

**Chairman, AERB Republic Day Address**  
**26-01-2023**

“Dear Colleagues present here and also those in RRCs , SRI and our site observers at various sites, security staff, canteen staff and housekeeping service staff,

Namaskar and heartiest greetings to all of you on the eve of the 74<sup>th</sup> Republic Day. It was on this day in 1950, India was established as the largest democratic republic and “we the people” put into effect a constitution that is an inspired document of our collective vision. The diversity and vibrancy of our democracy is appreciated world-wide. It is this spirit of unity and of being one nation which is celebrated every year as Republic Day.

The constitution of India was enacted and adopted by the constituent assembly on 26<sup>th</sup> November 1949, which we now celebrate as Constitution Day. But it was made effective two months later. This was done to mark that day in 1930 when India resolved to win complete freedom- ‘Purna Swaraj’. From 1930 to 1947, every year 26<sup>th</sup> January was celebrated as ‘Purna Swaraj Day’, and that was the day chosen to put the Constitution into force.

Constitution is the supreme law of the nation which sets the macro framework for functioning of the government at micro level. It sets the boundaries of various organs, lays down the rights and the duties. The Governmental and legal framework of the country emerges from the basic fabric of the Constitution.

Our Constitution is a rare blend of rigidity and flexibility, which has allowed our nation to shape its journey and to frame laws as per the evolving times. Using such laws, our organization, Atomic Energy Regulatory Board was set up in 1983. AERB has evolved over the years and has established itself as a competent and matured regulator. Getting elected as Chairperson of a country group for CNS review meeting, enhancement of participation status in OECD-NEA committees-CNRA & CSNI, and the observations of recently concluded IRRS follow up mission are testimony to this.

AERB has implemented Integrated Management System for governing its functioning which has been acclaimed internationally. IMS also provides flexibility to frame procedures at different levels to suit our requirements.

We must understand true meaning of flexibility. Flexibility is -providing multiple options according to basic principles, ethics and core values, that is what we call-rare blend of rigidity and flexibility. Flexibility retains provision of accountability. While full 360 degree freedom, is more of whims & fancy, ad-hocism without scope for accountability.

Currently AERB is taking efforts to harmonise its regulatory processes further to make it more efficient as well as effective. The actions in this regard include harmonisation of regulatory requirements and guidance, enhancing the competence of staff in human and organisational factors besides technical aspects, tweaking of the review and assessment practices to enhance the role of in-house reviews, integration of nuclear security aspects, greater emphasis on application of graded approach in the regulatory processes in accordance with the significance of safety issues associated. Besides, following bottom-up mechanism for implementation of Graded Approach, the process also identifies feedback to be given to DAE for amendment of higher level statutes to reflect graded approach.

AERB is also taking steps to provide formal forums / opportunities for soliciting the views and concerns of its stakeholders. With respect to bringing in transparency and openness in development of regulatory documents, the draft Safety Codes are uploaded on website for comments of stakeholders and public, which are appropriately addressed prior to issuance of the documents. The major stages consents are also being put on our web site.

For enhanced regulatory coverage, AERB has decentralised its regulatory activities and has established regional regulatory centres at Chennai, Kolkata and New Delhi. AERB has also modified its regulatory inspection methodology. The frequency of inspection is now being decided based on inputs from safety review, incident reporting, feedback from stakeholders. The observations made during the inspections are corroborated against specified regulatory requirements and graded.

AERB has been utilising the regulatory inspections as 'Jaagrukta Seva' missions to spread awareness on self-regulatory mechanisms in the facilities and influencing. The regulatory focus is now more on self-regulation and realisation of safety issues by licensee organisation rather than only compliance monitoring.

A major change which has been put into effect by AERB recently is in the area of emergency preparedness and response. More emphasis is put on

operator's response during initial phase of emergency, which is crucial. As per the updated methodology, the responsibility of taking decisions during an emergency situation now rests with the plant management, which is based on technical assessment of various plant and environmental parameters. The implementation of emergency response actions, as communicated by plant management, is the responsibility of district authorities. This model has been put into place in the District Disaster Management Plans of respective NPP sites.

To streamline the regulatory interfaces and towards Government's initiative on maximum governance and minimum government, AERB is engaging in various inter-ministerial coordination activities for seamless regulation in the matters related to radiation protection. For ease of doing business, AERB is actively supporting the Government's initiative on National Single Window System and is in process of simplification of its regulatory mechanisms aiming towards maximum governance. It continues to utilise its strong bilateral ties for enhancing the technical cooperation on matters related to safety

To increase the safety awareness among its stakeholders, AERB has enhanced its public outreach programmes, safety promotional activities of interested parties, training of law enforcement agencies, etc. As part of enhancing the knowledge management activities, AERB has conceptualised and organised series of webinars on sharing operating experience feedback on important past events and these are being archived for future generation. Further, the regulatory decision making process is strengthened by making it more inclusive and participative with increased emphasis on the reviews by internal staff of AERB.

All these efforts have been acknowledged by the IRRS Team of IAEA during the follow up mission and the team complimented AERB on its professionalism.

The achievements generate more expectations and demand continuous efforts from us to sustain and move forward.

As we all know, there are plans to expand the nuclear power programme in a big way by deploying fleet mode of indigenous PHWR based reactors, imported foreign design reactors and to supplement the energy requirements by deploying small and modular reactors. Government intends to rope in public sector behemoths for building nuclear power plants with aims to achieve its goal of net zero emissions . In the coming days, there will be deployment of non-power reactors for large scale

production of radiopharmaceuticals through a PPP mode. The radiation technologies are also fast evolving, be it hadron based cancer therapy or LINAC based irradiators or X ray based industrial radiography devices.

It is time for all in AERB to gear up and face the rising challenges with firm determination. The need of the hour is to follow a structured approach which has already been set up through Integrated Management System (IMS), free from all biases and with undeterred resolve.

I have complete faith on all my fellow colleague and staff and employees at AERB that they will continue to keep the flag of AERB flying high and strive for excellence, thus contributing in keeping our national flag flying high.

I close my address by remembering and paying our tributes to the great freedom fighters whose great sacrifices got us freedom and opportunity to celebrate this day every year. ”

**Jai Hind!!!**

## REPUBLIC DAY PICTURES

### AERB Chairman Unfurling the National Flag



### AERB Chairman receiving the guard of honour







**AERBites with Chairman, AERB**

