

MINUTES OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL PUBLIC HEARING FOR PROPOSED EXPANSION IN EXISTING UNIT OF SUGAR CANE CRUSHING CAPACITY FROM 2,500.0 TCD TO 5,000.0 TCD (INCREASE BY 2,500.0 TCD) & CO-GENERATION UNIT FROM 10.0 MW TO 18 MW (INCREASE BY 8.0 MW) & NEW ESTABLISHMENT OF 110.0 KLPD MOLASSES/SYRUP BASED ETHANOL DISTILLERY UNIT AT GUT NO.798/1, 798/2, 780/2/1, 795/2, 797/2, 797/3, 793/1, 793/2, 794/1, 794/2, 785/1, 25, KHARDI, TALUKA-PANDHARPUR, DISTRICT - SOLAPUR, MAHARASHTRA PROPOSED BY PROJECT PROPONENT M/S SITARAM MAHARAJ SAKHAR KARKHANA (KHARDI) LIMITED, KHARDI, TALUKA-PANDHARPUR, DISTRICT - SOLAPUR, MAHARASHTRA

The Environment Public Hearing for proposed expansion in existing unit of Sugar Cane Crushing Capacity from 2,500.0 TCD TO 5,000.0 TCD (INCREASE BY 2,500.0 TCD) & CO-GENERATION UNIT FROM 10.0 MW TO 18 MW (INCREASE BY 8.0 MW) & NEW ESTABLISHMENT OF 110.0 KLPD MOLASSES/SYRUP BASED ETHANOL DISTILLERY UNIT at Gut No. 798/1, 798/2, 780/2/1, 795/2, 797/2, 797/3, 793/1, 793/2, 794/1, 794/2, 785/1, 25, Khardi, Taluka - Pandharpur, District - Solapur, Maharashtra proposed by Project Proponent M/s Sitaram Maharaj Sakhar Karkhana (Khardi) Limited, Khardi, Taluka - Pandharpur, District-Solapur, Maharashtra was conducted on Thursday, the 02nd February, 2023 at 12.30 noon at project site.

Shri Nikhil Jalindar More, Sub Regional Officer, Maharashtra Pollution Control Board, Solapur and Convener of the Environment Public Hearing Committee welcomed Sou. Shama Pawar, Additional District Magistrate, Solapur and Chairperson of the Environment Public Hearing Committee; Shri Shankar L. Waghmare, Regional Officer, Maharashtra Pollution Control Board, Pune and Member of the Environment Public Hearing Committee; Environmentalists, NGOs, Journalists and Company Officials and

[Signature]

local people/participants who were present and with permission of Chairman, Environment Public Hearing Committee started the proceedings.

He appealed all to follow the strict guidelines of Central Government and State Government for COVID epidemic and keep the distance inbetween two persons and wear a mask.

Convener, Environment Public Hearing Committee informed that as per the Environment Impact Assessment (EIA) Notification of Ministry of Environment, Forest & Climate Change, Govt. of India, (i.e. MoEF & CC, GoI) dated 14th September, 2006 as amended on 1st December, 2009, it is mandatory to conduct prior public consultation to certain projects which are covered in the schedule of the said Notification.

He informed that Maharashtra Pollution Control Board was in receipt of application from Project Proponent M/s Sitaram Maharaj Sakhar Karkhana (Khardi) Limited, Khardi, Taluka - Pandharpur, District-Solapur, Maharashtra for proposed expansion in existing unit of Sugar Cane Crushing Capacity from 2,500.0 TCD TO 5,000.0 TCD (INCREASE BY 2,500.0 TCD) & CO-GENERATION UNIT FROM 10.0 MW TO 18 MW (INCREASE BY 8.0 MW) & NEW ESTABLISHMENT OF 110.0 KLPD MOLASSES/SYRUP BASED ETHANOL DISTILLERY UNIT at Gut No. 798/1, 798/2, 780/2/1, 795/2, 797/2, 797/3, 793/1, 793/2, 794/1, 794/2, 785/1, 25, Khardi, Taluka - Pandharpur, District - Solapur, Maharashtra.

Convener further informed as per EIA Notification, 2006 the category of project falls under Category A schedule 5 (g) and 5 (j) which requires to obtain prior Environmental Clearance from the Environment, Forest & Climate Change, Govt of India, New Delhi , for which prior environmental consultation is mandatory.

Convener informed that the aim of conducting prior public consultation is to make aware, local people who can be participant in the hearing and they should know the developmental activities and Environment Management Plan of the unit.

