

Proceedings of the Public Hearing for the proposed expansion project of M/s. IFB Agro Industries Ltd. at Vill. Durgapur, P.O. Noorpur, Dist. 24 Parganas (S) held at the office of Noorpur Gram Panchayat under Diamond Harbour-II Panchayat Samity on 17/10/2006.

M/s. IFB Agro Industries Ltd. has proposed to install 60KLD grain based Distillery unit under the expansion project of it's existing plant at Vill. Durgapur, P.O. Noorpur, Dist. 24 Parganas (S).

At the beginning of the public hearing, Dr. T. K. Gupta, Senior Environmental Engineer & In Charge – Consent Cell, West Bengal Pollution Control Board explained about the provisions of EIA and the public hearing notification of Ministry of Environment and Forest, Govt. of India. He also explained about the provisions of EIA and the public hearing of the new notifications of the Ministry of Environment and Forest, Govt. of India dated 14th September, 2006. He requested the project proponent to make a presentation about their project for the benefit of the panel members and other public present in the hearing. He also requested that questions should be associated with the proposed project and should be environment related.

Project Proponent (PP) then explained about the project, the likely environmental impacts arising out of the same as well as the proposed pollution abatement measures. In their presentation the PP expressed their apprehension that in near future the molasses would be used only for producing fuel ethanol, and the potable sector of alcohol may be forced to switch over to grain based. Keeping this in mind, IFB is looking for the diversion as well as expansion towards establishing grain based distillery with modern eco-friendly technology.

During the discussion the panel members and the others present in the public hearing made queries/suggestions with respect to the proposed expansion project which are given below:

Shri Mukul Chandra Sepoi

1. Shri Mukul Chandra Sepoi stated that few years back, once the liquid effluent of your plant flooded the adjacent paddy field which burnt the paddy leaves and resulted very poor yield. He asked is there any chance to occur such incidents further.
2. He expressed his apprehension and stated that the air/gas coming out from the distillery may affects their health and may be the reason for growth of the cancer diseases.

Reply of the representatives of M/s. IFB Agro Industries Ltd.

The PP replied that it was happened long back, perhaps in the year 1997 some adjoining paddy fields were flooded with liquid effluent, discharged from their plant, because of the over-flown effluent pit due to heavy and incessant rain. Since then,

they had taken adequate measures to prevent such type of incident further. He stated that IFB Agro has already implemented ‘Zero Discharge’ project as per CREP recommendations and no polluting effluent would be discharged outside. The PP informed that in a distillery no material of carcinogenic nature is used or produced.

Shri Pratap Halder

He wanted to know what type of grain shall be used in the IFB Agro and whether the same can be supplied locally.

Reply of the representatives of M/s. IFB Agro Industries Ltd.

The PP clarified about the type of grain to be used in manufacturing of rectified spirit and stated that the grains are basically wastes in nature like broken rice, wheat, jowar, etc. He expressed that IFB Agro definitely welcome if these grains are made available locally.

Shri Debdut Mondal

He raised an issue that the under ground water level may decrease gradually by withdrawal of ground water by IFB Agro which may cause scarcity of ground water in the neighbouring areas.

Reply of the representatives of M/s. IFB Agro Industries Ltd.

The PP stated that IFB Agro has reduced the consumption of fresh water by recycling waste water in the process. IFB Agro is also implementing rain water harvesting and recharging the same to bore wells. Further, the grain based process requires less water compared to molasses based process. Moreover, as a part of social responsibility they are already supplying drinking water to the nearby villages (mainly east & west side of the distillery).

In this context Dr. T. K. Gupta stated that a new regulation has been issued by the Govt. of West Bengal, that to draw underground water / sink a deep or shallow tube well prior approval to be sought from the Competent Authority.

Dr. Gupta suggested that IFB Agro may undertake a joint venture scheme with Noorpur Gram Panchayat towards health check-up of the nearby village people on periodical basis.

Shri Bimalendu Baidya, Pradhan, Noorpur Gram Panchayat welcomed the expansion project of IFB Agro. He urged on IFB Agro in particular and WBPCB in general as guiding authority, that to maintain all precautions in respect of keeping healthy environment, and to go on the expansion project.

Smt Shova Samanta, Member, Zilla Parishad, South 24 Parganas appreciated the activities of IFB Agro in diversified ways and the usefulness of waste products/by-

products generated from the process. She also explained about the useful features of bio-fertilizer which can be procured from the IFB Agro and can be used by the local people.

Shri Rishi Halder, the local MLA welcomed the expansion project of IFB Agro. He said that the local people will be benefited in many ways for the plant. He expressed his urge on the local people to cooperate with the company in many ways; through the alternative source of raw material, viz. broken rice. IFB Agro shall generate the by-product/waste like rice cake which ultimately the local villagers can procure as their cattle feed, poultry feed, aqua feed, etc. he requested to WBPCB to oversee so that the plant operate maintaining environmental norms.

Dr. T. K. Gupta, Senior Environmental Engineer & In Charge – Consent Cell, West Bengal Pollution Control Board summarized the essence of interactions in the public hearing. He assured that IFB Agro is always under regular monitoring and strict vigilance and supervision of WBPCB. He also humbly requested the local village people through Panchayat that they should also simultaneously take the responsibility of interacting with the WBPCB through local Gram Panchayat about various industrial activities of IFB Agro on regular basis.

In general the panel members and the other participants observed that they have no objection in allowing the project to be set up with the all precautionary measures proposed to be taken by the PP.

Sd/-

(Dr. T. K. Gupta)

Senior Environmental Engineer & In Charge – Consent Cell
West Bengal Pollution Control Board