

**Online International Conference and Exhibition -India Construction Week  
– 2020 “Reviving Construction Industry in Post COVID World” – A Joint  
Initiative of CIDC & IndSTT- Sectional Steering Committee “Agro  
Technology & Infrastructure Construction”**

**Minutes of the First Virtual Steering Committee Meeting, held on October  
21, 2020 from 2:30 PM to 4:00 PM**

**Participants**

1. Padma Shree Prof. Brahma Singh, Chairman, BSHF, Delhi, Former Emeritus Scientist, Member State Planning & Monitoring Board, U.T. of Ladakh , - Chairman
2. Shri C Devarajan, Managing Director, URC Construction (P) Ltd. - Co-Chair
3. Shri Asaithambi Manickam, Managing Director, L & W Construction Private Limited - Co-Chair
4. Prof. Indra Mani Mishra, President, Indian Society of Agricultural Engineers (ISAE) - Co-Chair
5. Dr VPS Arora, Professor Emeritus, Sharda University, Noida & Former Dean, College of Agri- Business GBPUAT - Co-Chair
6. Dr. Basant Ram, former Vice Chancellor, Rajendra Agriculture University Pusa, Samastipur, Bihar and N.D. University of Agriculture & Technology, U. P. - Co-Chair
7. Dr. Mahendra Singh, former Director Extension & Professor Agronomy, G. B. Pant University, Pantnagar - Co- Chair
8. Mr. Rajib Bishoyi, Director, PAL Nutrients Private Limited Odisha - Member
9. Dr. Ashish Kumar Singh, Principal Scientist (Food Technology), Dairy Technology Division, National Dairy Research Institute, Karnal - Member
10. Dr. D N Yadav, Principal Scientist (Food Technology), ICAR-Central Institute of Post-Harvest Engineering & Technology, Ludhiana - Member
11. Dr M S Alam, Professor (Agricultural Structure & Process Engineering), ICAR-Central Institute of Post-Harvest Engineering & Technology, Ludhiana, Punjab - Member
12. Dr P K Sahoo, Principal Scientist,, Agril Engg, IARI, New Delhi - Member
13. Dr. P. R. Swarup, Director General CIDC Co- Chair
14. Er. Sunil Mahajan, ADG, CIDC - Convener

The meeting started with a warm welcome to all the members by the Chairman of the committee, Padma Shree Prof. Brahma Singh, Chairman, BSHF, Delhi, Former Emeritus Scientist, Member State Planning & Monitoring Board, U.T. of Ladakh. He thanked all the participants for having accepted CIDC's invitation to join as members and sparing their valuable time for this meeting.

Chairman informed that this Conference is very important to bring out path way to tackle the ongoing Pandemic situation and its relevance with recently enacted act for Agricultural reforms which envisages a paradigm shift from the way of Indian Agriculture Sector has operated till date. This is where the corporate sector shall have a prominent role to play. Chairman then requested all the members to briefly introduce themselves for benefit of all.

All the participants introduced themselves and briefed about their areas of expertise in this sector. After the round of introduction chairman expressed that Agro industry and construction industry is a good combination and we have a good intention which will be revealed during the deliberations in this meeting. He then gave a brief introduction of CIDC (established by the Planning Commission jointly with the Indian construction industry), the premier policy thinks tank of Government of India providing both directional and policy inputs. CIDC is a change agent to accelerate a process of self-reform that should enable the industry to answer the challenges of the future. CIDC is organizing this International Conference and Exhibition for the revival of economy Post COVID.

Prof. Brahma said that I am happy that CIDC sees prospects for construction industry in rural area also. Time has come that now we see Agriculture as enterprise then only the condition of the farmers in India will improve. So, entrepreneurship is must. He emphasized on Secondary agriculture concept, i.e. addition of value to the agriculture produce. I think if we attend to this, the condition of rural farmers will definitely improve. And that's how construction and agro -industries are related to each other. We need to create lots of infrastructure for these agricultural produces and that is where both are connected. He then drew attention to Dr. APJ Abdul Kalam's program – Providing Urban like Amenities in Rural Areas (PURA). Rural people should be the part of Corporate or they should become the Corporate or say they should be the total beneficiary from this exercise. We want to develop a document for the Government thru this Conference and this is a part of this conference under Agro-Sector.

Chairman then invited Dr. P R Swarup, DG, CIDC to present an overview about CIDC and the need for organizing the International Conference and Exhibition on this vital theme.

### **Dr. P R Swarup, DG, CIDC - Conference and exhibition pen picture**

Dr. Swarup briefly introduced why construction industry is approaching the agro scientists and technologists and what we are going to achieve. It is evident that the economy of the nation is in great problem due to COVID. As we all know that its construction industry which sets the economy in motion, it generates substantial employment only after agriculture and of course consumption of various manufactured goods also comes after various activities in construction, like blocks, pipes, steel, cement etc. That is how the idea of holding India Construction Week 2020 conceptualized, where all allied industries come together on a single platform and together we can find practical

solutions to come out of this problem. In view of the new Agro bill, we are finding greater dependence of both Construction and Agriculture sectors on each other, therefore we gave special emphasis to this sector in this event.

