

Project Proponent M/s. Vikasratna Vilasrao Deshmukh Manjara Shetkari Sahakari Sakhar Karkhana Ltd. Vilasnagar, Tal. & Dist. Latur- (413531) Maharashtra
Minutes of public hearing on environmental issues regarding the expansion project of sugarcane crushing capacity from 4,750 to 7,500 tons per day (2,750 tons per day).

Project Proponent M/s Vikasratna Vilasrao Deshmukh Manjara Shetkari Sahakari Sakhar Karkhana Ltd. Vilasnagar, Tal. & Dist. Latur- (413531) Maharashtra an environmental public hearing was held on Thursday, April 30, 2026, at 11:30 AM at the project location, M/s Vikasratna Vilasrao Deshmukh Manjara Shetkari Sahakari Sakhar Karkhana Ltd., Vilasnagar, Tal. & Dist. Latur- (413531) Maharashtra, for the expansion of sugarcane crushing capacity from 4,750 to 7,500 tons per day.

Mr. P.V.Naik, Sub.Regional Officer, Maharashtra Pollution Control Board, Latur and Coordinator of the Public Hearing Committee on Environmental Matters welcomed Hon'ble Mr. Keshav Netke, Resident Additional District Magistrate, Latur and Chairman of the Public Hearing Committee on Environmental Matters; Mr. Manish Holkar, Regional Officer, Maharashtra Pollution Control Board, Chhatrapati Sambhajinagar and Member of the Public Hearing Committee on Environmental Matters; officials of the project proponent; journalists; representatives of environmental NGOs and media channels; and the large number of local citizens present, and, with the permission of the Honourable Chairman, commenced the environmental public hearing proceedings.

The Coordinator of the Environmental Public Hearing Committee stated that, in accordance with the notifications issued by the Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change, Government of India, New Delhi dated September 14, 2006, and as amended on December 1, 2009 it is mandatory for specific projects to obtain environmental clearance, and for this purpose, it has been made obligatory to organize a prior environmental public hearing.

The coordinator clarified that the primary objective of the public hearing on environmental matters is to apprise the general public residing in the project vicinity about the project itself and its potential impacts; to ascertain the sentiments of the local community regarding these matters; to provide the public with information concerning the pollution control mechanisms mandated for the project; and to give due consideration to the suggestions offered by them.

The Coordinator of the Public Environmental Hearing Committee stated that an application dated 03/02/2026 was received by the Sub regional office of Maharashtra Pollution Control Board, Latur submitted by the Project Proponent M/s. Vikasratna Vilasrao Deshmukh Manjra Shetkari Sahakari Sakhar Karkhana Ltd., Vilasnagar, Taluka & District Latur (413531), Maharashtra, requesting the organization of a public hearing regarding the expansion of their existing project's sugarcane crushing capacity from 4,750 tonnes per day to 7,500 tonnes per day (an expansion of 2,750 tonnes per day).

Since the said project falls under Category B-5(J) Sugar Production as per the Environment Notification, 2006, and its subsequent amendments, it is mandatory for the project to obtain "Environmental Clearance" from the Ministry of Environment, Forests





and Climate Change, Government of India, New Delhi; furthermore, it is mandatory to conduct a prior public hearing regarding environmental aspects for this purpose.

The Project Proponents submitted an online application on 09.07.2024 to obtain preliminary approval (ToR) from the Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change, Government of India, New Delhi (Issued by the State Level Expert Appraisal Committee (SEAC) Maharashtra) and to submit the Environmental Impact Assessment Report; the Government of India subsequently granted online approval to this application on 21.08.2024.

Accordingly, in compliance with the directives of the Government of India, the project proponent appointed an environmental consultant accredited by NABET to conduct a detailed environmental survey within a radius of 10.0 km. To assess the environmental impact resulting from the project's expansion, a draft Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) report covering the project site was prepared and subsequently submitted.

The Sub-Regional Office of the Maharashtra Pollution Control Board, vide a letter dated 20.03.2026, requested the Hon'ble District Collector, Latur, to organize a public hearing regarding the aforementioned project.

