The 5th biennial National Symposium on 'Nuclear and Radiochemistry' (NUCAR2001) was organised during February 7-10, 2001 by Board of Research in Nuclear Sciences (BRNS), Department of Atomic Energy, in association with University of Pune, Pune, at the Department of Chemistry. The objective of these biennial symposia has been to provide an effective forum for fruitful interaction among the specialists in the fields of nuclear and radiochemistry, application of radioisotopes and allied research areas to have an objective assessment of current trends and also take stock of the latest developments. The scope of NUCAR2001 was covered under various themes such as nuclear chemistry and instrumentation, chemistry of actinides and reactor materials, spectroscopy of actinides, radioisotope applications, chemistry of fission and activation products, radioanalytical chemistry and radioactivity in environment. Judging from the response in the form of number of papers received, this symposium seems to have provided the requisite platform for effective interaction. It is heartening to note that more than 230 contributory papers have been received for presentation. In addition, 16 specialists including 7 from overseas have kindly consented to deliver invited lectures in their area of specialisation.

The symposium was inaugurated by Dr. D.D. Sood, Director, Division of Physical and Chemical Sciences, IAEA, Vienna, at a function presided over by Prof. N.J. Sonawane, Vice Chancellor, University of Pune, Pune. Prof. R.S. Mali, Head, Department of Chemistry, University of Pune and Chairman, Local Organising Committee, welcomed the honourable guests, delegates and other participants to the symposium. Dr. K.L. Ramakumar, Convener, NUCAR 2001, while welcoming the gathering, spelt out the scope of NUCAR2001 symposium. The importance and the wide recognition of the impact the series of NUCAR symposia have generated has been gauged by the continuous increase in the number of contributory papers and participation. He further recalled the long and sustained association of University of Pune with NUCAR symposia.

In his inaugural address, Dr. Sood emphasized the indispensable role of the symposia like NUCAR, in bringing out interaction among various researchers active in different areas of nuclear and radiochemistry and application of radioisotopes for furthering the scope and understanding of the discipline. The synergic cooperation among the academics and the research institutions will go a
long way in extracting maximum benefits out of the applications of radioisotopes in different areas of science and technology.

Prof. Sonawane, in his presidential address, recounted the long-standing association of University of Pune with regards to the research activities in nuclear sciences. In this context, he emphasised the important and the catalytic role of collaboration, which the University has with the Department of Atomic Energy. "Symposia like NUCAR2001 adds further impetus to this collaboration activity", he stressed. Prof. B.S.M.Rao, Co-Convener, Local Organising Committee, and Dr. R.M.Kadam, Secretary, NUCAR2001 proposed vote of thanks.

The symposium took off with a keynote address by Dr.S.B.Manohar, Head, Radiochemistry Division, BARC, on academic interaction in nuclear sciences. The proceedings of NUCAR2001 were divided into 16 sessions, out of which four (one per day) were for poster presentations. In view of large number of contributory papers received, and with a view to having maximum interaction among the participants, poster presentations included a large number of papers. At the same time young researchers have also been encouraged to present their papers in oral presentations.

A one-day embedded seminar on "Chemistry of Actinides in Nuclear Fuel Cycle" was also organised during NUCAR2001. Specialists in the respective fields discussed all the aspects of nuclear fuel cycle starting from fuel fabrication to waste immobilisation.

Best paper presentation awards were also given away to young research scholars who have been pursuing research in nuclear and radiochemistry. Local press gave a wide coverage to the event.

In the feedback session, participants suggested of having a video coverage of poster presentations. Delegates from abroad were of unanimous opinion that the nuclear and radiochemistry research in India is far more thriving and active, especially at University level.