

**WCC – Alkali Manufactures Association of India (AMAI) Indian Chlor Alkali Plants Mercury Conference
Held at Manesar, India on 15th & 16th April, 2004**

AMAI organized the WCC – Indian Chlor Alkali plants Mercury Conference on 15th & 16th April, 2004 at Manesar, Near New Delhi in collaboration with World Chlorine Council (WCC) and The Chlorine Institute, USA. The Conference was largely attended by members from Indian Industry along with the following foreign experts:

- 1) Mr.Arthur E. Dungan, VP, SHE, The Chlorine Institute
- 2) Dr.Flavio Zambrone, Director President of Planitox representing Clorosur, Brazil
- 3) Dr.Arseen Seys, Director, Environment & Regulatory Affairs, Euro Chlor
- 4) Dr.Guy Mesrobian, Tech. & Safety Manager, Euro Chlor
- 5) Mr.Bill Rankin, Chlorine Institute, USA
- 6) Mr.Frank Anscombe, Industrial Ecologist, USEPA.

The Conference was inaugurated by Mr. Naresh Dayal, Additional Secretary, Government of India, Ministry of Environment and Forests and addressed by Mr.Ramesh Inder Singh, Joint Secretary, Government of India, Department of Chemicals & Petrochemicals. The concluding session was chaired by Dr.G.K.Pandey, Advisor, Government of India, Ministry of Environment & Forests & Dr. I. Haq, Senior Scientist from Central Pollution Control Board, Government of India also participated.

During the two days Conference, deliberations and discussions were held and Papers were presented on Status and Regulatory/Legislative Aspects of Chlor Alkali Plants based on Mercury Cell in Europe, USA, South America, India and Brazil. Speakers were Dr. Arseen Seys from Euro Chlor; Mr. Arthur Dungan from Chlorine Institute, USA; and Dr. Flavio Zambrone from Chlorosur, Brazil. The Officers from Government of India Mr. Ramesh Inder Singh, Joint Secretary, Ministry of Chemicals & Fertilizers and Mr. Naresh Dayal, Additional Secretary, Ministry of Environment & Forests overviewed the Chemical Industry in India with emphasis on chlor alkali Industry. A Session was also devoted for mercury management methodology and good operational practices including C-gas treatment technology, which was addressed by Mr. Guy Mesrobian from Euro Chlor and Mr. Bill Rankin from Chlorine Institute, USA.

To provide perspective of Indian Chlor Alkali industry, Papers were presented by Mr. B.S. Gilra and Mr. S.K. Agrawal from AMAI who summed up Indian Mercury Plants Scenario. A Presentation was also made by Mr. Frank Anscombe Industrial Ecologist from USEPA.

The delegates also discussed technologies to minimize mercury content in brine/ brine sludge treatment for stabilization, thermal recovery of mercury from mercury waste and details about preparation of mercury balance and bridging difference to balance. The main contributors in this were Mr. Guy Mesrobian from Euro Chlor, Mr. Bill Rankin from Chlorine Institute.

A session was also devoted on medical surveillance of workers exposed to mercury environment and handling of mercury at the end of life of plants besides cell room technology for minimizing consumption of mercury.

In the end, the delegates and speakers finalized recommendations of Workshop which highlighted that India was having 2.3 million tones caustic soda capacity out of which 28% was only on mercury cell and 72% on membrane cell. India was leading in this aspect in the world and was only next to Japan. The Conference listed world emission norms, present consumption of mercury in different countries, mercury contents in water effluents, procedures for solid waste disposal and time taken by various countries to achieve the present emission standards. The Workshop recommended to Government of India for providing incentive to Indian Industry for early conversion from mercury cell to mercury-free cell plants, like reduction in customs duty on membrane cell plants, spares of plants and fuel oil. The Workshop was extremely successful and recommendations have been submitted to the Government Authorities and copies have been mailed to delegates and the International organizations.

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