Project Proponent had submitted online prescribed application on 06-07-2022 alongwith pre-feasibility report to the, Ministry of Environment, Forest & Climate Change, Govt. of India, New Delhi and it has been considered and given online approval on 15-07-2022.

After sanction of District Collector, Solapur to conduct the Physical Environment Public Hearing on Thursday, the 02nd February, 2023 at 12.30 noon, and as per the Notification dated 14-09-2006 issued by Ministry of Environment, Forest & Climate Change, Govt. of India, (MoEF & CC, Gol), New Delhi and subsequent amendment on 01-12-2019, Member Secretary, Maharashtra Pollution Control Board, Mumbai has constituted Public Hearing Panel vide Board's Office Order No. E- 07 of 2023 under letter no. BO/JD (WPC)/PH/B- 230119 FTS- 0149 dated 19-01-2023 :-

1) District Magistrate-Solapur
or his representative not below
the rank of an Additional District
Magistrate

Chairman

2) Representative of Maharashtra
Pollution Control Board, Mumbai -
Regional Officer – Pune,
Maharashtra Pollution Control Board,
Pune

Member

3) Sub Regional Officer,
Maharashtra Pollution Control Board,
Solapur

Convener

As per said Notification, 30 days' advance public notice was published by Sub Regional Officer, Maharashtra Pollution Control Board, Solapur in the Local Newspaper in Daily Sanchar in Marathi and in National Newspaper Indian Express in English on 02-01-2023. The public were appealed to send their suggestions, views, doubts or objections regarding the proposed unit.

Also copy of EIA report and executive summery were made available in Marathi and in English at various notified Government offices as under:-

- 1) Ministry of Environment, Forest & Climate Change, Zonal Office, Western-Central Zone, New Secretariat Building, Ground Floor, East Wing, Civil Line, Nagpur-440 001;
- 2) District Collector, Solapur;
- 3) Chief Executive Officer, Zilla Parishad, Solapur;
- 4) General Manager, District Industries Center, Solapur;
- 5) Block Vikas Adhikari, Panchayat Samiti, Taluka - Pandharpur, District - Solapur;
- 6) Tahsildar, Tahsil Office, Pandharpur, District - Solapur;
- 7) Sarpanch, Gram Panchayat Offices - Mouje - Khardi, Shetfal, Sangewadi, Umbargaon, Tanali, Shirmavi, Methwade, Marapur, District - Solapur;
- 8) Environment & Climate Change Department, Maharashtra Government, New Administrative Building, 15th Floor, Mantralaya, Madam Cama Road, Mumbai – 400 032;
- 9) Joint Director (WPC), Maharashtra Pollution Control Board, Head Office, Mumbai;
- 10) Regional Officer, Regional Office-Pune, Maharashtra Pollution Control Board, Jog Center, 3rd Floor, Wakadewadi, Old Pune Mumbai Road, Pune – 411 003;
- 11) Sub Regional Officer, Sub Regional Office, Maharashtra Pollution Control Board, Solapur;
- 12) Website of Maharashtra Pollution Control Board, Mumbai;

Convener informed that an opportunity is given to all participants to raise any doubts, suggestions or objections regarding the proposed project in environmental angle, which can be submitted by orally or in writing also.

Convener asserted that this Committee is only for recording public opinion, suggestions, objections and has no right to approve, reject or recommend the project.

The suggestions/objections raised by the participants in the public hearing will be noted and it will be included in the minutes of the meeting.

Similarly, the revised Environmental Assessment Report of the Project Proponent and minutes of the meeting after approval of Chairperson will be submitted through MPCB Head Office to the Department of Environment, Forest & Climate Change, Government of India, New Delhi after taking note of the video recording of the said meeting, suggestions and objections recorded in the meeting. An Expert Committee there takes further decision regarding the same He requested Chairperson of the Environment Public Hearing Committee to inform Project Proponent to start the presentation

With the permission of the Chairperson, the Environmental Consultant of the project made a presentation on the entire Environmental Management Plan (EMP) for the proposed project. She gave information about the geographical location of the proposed project, potential impact on the environment due to the proposed project, Environmental Management Plan (EMP) prepared for it, Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) Fund and Corporate Environmental Responsibility (CER) Fund.

It is informed that investment for this project would be Rupees 319.19 crores. Project Proponent has ear-marked Rupees 2915.0 lakh for environmental responsibility. The project is Zero Liquid Discharge Project.

