

MINUTES OF ENVIRONMENTAL PUBLIC HEARING

Minutes Of The Public Hearing Of proposed, for the production of RS/ENA/IA/Ethanol/Aviation Fuel, the installation of a new 655 KLPD multi-feed raw-material (spent wash / sugarcane juice / grain) based distillery plant, expansion of the distillery (from 45 KLPD to 700 KLPD), expansion of the sugar factory (from 5,000 TCD to 15,000 TCD), as well as a co-generation project (from 19.5 MW to 70 MW), and a compressed biogas (CBG) plant (30 TPD) By Project proponent Bhima Sahakari Sakhar Karkhana Ltd., Madhukarnagar, Patas, Taluka Daund, District Pune.

An Environmental Public Hearing for the capacity expansion project of Bhima Sahakari Sakhar Karkhana Ltd., Madhukarnagar, Patas, Taluka Daund, District Pune, Maharashtra for the above-mentioned RS/ENA/IA/Ethanol/Aviation Fuel production through a 655 KLPD multi-feed raw-material dependent distillery plant, distillery expansion (from 45 KLPD to 700 KLPD), sugar factory expansion (from 5,000 TCD to 15,000 TCD), co-generation project expansion (from 19.5 MW to 70 MW) and Compressed Biogas Plant (CBG 30 tons per day) was organized at the project site on Friday, 20-06-2025 at 12:00 PM.

Shri. Kartikeya Langote, Sub- Regional Officer, Pune-1, Maharashtra Pollution Control Board, Pune and Conveyer, Environmental Public Hearing Committee, welcomed Hon. Mr. Namdev Tilekar, Chairman and Additional District Magistrate , Pune, Shri. Navnath Awatade, Representative of Regional Officer, Pune and Sub Regional Officer, Regional Office Pune, of the project proponent, journalists, environment-focused organisations and local public on behalf of the Maharashtra Pollution Control Board and the District Collector Office, Pune. With the permission of the Hon. Chairman the Environmental Public Hearing was started.

The Convener has given an introduction regarding the purpose of the hearing as per the EIA Notification dated 14-09-2006 and its amendment dated 01-12-2009, issued by the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC), Government of India. It was emphasized that obtaining prior Environmental Clearance (EC) and organizing a public hearing are mandatory requirements for certain project categories.

The Convener of the Committee stated that the project proponent, Bhima Sahakari Sakhar Karkhana Ltd., Madhukarnagar, Patas, Taluka Daund, District Pune, Maharashtra, has applied to the Maharashtra Pollution Control Board for organizing an Environmental Public Hearing for the proposed project of production of RS/ENA/IA/Ethanol/Aviation Fuel by installing a 655 KLPD multi-feed raw material based distillery plant, expanding distillery from 45 to 700 KLPD, Sugar factory from 5,000 to 15,000 TCD, co-generation (19.5 MW to 70 MW), and CBG plant of 30 TPD. As per Environmental Notification 2006 and its amendments, this project falls under Category 'A', Activities 5(g) Distillery, 5(j) Sugar Industry, 1(d) Co-generation Project, hence requiring environmental clearance from the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC), Government of India prior public hearing.

The Convener explained that the purpose of the public environmental hearing is to convey details about the project and its potential impacts to the local community,

gather their opinions, present mandatory pollution control mechanisms in the project, and consider any suggestions from them.

The project proponent submitted an online application on 23rd August 2024 to the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC), Government of India for approval of Terms of Reference (TOR) and Environmental Impact Assessment Report. PP has obtained TOR from Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC), Government of India vide letter dated.13.01.2025.

The District Collector, Pune granted permission for a physical Environmental Public Hearing for Friday, 20-06-2025 at 12:00 PM, after which the Member Secretary, Maharashtra Pollution Control Board, Mumbai, formed the Environmental Public Hearing Committee as per GOI Notification dated 14-09-2006 and amendment dated 01-12-2009 vide office order no. J-11011/115/2008-IA-II(I) dated 13-01-2025:

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| 1) District Magistrate-Pune
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, Pune-I
Maharashtra Pollution Control Board, Pune. | Convener |

The Convener stated that, as per EIA Notification, public notice about the hearing scheduled for 20-06-2025 was published on 14-05-2025 in Loksatta (in Marathi) and The Indian Express (in English), inviting environmental feedback, objections, and suggestions from public and environmental organisations.

Furthermore, documents such as the EIA and Executive Summary reports in English and Marathi copies of Environmental Impact Assessment and Executive Summary Report for public information and perusal at the notified offices of the Government i.e. Collector Office, Pune., District Industries Centre, Pune., District Parishad Office, Pune., Regional Office and Sub Regional Office. Pune-1, Maharashtra Pollution Control Board, Jog Centre, 2nd & 3rd Floor, Wakdewadi, Pune-Mumbai Road, Pune-411003., Hon. Member Secretary, Mprani Mandal (Headquarters), Kalpatru Point, 3rd Floor, Sion-Matunga Scheme Road No. 7, Opposite Cineplanet, Near Sion Circle, Sion (East), Mumbai-22, Zonal Office, West Central Zone, Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, New Secretariat Building, Ground Floor, East Wing, Civil Line, Nagpur-440 001. , Department of Environment, New Administration Building, 15th Floor, Madam Cama Marg, Mantralaya, Mumbai- 32. Sub-divisional Officer, Daund, Taluka Daund, District Pune, Tehsil Office, Daund, Taluka Daund, District Pune, Panchayat Samiti Office, Daund, Taluka Daund, District Pune, Gram Panchayat Office, Patas, Kurkumbh, Kusegaon, Padvi, Birobachiwadi, Varvand, Roti, Kangaon, Taluka Daund, District Pune. It was informed that Pollution Control Board's website is available here.

