014, and that the country will once again be on the high-growth trajectory.



Anumolu Rama Krishna

I conclude my report with a heavy heart as one of the doyens of Indian civil engineering industry in India, Dr. Anumolu Rama Krishna, former deputy managing director of L&T, died suddenly of a heart attack on August 20, 2013 at the age of 74. He was in good health and was travelling tirelessly to continue his mission of developing India's infrastructure. He played a strong role in the formation of DFI of India. He gave encouragement and guidance to me and was greatly interested in the two DFI conferences held in 2011 at Hyderabad and in 2012 at IIT Madras. As a mark of great reverence to him, the DFI of India 2013 conference souvenir publication included an article titled "Dr. A. Rama Krishna- A Great Soul & A True Visionary."

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