After the presentation, Chairperson, Environment Public Hearing Committee appealed participants to raise their suggestions, objections if any regarding the proposed project in environmental angle only. While raising the suggestions, objections, mention your name and village name while registering suggestions or objections.

FOLLOWING PARTICIPANTS HAVE TAKEN PART IN THE DISCUSSIONS AND ANSWERS GIVEN BY PROJECT CONSULTANT/PROJECT PROPONENT/ENVIRONMENT PUBLIC HEARING COMMITTEE:-

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1) Shri Santosh Vishwanath Pawar, Residence - Methavade, Tal - Sangola, District - Solapur:-

We are residents of Methwade village. The water source of Methwade village has been damaged due to the sewage released from the factory. We face bad odour due to factory sludge being released in our area. There is a school next to where the sewage is discharged.

The Presentation states that no effluent will be released from the project. However, it should be disclosed when the discharge of waste water will be stopped. For the last three years, the sewage is being released outside the factory and even now the sewage is being released. It should be closed this year itself.

Project Proponent - Chief Executive Officer of the project said that as an Owner, we have taken over the factory only last year. Here, first a study was done on what changes need to be made. Attempts were made not to release the treated wastewater outside the plant in a very short period of time while making technical changes in the factory.

The CPU has been commissioned at the project. Only after treating and testing the effluent from the project site, it is released in the 13 acres of land owned by the factory. The wastewater from that process is not hazardous.

Since last year, the process effluent after treatment is recycled and reused in the production process of the project and the remaining treated effluent is being discharged in the factory owned premises. Now the expansion project will be a Zero Liquid Discharge (ZLD) project as per the guidelines of Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Govt. of India, New Delhi (MoEF & CC, GOI, New Delhi); Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) and Maharashtra Pollution Control Board (MPCB).

Not a drop of treated effluent from the project will be released outside the project. The waste water generated in the project will be treated, recycled and reused in the production process itself. Similarly, the water will be generated in granular form and disposed of properly. Not a single drop of water will go out of the project.

**2) Shri Madhav Rama Mane, Residence - Tapkiri Shetfal,
Taluka-Pandharpur, District - Solapur:-**

I want this project should be started as soon as possible and hundred local young boys of the area should get job opportunities.

**3) Shri Somnath Aare, Residence - Tapkiri Shetfal,
Taluka-Pandharpur, District - Solapur:-**

The factory which is in operation is running properly now and many young boys of our area are working in this factory. There are many educated young boys and girls in our area. So will sons of soil/bhoomiputras get job in expansion project and new distillery project?

Chief Executive Officer of the Project said that around 400 people are currently working in the project. Out of which, 250 workers are permanent and 150 workers are hired on seasonal basis. Among them, 330 workers are from nearby villages. Some of the workers were skilled and some were unskilled. Those who were not skilled, were trained in the project and given job opportunities. So far, the production of this factory was 2,500 TCD. The plant will produce 5,000 TCD after approval of the project expansion and will require about 100-125 additional skilled workers after setting up the new distillery plant. So our 100% efforts will be to get those employees, workers who are local people and from the nearby villages only. The ITI colleges in the area will be requested by the



Project Proponent to send the names of skilled young boys and girls of the nearby villages. They will be given job opportunities.

She said that two colleges in the locality have agreed to give the names of skilled young men and women from the local areas and nearby villages. Project management is committed to provide job opportunities to the local young boys and girls.

4) Shri Samadhan Ronge, Residence - Khardi, Taluka - Pandharpur, District - Solapur :-

Sugarcane problem in our village is 100% solved due to this factory. Young boys here got job opportunities due to this project and due to the project only, there has been a huge increase in indirect business in the surrounding villages. On behalf of the people of the village and surrounding villages, I thank the Factory Administration for starting this factory.

Now, due to this project expansion and new distillery project, local people will get new job opportunities. It is necessary to support the factory by taking a positive stance regarding whatever small or big problems the local people have. Like others, I also went with some questions and the Factory Administration took a positive decision. The factory is also doing good social work. However, while wishing the project, I request the Government to approve the said project immediately.

5) Shri Sanjay Chaugule, Residence-Gunjegaon, Taluka - Mangalvedha, District - Solapur:-

I have vineyards and sugarcane fields. For this, I take the water and after checking the pH, TDS, BOD, COD, Chloride, Sulphates, I use it for the vineyards and

sugarcane fields. Since last twelve years, there has been no problem. Project Proponent is constructing 18 MW co-generation plant and 110.0 KLPD distillery plant. Will there be any pollution problem due to this project in future?