The Joint Director (Water Pollution Control), Maharashtra Pollution Control Board, Mumbai, vide letter dated 21.04.2026, instructed the Sub-Regional Office, Maharashtra Pollution Control Board, Latur, to implement the process for organizing an environmental public hearing through panel formation.

Following the approval granted by the Hon. District Collector, Latur, to conduct a physical public hearing regarding environmental matters on Thursday, April 30, 2026, at 11:30 AM, the Hon. Member Secretary, Maharashtra Pollution Control Board, Mumbai, vide Office Order No.E-220 BO/JD(WPC)/PH/B-E220-2026 dated 21/04/2026 and in accordance with the MOE notifications issued by the Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change, Government of India, has constituted the Public Hearing Committee for Environmental Matters as follows:

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| 1) | Hon'ble Shri Keshav Netke
Resident Additional District Magistrate Latur | - Chairman |
| 2) | Shri Manish Holkar
Regional Officer,
Maharashtra Pollution Control Board,
Chhatrapati Sambhajinagar | - Member |
| 3) | Shri P.V. Naik
Sub-Regional Officer,
Maharashtra Pollution Control Board, Latur | - Coordinator |





Pursuant to the aforementioned notification, the Sub-Regional Officer, Maharashtra Pollution Control Board, Latur, published a public hearing notice in Marathi in the local daily newspaper, 'Lokmat' edition for Marathi and in the National Newspaper, 'The Times of India', for English, on 27/03/2026.30 days before the scheduled date of the public hearing, to apprise the general public of the same. Similarly, all documentation about the said project was made available for public perusal and information at the following notified offices:

- 1) Regional Office, West Central Zone, Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change, New Secretariat Building, Ground Floor, East Wing, Civil Lines, Nagpur – 440 001.
- 2) Hon. District Collector, District Collector's Office, Latur.
- 3) General Manager, District Industries Centre, Latur.
- 4) Chief Executive Officer, Zilla Parishad Office, Latur.
- 5) Tahsildar, Tahsil Office, Latur.
- 6) Sarpanch/Gram Sevak, Gram Panchayat Offices – Sakhra, Savargaon, Chincholiaowadi, Khandapur, Pakharsangvi, Harangul BK., Bhuisamudraga, Ankoli, Vasangaon, Bhoyra, Khopegaon, Gangapur, Peth; Taluka and District Latur.
- 7) Deputy Secretary, Environment and Climate Change Department, New Administrative Building, 15th Floor, Madam Cama Road, Mantralaya, Mumbai – 400 032.
- 8) Hon. Member Secretary, Maharashtra Pollution Control Board (Headquarters), Kalpataru Point, 2nd, 3rd, and 4th Floors, Sion-Matunga Scheme Road No. 7, Opposite CinePlanet, Near Sion Circle, Sion (East), Mumbai – 400 032.
- 9) Regional Officer, Maharashtra Pollution Control Board, Chatrapati Sambhajinagar.
- 10) Sub-Regional Officer, Maharashtra Pollution Control Board, Latur.
- 11) Website, Maharashtra Pollution Control Board – Executive Summary Reports are available in both Marathi and English.

As on 30.04.2026 no suggestions or objections regarding the aforementioned project have been received by the Sub-Regional Officer of the Maharashtra Pollution Control Board, Latur.

The coordinator informed all those present that they had the opportunity to submit any objections, grievances, or suggestions, either in writing or verbally.

The coordinator stated that this Public Hearing Committee on Environmental Matters serves solely to record the public's opinions, suggestions, and objections regarding environmental issues; the Committee does not possess the authority to approve, reject, or make recommendations regarding the project. The suggestions and objections raised by

residents during the public hearing will be duly recorded in the minutes, and these minutes will be prepared in both Marathi and English. Furthermore, the video recording of the said meeting (presented as an unedited visual record), along with the suggestions and objections raised during the proceedings, the project proponent's revised Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) report, and the written suggestions/objections received. The meeting minutes collectively constituting the complete documentation will be submitted to the State EIA authority/State EAC. This submission will be made by the Headquarters of the Maharashtra Pollution Control Board, with the concurrence of the Chairperson of the Public Hearing Committee on Environmental Matters. Subsequently, the expert committee at that level will take the final decision regarding the matter. The organizers requested the Chairperson to direct the project proponents to commence their presentation.