The Conveyer stated that written comments may be submitted to MPCB representatives, and those wishing to ask oral questions must first state their name and village. The project proponent / environmental consultant will respond to those questions.

Minutes of the meeting will be prepared and submitted by the MPCB headquarters to the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC), Government of India. This Committee is solely for recording public's views, suggestions, objections; it has no decision-making authority.

These suggestions/objections will be recorded in the minutes. The public hearing will be video recorded on film, including all remarks and objections, and submitted by the project proponent with the revised EIA report to the Environment Department. The Expert Committee will then decide further. The Conveyer requested the Chairperson to commence the project presentation.

The Hon'ble Chairman expressed his apologies to the people as the public hearing started two hours late than the scheduled time. He said that the delay was due ashadi wari in the Pune city and unforeseen administration work.

The Chairperson of the Environmental Public Hearing Committee instructed the project proponent to begin their presentation.

With permission from the Chairperson, the project consultant presented the full environmental management plan pertaining to the proposed project.

The environmental consultant stated that, as per Environmental Notification, the proposed project falls under Category A, Activities 5(g) Distillery, 5(j) Sugar Industry, 1(d) Co-generation project, requiring Environmental Clearance from the Maharashtra State Environment & Climate Change Department (SEIAA).

The project environmental consultant provided details about the location of the project and the potential environmental impacts and the environmental management plan prepared to mitigate them.

They stated that approximately 626 persons will get direct employment through this project. However, indirect businesses in the project area will increase significantly.

The total capital investment of the project is INR 2073.06 crores, while INR 134.00 crores has been allocated for environmental protection and INR 13.22 crores per annum for recurring expenditure.

After the presentation, attendees were invited to give their suggestions, objections, or comments, with instructions to clearly state their name and village.

The following individuals participated in the discussion, and their questions were answered by the environmental consultant/project proponent/EPAH committee:

1. **Mr. Sachin Shitole, Patas:** Mentioned the factory management had not addressed the issue percolation of distillery wastewater in their agriculture field and said that due to their fondness for the factory they had not complained up to now.

Reply: The factory's General Manager clarified that machinery is being modernized under the expansion and the spent wash will be incinerated in a boiler, so there will be no discharge of spent wash.

2. **Mr. Amol Shitole, Patas**: Asked about MPCB's responsibility and appointing an independent pollution officer, and resolving fly-ash issue.

Reply: MPCB officials stated they have not received any such complaints therefore received such complaints is being resolved. The factory's Executive Director said they will appoint an independent pollution officer and share their name and phone number; fly-ash issue will be resolved post-conversion with modernization.

3. **Mr. Dinesh Shitole, Patas**: Asked how their village would benefit.

Reply: The Executive Director said modernization will enable farmers to get timely cane crushing and better rates; employment will be generated; CSR funds will be used for local development; compost, solar energy, tree planting support will be provided on demand; the aim of the expansion is to develop the farmers, labourers, and the villages in the working area. They will also produce quality seedlings and make efforts to improve current tonnage.

4. **Mr. Ashok Pansare, Patas**: Said the factory is the pride of the village and they have no objection, as per Gram Sabha resolution.

Reply: The Executive Director said Patas is the soul of the factory; efforts will continue for the development of the village and its environs. Post-expansion, issues of fly-ash and smoke will be resolved using state-of-the-art systems; management is working for the development of farmers.

5. **Mr. Shankar Shitole, Patas**: Requested that publicity in newspapers is needed to inform about development.

Reply: The Executive Director replied that after expansion, publicity will be stepped up to spread awareness.

6. **Mr. Pravin Shitole, Padvi**: Said they have no objection to the new expansion but requested free seedlings/bamboo shoots.

Reply: The Executive Director said the factory would try to provide high-quality planting material to farmers in the area.

7. **Mr. Keshav Divekar, Varvand**: Said there will be no problem from his village; the expansion will lead to regional development.

Reply: The factory thanked him.

Hon'ble MLA Shri Rahuldada Kul expressed his views. Attendees thanked him for the cooperation in setting up the expansion project. He also said that modern technology and modernization are taking place precisely to resolve spent-wash and fly-ash issues. Post-expansion, cane crushing will be timelier and farmers will get better rates. He said the state government has approved INR 500 crores for water supply facilities in the area; work will continue for all good things for Patas village and its surroundings. He requested anyone with issues to contact him and stated that the revival of their factory was made possible with the significant help of the farmers and he also expects everyone's cooperation.

The factory stated they respect farmers and are working to resolve problems and reduce pollution.

Then the Chairperson and Environmental Public Hearing Committee said that during the hearing, many doubts were resolved through the public's various questions, and requested the factory to comply with pollution regulations and make necessary arrangements. The public hearing concluded with thanks to all attendees, declaring the hearing complete and the proceedings of the hearing closed.

Before Public Hearing this office has received 02 no of suggestions/objections namely 1. Shri. Vasantrao Vinayak Salunkhe (total pages 1 to 6) and 2. Shri. Sujit Dhamale (total pages 1 to 5) have been received. The copy of the same is enclosed herewith.



(Mr. Kartikeya Langote)

Convener

of the Public Hearing Committee and
Sub Regional Officer, Pune- I, MPCB,
Pune



(Mr. Navnath Awatade)

Member

of the Public Hearing Committee and
Regional Officer, MPCB, Pune



(Hon. Namdeo Tilekar)

Chairman

Additional District Magistrate, Pune

