The IX Batch of One Year Health Physics Stipendiary Training Course (BARC and NPCIL batches) was inaugurated at the Health Physics Division auditorium, Radiation Protection Training and Information Centre, CT&CRS building, Anushaktinagar on February 3, 2003 by Dr V. Venkat Raj, Director, Health, Safety & Environment Group, BARC. Mr A.K. Gore, Executive Director (O), NPCIL, graced the occasion as the Guest of Honour. Heads of Divisions of HS&E Group, BARC, senior officers from NPCIL, BARC and AERB were also present.

In his welcome address, Mr R.M. Sharma, Head, Health Physics Division, briefed the efforts made by Health Physics Division to provide trained manpower in Radiological Safety to meet the needs of the expanding activities of the Department. He also observed that the staff who had passed out through the previous batches of the One Year Training course were doing extremely well in their profession and many of them were able to pursue their desire to improve their academic qualifications also. He also mentioned that Health Physics Division was concurrently running a One Year Training Course for Trainee Scientific Officers to be later posted as Health Physics professionals in Nuclear Power Plants. It was also mentioned that the present batch of 48 trainees would be concurrently trained in 2 separate groups - 30 trainees for NPCIL at Health Physics Laboratory, Tarapur, and 18 trainees for BARC units at RPTIC, CT & CRS building, Mumbai.

In his address, the Guest of Honour Mr A.R. Gore, Executive Director (O), NPCIL, stressed on the important role played by the Health Physics staff in the expanding Indian Nuclear Power programme and the importance of improving production without compromising on safety aspects. He also remarked, while lighting the traditional lamp, that lighting the lamp was symbolic of removing darkness - darkness of ignorance to be removed by education and experience gained through the training course. He also remarked that the important role played by the Health Physics staff in ensuring safety of the plant personnel, meeting the regulatory requirements and the efforts made for the environmental protection are held in high esteem in the Department of Atomic Energy.

The course was formally inaugurated by Dr V. Venkat Raj, Director, HS&E Group, BARC. In his inaugural address, he stressed on the importance of maintaining high standards for the training course and the need to mould the trainees to meet the tough challenges of the future. He reminded the important role to be played by the Health Physics staff in ensuring safety in the
operating units and also the necessity of building up a strong R&D base to support the on-going programmes of the department. He also remarked that it was heartening to see that the staff who had passed out through the previous training batches were holding responsible positions in different units. In this context, he stressed the need for the Health Physics Staff to remain ever vigilant, enforce the safety regulations and build up a safety culture in the department. He emphasized the need of maintaining high standards in radiation protection especially as the Health Physics Staff have to play the added responsibility as the representative of the regulatory body.

The function was concluded by vote of thanks proposed by Mr K. Narayanan Kutty, Officer-in-Charge, Training Group, HPD. He also briefed on the efforts being taken by the Training Group of HPD to make the training programme effective and the sustained efforts made for improving the standards of the course.