



SERI news

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*With you in Pursuit of Sustainable
Management of Finite Water Resources*

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Point for discussion this month

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**How the Corporate Social Responsibility
can save our fresh water bodies?**

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Eternal Words

"In the long term, economic sustainability depends on ecological sustainability."

- *"America's Living Oceans"* [Pew Oceans Report, 2003]

"You must be the change you wish to see in the world."

- *Mahatma Gandhi*

Without the land, the rivers, the oceans, the forests, the sunshine, the minerals and thousands of natural resources we would have no economy whatsoever

- Satish Kumar, ecological campaigner (2008)

Environmental Clearance for Steel Giant

- Mr. Pradnyesh Agre

Queued for the last eight years, Posco Steel plant having capacity of 12 million tonnes per year now has been finding positive nodes. Its turning to be the biggest foreign direct investment in India as the environment ministry, GOI under Veerappa Moily has approved the \$ 12.6 billion Posco steel plant in Orissa. It got the green signal after getting delinked from the port project after Govt asks environment ministry to fast track of 27 major infra projects.

Posco India requested Cabinet Committee on Investment to fast-track the inordinately delayed project. Revalidation of lapsed environmental clearance was done days before South Korea's President Park Geun-hye visit to India. Posco's integrated steel plant and port project was originally proposed on some 4,000 acres in the coastal town of Jagatsinghpur in Orissa.

Despite willingness of MoEF to give the clearance to the project, opposition over land acquisition issues was the obstacle. During discussion of South Korea's ambassador with Mr. Moily, green node was given with suggestion of delinking the plant and port projects. This has reduced the area of project to 2700 acres. It has been granted approval on meritorious argument with all requisite conditions as there was no valid reason for holding up one project because of another.

The logjam cleared within three weeks of Mr. Moily replacing Ms. Jayanthi Natarajan as environment minister. After taking over the charge from Jayanthi on December 24, 2013 Moily learnt to have issued clearances to around 15 projects including Posco. The MoEF has asked Posco to spend five per cent of its total investment on 'enterprise social commitment' based on local needs. Apart from retaining the conditions laid down in the original clearance in 2007, MoEF has put 23 additional conditions such as no withdrawal of ground water for the project and submission of its policy on 'corporate environment responsibility' within three months.

The compensation for environment degradation or cost for environmental impacts mitigation from such big projects can be utilized in proper way. The CSR can be readily used in restoration of our deadly polluted rivers with integrated Lentic and a Lotic basin management principle that includes process development approach rather than just infrastructure development. On parameter of sustainable ecological development FDI should be diverted for improvement of environmental status in India. The proper and strict guidelines that seek non negotiable environment protection should be implemented. The governance and social vigilance should be also incorporated in all project phases.

Dear Readers,

Yale University's recent revelation of Environmental Performance Index has fixed India in a very tight spot. Many such revelations have fixed national capital Delhi in a tight spot of being pollution capital due to its failure in protecting and conserving Yamuna River. The real analysis of sustainability of water quality issue of Yamuna river is centred on the lack of coordination between various statutory and constitutional local, state and federal agencies. Even the judicial directives could not revive the pollution-dead Yamuna and bring ecological life back to the river. One interesting fact about CPCB's submission to Supreme Court of India in 2007 that the experts of the central government's this statutory body stated green bridge technology as one of the promising technologies to revive river in short duration. Government of Delhi State and Government of India are yet to come to common platform which can help them arrive at consensus for the "in-situ ecological operation of Yamuna River" to make it demonstrable success to the world.

Awarding environmental clearance should be a most responsible decision with a stated commitment from the government as well as from the industrial units for maintaining the liveable environment for residents and ecosystems of that region. The brunt of environmental deterioration should not be borne by the society at large. Proposed industrial growth must contribute to economic growth of the region with timely corrective measures for environmental deterioration in terms of loss of water quality of rivers, lakes and groundwaters, loss of soil fertility, and air pollution. Reflection of these intentions must be documented in the environmental clearance certificate granted to industries.

SESS's programme of workshop and conference was well-attended by international and national experts - likes of Dr. Masahisa Nakamura, Chairman ILEC-SCICOMM, Dr. S. P. Gautam in Ludhiana in January 2014. The objective of assessing the status of the work completion was fulfilled and the implementer was directed to take the corrective actions as per the observations by experts. After the programme, the experts had opportunity to update honourable Chief Minister of Punjab Government about the progress of Buddha NEER Project - an ambitious first of its kind bioremediation project on 600 MLD polluted river y Government of India.

Thank you,
Chief Editor

Delhi: A Pollution Capital

- Miss. Bhargavi Thorve

(Internee from TERI University)

The magnitude and effects of environmental problems in Delhi has an extreme effect on health and quality of life as well as on natural functioning of ecosystems. According to the 2011 Census of India, Delhi accommodates about 22 million people and has the highest cluster of small scale industries. There are increasing concerns all around the world about Delhi's increasing level of pollution and the governments' lack of interest in curbing the pollution.

