

Cleaner Brick Production Technologies

- Promoting Fly Ash Brick Production in Bihar

Introduction

Traditionally the predominant walling material usage in Bihar is burnt clay bricks. This is due to the availability of good quality soil for producing bricks. However with increased awareness on pollution and resource usage, brick making community is increasingly looking at alternatives. To promote the same a one day workshop on “Cleaner Brick Production Technologies – Promoting Fly Ash Brick Production in Bihar” was organized on 30th November 2012 by National Thermal Power Corporation (NTPC), at Kahalgaon in association with Bihar State Pollution Control Board (BSPCB) and Development Alternatives (DA). The objective of the workshop was to bring together different stakeholders involved in the brick sector on a common platform to discuss challenges and solutions on fly ash brick making technologies and the final product.

The workshop was attended by more than 70 entrepreneurs, fly ash technology providers and presided by officials of NTPC, BSPCB and DA. The inaugural session presented an overview of the fly ash situation in the country and emphasized the need for action. Subsequent technical sessions by service providers e.g. TARA Machines and Tech Services Pvt. Ltd. presented solutions and the various technologies to utilize fly ash. After the technical sessions, demonstration visits to fly ash production technologies and units were also conducted on creating awareness on the various steps to produce fly ash bricks.

Interactive Session

After technical presentations, an interactive session was held to solve the issues and answer the queries of entrepreneurs and solve issues raised on technology, product and required policies. Participants had queries about the type of ash to be used and the modalities of collection from NTPC. Economics of the unit was a concern among the entrepreneurs when compared to a conventional burnt clay brick making unit. Issues were mainly raised on the quality, production cost and the investment required for setting up a fly ash enterprise. There were suggestions from entrepreneurs and Government to hold similar workshops in other locations in the state to increase awareness among entrepreneurs. It was strongly suggested to ensure marketing support to fly ash bricks. This it was recommended that government agencies should promote use of these products in government buildings and social housing schemes to ensure visibility and clarify any doubt on its quality.

Way Forward

As per demand of entrepreneurs, it was recommended that NTPC should prepare a manual on “How to Access Fly Ash from NTPC”. They were also requested to set up demo units to encourage more enterprises to start up and use these demo facilities to train workers and entrepreneurs. Regular awareness workshops were also requested to be held in and around NTPC.

The Government of Bihar should conduct large scale awareness campaigns especially on quality issues. They should recommend including skill development for brick production in the National Skill Development Programme. Use of fly ash bricks in public construction projects should be encouraged to promote its use.

DA would provide technical support during capacity building and awareness workshops and facilitate stakeholder engagement.