Project Proponent congratulated him as a conscious farmer, for first checking the water and then giving it to the farm. There is a possibility of pollution of surface water and ground water due to the project. So, you yourself said that after testing the water, it is suitable for agriculture that is why you have been using water for the last twelve years. This is a relief to Project Management.

The project expansion and the new distillery plant will require the use of additional chemicals in project production that have not been used so far. Here, the directions of Central Pollution Control Board and Maharashtra Pollution Control Board will be followed to avoid pollution.

If the generated sewage gets mixed with the soil, then only pollution occurs, so we are going to make sewage granules. It will be made available for compost or bricks making. The waste water produced will not mix with the soil. Hence, there will be no pollution.

6) Shri Sunanda Reddy, an Environmentalist, Telanga:-

My best wish for expansion and commissioning of new distillery project. I am the first environmentalist in India who support industries. At the age of 65 years, I am healthiest environmentalist in India. Why I am supporting the industries, in my opinion unemployment is the major pollution to the society. Water, air, soil, noise pollution can be controlled at any stage. Here I am giving few suggestions to the management-

Your consultant has already prepared EIA report. It is very good and satisfactory. I am giving few suggestions -

- a) Whatever you plant plantation, instead of normal plants,



fruit bearing plants, medicinal plants take up. It is very useful in future and medicinal value plants will control air pollution. I am requesting you within the CSR Fund, you can do it. No extra fund is required;

- b) Also, I am requesting, if possible, carry survey for health status of the people, crops production status and ground water availability status. It is very useful in future to take precautionary measures to maintain ecological balance; If it is possible, please do carry though it is not mandatory.
- c) I am also requesting to form a Co-ordination Committee with village sarpanches, human groups with the management and officials to take CSR budget. Meeting will decide "Demand Oriented Work." Credibility comes to the management.

I am also requesting this is "Farmers' Friendly Industry." As a practical environmentalist, I am demanding Ministry of Environment, if there is possibility, please exempt the public hearing process for such industries. Recently in Corona epidemic, the interim dates have been exempted from the public hearing. Recently Nagpur High Court Bench have taken decision to exempt the public hearing for minor metal for the public utility. Actually, the pollution can occur in industries like fertilizers, pesticides, vehicular pollution and what are habits of the food taking processes, these 4-5 items are affecting the pollution. This is only 1/10th of the pollution. Very minor pollution due to this project.

The management is spending 300 crores, 100 people will get direct job opportunities in the project. As per my reading, 1,500 indirect people will be benefitted. This is very important aspects.

With help of the government, if you promote drip irrigation in the sugar cane cropping, the great credibility will come to you. With the help of Government, you should carry. With help of Government, provide technical guidance to the local farmers for keeping ecological balance activities to save the water. Once again my best wishes to the project. I am requesting MoEF & CC, Govt. of India to give unconditional permission to this project.

CEO thanked for support of the project. Chief Executive Officer said that you said that plantation should be done more. This will control the air pollution. She said that I myself is working as an NGO. We have planted trees on a large scale. Government of Maharashtra has noted our efforts for green belt development and given us "Vanashree Award" in 2005. Five thousand trees were planted and preserved.

We have donated 61,000 trees on behalf of Head of Sitaram Maharaj Family. Similarly, there is an appeal in the meeting to plant fruit bearing trees and medicinal value plants. We are donating more and more mango trees.

It is suggested that a Co-ordinating Committee for spending of CSR Fund is proposed to be constituted. Environmental Consultant has said that we are going to spend 2.3 crores in the next three years.

As suggested by you, a Co-ordination Committee will be first constituted for spending of CSR Fund and after discussions only, the appropriation will be made accordingly.

For the last one and a half years, the students who were giving civil exams, there were facilities available to them. Study books are made available for competitive exams after 10th, 12th for civil exams. Some of the teachers here were preparing to teach without payment. Tables, chairs, cupboards, projectors, computers have been provided to them. After our help, the people of the village also helped them.

The students there have studied and succeeded in the competitive examination. In one year, its benefit was seen that succeed students there have also got job opportunities.

Last year we gave bicycles to 25 studying girls, Similarly, health camps, blood donation camps have been organized. 250-300 people have donated blood.

Medicines were distributed, food packets were distributed during Ashadhi Wari. About five thousand people benefited from it.

As you suggested that unemployment is the biggest pollution, unemployment is not pollution but unemployment causes insecurity, depression. The expansion of the project and the new distillery will result in a huge increase in indirect business in the area, benefiting around 1,500 people. Similarly, more than 5,000 farmers are members of this sugar factory, who contribute sugarcane to the factory.