With the permission of the Honourable Chairperson, the Project Environmental Consultant delivered a presentation regarding the project and its Environmental Management Plan. He stated that this project serves the interests of local farmers and provides employment opportunities to the local population. The total investment for the proposed project amounts to Rs. 9165 Lakhs (i.e., Rs. 91.65 Crores), while an investment of approximately Rs. 978 Lakhs (i.e., Rs. 9.78 Crores) is earmarked specifically for environmental management. As a result of this project expansion, 25 to 30 individuals will secure direct employment opportunities within the project, and there will be a substantial surge in indirect business activities within the surrounding region.

The water required for the said project will be supplied from Tawarja Dam, Irrigation Department, Latur. The industrial and domestic waste water generated in the project will be processed and reused in the project itself.

As per the new guideline of GoI dated 29 October 2025, suggest developing a green belt of 20% for isolated industrial units. But this project has allocated 33% of the land for the greenbelt area. 10,310 trees have already been planted within the operational project, and an additional 6,630 trees will be planted in the expanded project over the next three years. Additionally, it is proposed to allocate 1% of the total project cost towards Corporate Environmental Responsibility (CER), amounting to a total of Rs. 92 Lakhs. Furthermore, the capital expenditure for environmental management will be Rs. 975 Lakhs, while the recurring expenditure will be Rs. 140 Lakhs per annum. A rainwater harvesting system will be implemented within the proposed project. This project is beneficial for the local community, as well as for the State of Maharashtra and the nation at large.

Following the conclusion of the presentation, the organizers, specifically the Public Hearing Committee on Environmental Matters, appealed to the attendees to register any suggestions, comments, or objections they might have regarding the proposed project. Attendees were requested to state their name and the name of their village before submitting their suggestions or objections.

The details regarding the questions raised, suggestions offered, and objections raised by the citizens present, along with the corresponding responses provided by the Project Proponents, Project Consultants, and the Public Hearing Committee on Environmental Matters, are as follows:



1) Mr. Tanaji Shivaji Shinde, Res. Ankoli, Taluka Latur, District Latur.

What measures have been implemented regarding wastewater management in light of the proposed project expansion?

The Project Environmental Consultant stated that the wastewater will undergo complete treatment. To this end, an operational Effluent Treatment Plant (ETP) is already in existence at the facility, and its capacity is set to be augmented.

2) Mr. Mahesh Haridas Mule, Res. Ankoli, Taluka Latur, District Latur.

What measures have been implemented regarding air pollution control in light of the proposed project expansion?

The Project Environmental Consultant stated that an Electrostatic Precipitator is available at the facility to mitigate air pollution. Currently, the factory possesses two chimneys; a separate Electrostatic Precipitator (ESP) has been installed for each of them. The efficiency of the ESP is 99% or higher, and it is widely utilized across various industries for the control of particulate matter.

3) Hon. Member, Public Hearing Committee on Environmental Matters.

Regional Officer Chhatrapati Sambhajinagar M/s. M/s. Vikasratna Vilasrao Deshmukh Manjra Shetkari Sahakari Sakhar Karkhana Ltd, the following questions have been raised to them.

1. The water consumption quota sanctioned by Irrigation Department Latur is 0.15 Million Cubic Meters / Annum less than the quantity mentioned in agreement between industry and Irrigation Department / M.P.C Board Consent?

Project Proponent:- The water usage will be from Tavarja Dam and a copy of the water supply agreement has been submitted. Also, the water usage will not go beyond the limits specified in the agreement. A corrected certified copy of the water agreement has been submitted by the Irrigation Department stating this.

2. What is the CO₂ emission management plan?

Project Proponent:- The Molasses is utilized in the distillery unit for the production of Ethanol, where carbon dioxide is separated through a CO₂ Scrubber system and supplied to authorized recycler vendors.

3. Details of upgradation of existing ETP with respect to increased effluent quantity ?

Project Proponent:- Additional industrial effluent and domestic wastewater will be properly disposed due to the increased crushing capacity. To ensure scientific treatment and proper disposal of the said wastewater, the existing effluent treatment plant (ETP) will be

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modernized and expanded prior to obtaining the Consent to Operate, and it will be upgraded to adequately handle the enhanced crushing capacity.