It is repeatedly reported that the daily examination of pollution figures suggests that Delhi's air is heavily loaded with dangerous small particulate matter which causes diseases like lung cancer. It's dominated with high levels of PM 10, PM 2.5 and Benzene with other harmful pollutants that have hazardous effects on public health. With recent media reports, it looks like Delhi Pollution Control Committee and the Central Pollution Control Board lacks in stringency and aggressive approach for cleaning up their air. While making a wise decision of implementing Euro IV norms in the city for fuels and vehicles, it is expected to reduce PM and NOx emissions to half of its concentration levels. Even though, all busses and auto rickshaws run on CNG and public transport has been better by Metro, more number of cars have been flooding the roads of Delhi. This clearly indicates that the local authorities' lacks intervention or enforcement in upgrading transport infrastructure and taking charge of controlling private vehicles rise.

Throughout the winter season the levels of hazardous particulate matter and other gaseous components causing diseases were at least two to three times higher than the permissible limits. Yale University in 2014 has ranked India 155 among 178 nations in its study on nations fare in environmental performance. A study also reveals that Indians have the world's weakest lungs, and have increasing rate of deaths due to asthma.

Over the years many scientists and doctors have reported the frequency of chronic respiratory symptoms, increased risk of developing rickets amongst the children, policemen showing high benzene exposure and poor lung functioning due to killer smog that appears during the dry winter spells.

It is important to meet the ambient air quality standards prescribed by the 12th Five Year Plan as Delhi's air is getting worse. To turn the pollution clock back there is a need of time bound action plan to restrain cars, upgrade public transport system with walking and cycling access and to set a time line for Euro V/VI emissions standard for both oil and automobile sector.

Exposure to noxious levels of air pollutants is a seasonal issue. But along with air pollution Delhi also faces various other problems leading to degradation of environment. There is massive dumping of construction waste along roads, vacant plots and water bodies. This is not only causing heavy dust pollution in air but also choking the floodplains of Yamuna River. The ammonia concentration in Yamuna is the rising concern of Delhi Jal Board. Due to the polluting industries in Haryana discharging untreated waste directly in to the river has made it difficult to supply clean water to Delhiites. The Central Pollution Control Board has suggested Delhi to upgrade its raw water treatment plants. Increase in pollution has forced Delhi Jal Board to cut production of water treatment plants by 50%. If downstream people consume this water, it could result in stomach poisoning, sudden hair loss and skin diseases. Along with point sources there are several other non point sources adding hazardous chemicals in to the river.

Delhi has three major sanitary landfill sites; Ghazipur, Okhla and Bhalsawa Jahangirpuri- which have exceeded their life span resulting into huge garbage mountains. It has been reported that the Capital needs to identify a new landfill sites for the dumping of waste in nearing future. The existing landfills are not properly maintained and constructed leading to filtration of a black thick liquid, leaching through the landfill and making groundwater as well as soil highly toxic. It also drains into the surface water as rainwater runoff and methane gas poisoning air. Delhi faces poor segregation of waste, non-functioning of compost plants and has informal way of door-to-door collection of waste.

The need of the hour is to focus on implementation of the set norms and standards which have long-term implications. It is important to create institutional co-operation and improve institutional structures for strict monitoring and have urgent policy interventions. Though the international focus is on Delhi for its exceeding pollution levels there is lack of public pressure for policy actions. This is due to poor information in the public domain. The city should emphasize on building awareness and interpretation of data in relation to more stringent standards like that of Beijing, in case of air pollution. The wide spread coverage of problems and pollution across the city needs to be addressed in order to make people understand its adverse effects on human health. In Delhi due to people's aggressive response, in past, the polluting industries were shifted out of the city with improved emission standards. At present, people are concerned about air and water pollution but there is a need of consistent and aggressive involvement of people to push government to take actions to control pollution in Delhi.

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From SERI's Desk

Workshop and Conference on Eco-restoration of Lentic- Lotic Systems through Six Pillar Approach of Integrated Lake Basin Management

Shrishti Environment and Sustainability Society (SESS) had conducted a two days workshop and Conference on Eco-restoration of Lentic- Lotic Systems through Six Pillar Approach of Integrated Lake Basin Management in association with Indian Ecological Society (IES), Punjab Agriculture University (PAU), Ludhiana and Youth for Sustainable Development, Shimla on 7th and 8th January 2014. The Conference was about the dissemination of rightful, authentic information of the monitoring and implementation work done in prestigious Buddha NEER Project coordinated by India's premium regulatory institution Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) which is really a path-breaking approach taken by the government to find the solution of pollution elimination which do not require electricity and chemotherapy.