We take care of them too. We consider it our duty to create employment and not just promise employment. We are happy to say that this year all the Members have been paid their dues and we are paying the wages to the working staff and increments also in every year.

7) Shri Maruti Sambha Matal, Ex-Sarpanch, Residence-Tapkiri Shetfal, Taluka - Pandharpur, District - Solapur:-

This Sitaram Maharaj Sugar Factory construction was desired by the farmers, so water was supplied to this factory with the approval of Tapkiri Shetphal Gram Panchayat. This factory has benefited the Tapkiri Shetfal village. The sugar factories in the area were not in operation last year, but this factory did complete sugarcane crushing and thus avoided loss of the farmers.



Sons of local farmers are given job opportunities in this factory without considering any political party. In this factory, the Farmers-Members are paid the bill for the rate of sugarcane crop on time, the workers are paid on time. Hence, I request the Government to approve this expansion and new distillery project.

Chief Executive Officer thanked for the suggestion. Convener, Environment Public Hearing Committee appealed all participants to raise any views, suggestions or objections regarding the proposed project in environmental angle only.

8) Shri Santosh Dattu Chavade, Residence -

Now in this meeting, it is informed that the treated waste water from the factory is discharged in the factory farm. It is not released in the field, but it is released in the canal. We suffer due to this act. The ash from the factory flies on our crop, it also suffers us. Because that ash accumulates on corn, on grass which is given to animals. It is given to the cattle and goes into the stomach of the cattle.

My house is just near the distance from the factory. The factory bagasse is blown away. My eyes are still red from that ash, so what are we just talking about the environment? We have the photos of raised objections.

CEO of the Project said that you are not wrong that ash flies. An ESP (Electro-Static Precipitator) system has been installed to the stack to arrest the pollutants from the smoke that comes out of the chimney. It gives 99.9% efficiency. It does not emit harmful pollutants, so there is no need to worry about smoke. The boiler, which will be commissioned next year, will have state-of-the-art equipment.

She said that due to the wind, the bagasse is blown away, but local farmers transport the bagasse from the factory to the fields. It also falls on the road, so the

bagasse doesn't seem to have any harmful effects. The project will be executed by following all Government directives. The project will be upgraded/improved only after taking confidence of local people.

Here again Convener, Environment Public Hearing Committee appealed all participants to raise any views, suggestions or objections regarding the proposed project in environmental angle only. There was no response from the participants.

Convener informed that the suggestions, objections raised during the meeting are noted and it will be included in the minutes of the meeting. The written suggestions, objections will be attached alongwith final EIA and minutes of the meeting with approval of Chairperson, Environment Public Hearing Committee and it will be submitted through Head Office, Maharashtra Pollution Control Board to Environment, Forest & Climate Change, Government of India, New Delhi. An Expert Committee there will take further decision.

Convener, Environment Public Hearing Committee thanked all for attending the Environment Public Hearing and raising suggestions, objections. He thanked all project officials and government officials and on behalf of Chairperson, Environment Public Hearing Committee declared that the meeting is concluded.

The meeting ended extending thanks to the Chair.

Written 06 suggestions/ objections/ comments/ complaints are enclosed herewith. The details are as mentioned below:-

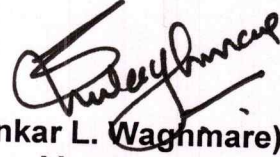
- 1) Shri. Samadhan Vitthal Jagdale
- 2) Shri. Santosh Dattu Daunde
- 3) Mr. Mahalinga Dudhale
- 4) Shri. Ganesh Tatya Jadhav
- 5) Smt. Vootkuri Sunanda Reddy, Environmentalist, Dharithri
Paryavarana Parirakshana. Samastha



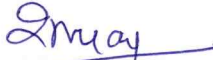
6) Shri. Rangarao Kokhonda, Save Earth, Metro Urban and Rural
Development Society



(Nikhil Jalindar More)
Convener,
Environment Public Hearing Committee
And
Sub Regional Officer, Maharashtra
Pollution
Control Board,
Solapur



(Shankar L. Waghmare)
Member,
Environment Public Hearing Committee
And
Regional Officer,
Maharashtra Pollution
Control Board,
Pune



(Sou. Shama Pawar),
Chairperson
Environment Public Hearing Committee
And
Additional District Magistrate, Solapur
District - Solapur