

Recent Developments in Environment and Safety in the Sugar and Allied Industry

The significance of environment and safety in industrial operations cannot be overemphasized, more so in sugar and allied industry. The industry is the backbone of the rural economy yet in recent times it has been the focus of criticism over excessive water usage and water pollution. There have also been incidences and accidents which point to the lack of adequate industrial safety. Such incidences have also caused environmental concern. Recently, there have been new notifications regarding environmental clearance for sugar and distillery projects vis-a-vis the National Biofuels Policy as also the use of groundwater (CGWA). These will have an impact on the sugar and distillery industry.

Considering the above, a one-day awareness workshop on 'Recent developments in environment and safety in the sugar and allied industry' was organized at Vasantdada Sugar Institute on 25th February 2019. Dr. Amol Deshmane welcomed all the guests and requested the Director General welcomed the Chief Guest, Mr. Shekhar Gaikwad (Sugar Commissioner). This was followed by an introduction to the theme of the workshop by Dr. Deepali Nimbalkar and an address by Mr. Shivajirao Deshmukh, DG, VSI which focused on the significance of environmental issues for the industry and VSI's role in approaching them. Mr. Shekhar Gaikwad, in his inaugural address, advised the environmental officers to work with dedication and follow every norm strictly to minimize the impacts due to sugar industry and distilleries. He suggested making a pollution inventory

for sugar and distillery industry along with regular self audits & third part audits once in three years.

This workshop was arranged in two sessions, Technical Session I- Safety & Technical Session II- Environment. Mr. Isak Mujawar gave the first talk on general safety guidelines for the sugar and distillery industry (including HIRA). He explained the terms as Hazard, Risk and how to identify and control hazard as well as risk. He suggested setting up an emergency exit plan for worker's safety. The second lecture on PESO Guidelines for ethanol storage was delivered by Mr. Prakash Patil who explained The Petroleum Act, 1934 and Rules, 2002, in detail with the rules for import, transport & storage of petroleum and also the criteria for license. The final presentation in this session was made by Dr. Eknath Alhat, VSI who elaborated on the safety issues in Effluent Treatment Plants.

In the second session on environmental issues, Dr. SV Patil, Head & Technical Advisor, Dept. of Alcohol & Bio-fuels explained the various alternatives available to the distillery industry for achieving zero liquid discharge. The final talk was delivered by Dr. Deepali Nimbalkar on recent EIA Notification and its implications for sugar and distillery industry. She explained in detail about the notifications pertaining to the distilleries regarding fuel ethanol projects as also the EIA notification on violation projects. She also enlightened briefly about the draft notification regarding extraction of groundwater.

The workshop received a very good response with 79 participants who were active in the deliberations. All

the speakers received several questions which were answered to the satisfaction of the participants. Many participants requested VSI to arrange such workshops twice a year, so that they remain updated and it helps

to follow specific process and implementation of norms to take care of environment and to improve the status of mills as well as workers. The workshop ended with vote of thanks by Mr. Vivek Patil




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