

Cleaner Brick Production Technologies

– Supporting Bihar's Initiative Towards a Low Carbon Economy

Introduction

A day long Workshop on Cleaner Brick Production Technologies- Supporting Bihar's Initiative Towards a Low Carbon Economy was organised by Bihar State Pollution Control Board (BSPCB) and Development Alternatives (DA) supported by Shakti Sustainable Energy Foundation on the 6th of December 2012 at Hotel Patliputra Ashok. The main objective of the workshop was to create awareness about various cleaner brick production technologies among entrepreneurs. The workshop brought together various stakeholders to deliberate on the various issues of entrepreneurs so that they are able to **practice and preach** cleaner brick technologies.

The workshop was attended by over 170 entrepreneurs, service providers, NTPC and various government officials. Shri.Sushil Kumar Modi, Hon'ble Deputy Chief Minister, Bihar graced the occasion as Chief Guest.

Hon'ble Deputy Chief Minister address

While appreciating the effort of the various stakeholders on the brick sector, Shri.Modi, reiterated that the main objective of cleaner brick production technologies should be to use less coal, less top soil and reducing pollution. It was also directed that such a Workshop be organised on a bigger scale with entrepreneurs' participation from each district throughout the state. It was emphasized that there is a need for policies and incentives related to this sector. It was announced that special focus will be given on incentives for entrepreneur who would be adopting new technologies. It will be modelled on the food processing industry in Bihar. He urged the experts to document the best practices and incentives offered to brick sector in other States so that Bihar can consider in adopting the same. It was also advised to implement MoEF notification. Misconceptions about fly ash bricks should also be removed from the minds of people. In addition to promotion of fly ash the Govt. of Bihar alongwith other organizations will relook on the strategy of the brick sector. Schedule of Rates will also be revised to include Fly Ash and other eco-friendly technologies. The setting up and role of Task Force was appreciated with a hope to see a difference in this sector in the next 3 years.

Interactive Session

The major issues raised by entrepreneurs were on the exemption of fly ash bricks from VAT, lack of awareness among the entrepreneurs about the process of procurement of fly ash from NTPC and revision of rate of fly ash bricks in the Schedule of Rates. There is also a need to relook at NOC for cleaner brick production. Entrepreneurs also requested the appointment of a nodal officer in the government for clarification of any issues. Member Secretary, BSPCB was appointed as the nodal officer for the same. It was encouraged to bring issues related to adoption of cleaner brick production technologies to the Task Force through BSPCB which will be promptly attended to.

Way Forward

Adoption of fly ash technologies to be accelerated in specific areas like Muzzafarpur, Nabinagar, Barh, Bhagalpur etc. once quality raw materials are available. Efforts should also be to get support from entrepreneurship training schemes of World Bank to build capacity of young entrepreneurs in adopting cleaner brick production technologies. Diploma courses on brick making will be introduced. Mining royalty will be changed on the basis of technology. Waiver of VAT on fly ash bricks will also be considered.