4. You are giving Press mud to local farmer for use as Fertilizer. Weather quantification of Methane Gas generated is done or not?

Project Proponent: - Press mud takes different time to decompose when used in different fields. It is a neutral cyclic carbon. Since it is a non-specific/non-concentrated source, there is no information about its measurement. It was said that if it is available, it will be provided in the final report.

The Regional Officer, Maharashtra Pollution Control Board (MPCB), Chhatrapati Sambhajanagar, instructed that the information regarding the ETP (Effluent Treatment Plant) in response to Questioner (Shri Tanaji Shivaji Shinde, Res. Ankoli) - Question 1. Please explain the information of ETP once again. It was suggested.

Project Proponent: - The existing ETP is using the Activated Sludge Process (ASP) method to process the wastewater. The ETP will be modernized and expanded to increase its capacity. The wastewater treatment process in the ETP is completed in three stages. It consists of primary, secondary and tertiary stages.

- In the Primary treatment stage, floating particles, debris, etc., are separated from the wastewater, and the pH of the wastewater is neutralized. -In the secondary treatment stage, the organic and carbonaceous components present in the water are decomposed with the aid of microorganisms. Consequently, the Chemical Oxygen Demand (COD) of the water is significantly reduced, resulting in its purification.
- In the third stage, the water is passed through filters containing sand and activated charcoal. This process enhances the water's quality, bringing it within the specific parameter limits prescribed by the Pollution Control Board.

The Coordinator of the Public Hearing Committee on Environmental Matters appealed to the attendees to raise any environmental suggestions, views, comments, or objections they might have regarding the proposed project. The Hon'ble District Collector is present here for your benefit. These points will be duly recorded in the minutes of the meeting and of the Public Hearing Committee on Environmental Matters requested the Hon'ble Chairperson of the Committee to provide guidance.

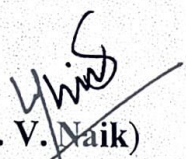
The Chairperson of the Public Hearing Committee on Environmental Matters stated that we have gathered here today for a public hearing regarding the proposed expansion of the operational project of the Project Proponent—M/s. Vikasratna Vilasrao Deshmukh Manjra Shetkari Sahakari Sakhar Karkhana Ltd., Vilasnagar, Taluka & District Latur (413531), Maharashtra. This expansion entails increasing the sugarcane crushing capacity from the current 4,750 tonnes per day to 7,500 tonnes per day (an expansion of 2,750 tonnes per day). The project presentation was delivered by the Project's Environmental Consultant, who provided comprehensive information regarding the

Environmental Management Plan. Residents raised various suggestions and concerns regarding the proposed project. Their written clarifications must be duly incorporated into the proceedings; furthermore, detailed responses to the questions raised by the Regional Officer must also be provided. The suggestions received concerning pollution control must be integrated into the project's design and planning. Adequate precautions must be taken to prevent water, air, and soil pollution. The Project's Environmental Consultant has provided satisfactory responses to the queries raised. All these points have been duly noted and will be included in the minutes of the meeting, which will subsequently be submitted to the State EIA authority/State EAC.

The Chairperson of the Environmental Public Hearing Committee once again appealed to the attendees to raise any suggestions, objections, or comments they might have regarding the proposed project.

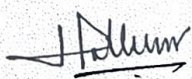
- The issues raised on industrial wastewater generated by the project, as well as air pollution, should be duly recorded in the minutes, and appropriate remedial measures to address them should be devised as communicated here in the meeting.
- Permission for the water required for the expanded project must be obtained in accordance with the agreement with the Irrigation Department.

The Hon'ble Chairperson of the Environmental Public Hearing Committee expressed gratitude to all attendees for their cooperation in conducting the meeting and declared the Environmental Public Hearing concluded.


(P. V. Naik)

Coordinator

Public Hearing Committee
and Sub-Regional Officer,
Maharashtra Pollution Control Board,
Latur


(Manish Holkar)

Member,

for Public Hearing
and Regional Officer,
Maharashtra Pollution Control Board,
Chhatrapati Sambhajnagar

(Hon'ble Shri Keshav Netke)

Chairman

Public Hearing Committee
and Resident Deputy Collector, Latur