Workshop began with site visit to Buddha NEER project site at Jainpur Bridge. All the participants including Dr. Nakamura, Members of Gujarat Pollution Control Board Team, researchers from PAU, and members of Youth for sustainable development, SESS, SEERAM, GRIN visited the Green Bridges installation site on Buddha stream to understand the treatment system and to observe the changes in the stream.

After the site visit all participants gathered in Dumra Auditorium, Dayanand Medical College, Ludhiana to attend brainstorming session on lentic-lotic system with the ILEC perspective.

The session was opened by Sandeep Joshi, President, SESS, Pune by introducing Guest of honour Dr. S. P. Gautam, Ex-Chairman CPCB, Dr. Nakamura, Chairman ILEC, Japan and Mr. Ravindar Singh, Chairman PPCB.

On next day i.e. 8th January conference in opening session Dr. Mangesh Kashyap welcomed all. Mr. Bihari Sharma introduced the chief guest Prof. Rajendra Bhandari (Chairman, Deputy planning commission, Ludhiana).

In technical Session I papers were presented under theme of Monitoring & analysis of lentic-lotic systems. While summarizing session chaired by Dr Mangesh Kashyap, he presented the views about agronomic way to success

In second session about Eco-technology for waste treatment and Governance & participation for restoration of water bodies Er. Pratik Nayak, (GPCB) shared initiative by GPCB and Vinod Bodhankar (Jalbiradari) put forward peoples involvement in restoration of water bodies.

Mrs. Sayali Joshi summed up the session chaired by her with astounding remarks .She discussed the application of Eco-technologies and their impact on socio-economical status of community.

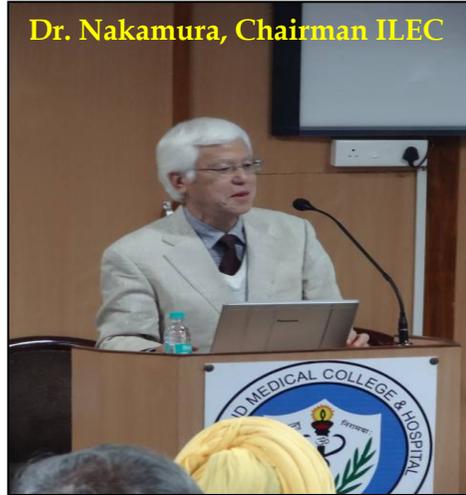
Dr. Sanjeev Chauhan Summarized the event and Dr. Mangesh Kashyap expressed vote of thanks.

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**Ravinder Singh, Chairman
PPCB**



Dr. Nakamura, Chairman ILEC



Dr. Gautam, Ex-Chairman CPCB



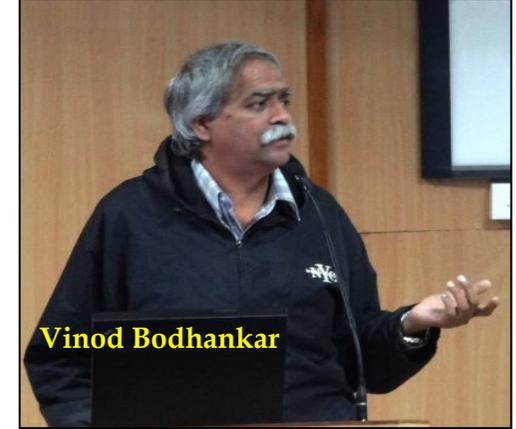
Sayali Joshi, VP, SESS



Sandeep Joshi, President SESS



Dr. Mangesh Kashyap



Vinod Bodhankar



Prof. Rajendra Bhandari



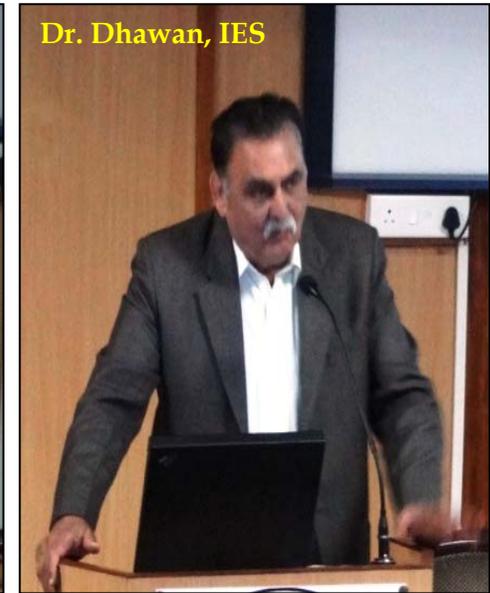
Pratik Nayak, GPCB



Dr. Pramod Salaskar



Dr. Chauhan, PAU



Dr. Dhawan, IES



Felicitation of Chairman PPCB



Felicitation of Rajendra Bhandari



Felicitation of PPCB team



Felicitation of GPCB team



August gathering at Buddha NEER Ludhiana Workshop