Dr. Swarup then explained the purpose of this meeting. So far we have been looking at . on account of COVID and post-enactment of new bill, there are two things emerging-

1. Put the house in order, so that stalled can begin, that may be physical infrastructure & generation of utility i.e. warehouses, light and power etc.
2. Agricultural sector now needs to be corporatized. This means that there will be lots of Infrastructure development in the hinterland, as we would be requiring lots of warehouses, birthing stations, Food processing units, cold chains and many other such units.

Dr. Swarup referred to the view of one of the participants that engineers cannot work in isolation and would certainly need guidance of a scientists and also need to have corporates who are actually looking at this sector of economy which is now going to open up and going to give lots of opportunities to people in construction sector, to work for the upliftment of Agro sector. In view of this, we proposed to deliberate on this new tie & business sector for the infrastructure industry.

At present the need arose out of calamity, ill effects have to be nullified. Experts should sit and deliberate out of box thinking and many old rules will not be valid anymore.

One of the paramount tasks for CIDC now is to revive the economy from the difficult situation arose due to this pandemic. There is paradigm shift due to COVID, new rules have to be written and prepare a blue print for action. The role of this Group which has some of the finest people from Agro & Infrastructure sector, who know how to make a difference and how these industries could be revived at the faster pace.

After elaborating on theme of the conference and exhibition and apprising the members about CIDC's vision on this proposed event, Dr. Swarup handed it back to Chairman. Prof. Brahma Singh referred to the first agenda point and invited the views from all the present members.

### **Prof. V P S Arora**

In the last couple of years, a lot of developmental efforts have been made in India to revive the rural sector in general and the agriculture sector in particular. As an economist, I am of the firm opinion that the three farm marketing laws that have been recently enacted in the country will prove to be the major milestones in the growth of the agricultural sector and in reviving the rural sector.

To facilitate the implementation of these three laws, we need to markedly upgrade and upscale the infrastructure in the rural sector. The sector would require the better communication network, better road connectivity, better warehousing, and improved farm processing. Farmers are to be facilitated so that they get every penny for their hard work and nothing gets wasted. He summarized as follows:

- Formation of more and more Farmer Producer's Organizations (FPOs) with effective participation of construction sector;
- Construction industry people to tie-up with FPOs, to enable better infrastructure facilities developed in the rural areas;

- Development of infrastructure including communication, roads, transportation, primary processing in the rural areas itself will be the key to the growth of farming communities, and enhancing their income.

### **Prof. Indra Mani Mishra**

During this kind of pandemic everything was stopped but agriculture sector never halted. He referred to Mini-Agriculture budget during the pandemic time. Agriculture is to be seen in totality. There is need to improve the rural infrastructure. IARI also has number of technologies for different kind of farmers, how things can be taken up for each with different technologies. Selected technologies to be disseminated to selected groups. Means Farmer's centric approach is to be made. This is right & ripe time to, that this group can help in selecting, customization and disseminating the technologies to the end users.

### **Dr. Basant Ram**

We need to identify the technologies friendly for concerned farmer. There are many technologies but how much they have been percolated is important. Thru this platform we can spread.

Construction of fishery pond, cold storage, produce packaging and processing etc.

Dr. Brahma Singh said that what we should do is that we can suggest what Construction engineers, particularly the infrastructure can do for further welfare of agriculture.

### **Mr. C. Devarajan**

With the help of German company, called Verbio, first plant has been made where the husk of rice & wheat is being utilized to produce methane and cooking (bio-gas) gas. They are also working in Odessa with the same model. Construction engineers can help us in developing many such structures. We can also include horticulture and animal industry and other such related industries.

All participants can send their views on how infrastructure industry & Agriculture can work together to work for the improvement of Agri-business in rural sector. Send your views to Chairman, which can be collated and put in the form of a blue print, to be taken up to the Government.

### **Dr. M S Alam**

Dr. Alam, Principal Scientist, AIU Ludhiana Center informed that basically we are working on aspects of post-harvest technology and instrumental in developing Agro-Processing Centers throughout the Punjab State and approx.. more than 300 have been developed in catchment area, which is providing the employment to 3-5 persons in one Centre and that is very much popular here. As well as we also doing research on different aspects of Post-harvest like storage, packaging and distribution of different items produced, to generate employment. Such type of information and work can be disseminated.

1. There should be some zero energy storage systems in catchment areas, where they can keep the produce for a weeks' time and then can be transferred to Central Storage, to have large self-life of all commodities.
2. Ago-processing units for durable and perishable crops
3. Skill development is required in the line of operation & maintenance, packaging, processing etc.

4. Grain storage optimization is required. Building at various places would be required for this.

### **Dr. D. N. Yadav**

Good initiative that to improve this sector we are working with CIDC. In absence of infrastructure for storage, lots of grains gets wasted in Punjab. There is huge requirement of silos for storage, mainly for organic farming. Skill development centers are also required in this sector. Huge requirement of Collection Centers, Multi-commodity ripening centers.

### **Mr. Rajib Bishoyi**

Marketing linkage is an issue of concern for farmers. And needs to be addressed.

### **Dr. Ashish Kumar Singh**

1. Milk Collection- where we need complete Cold Chain type of system. Need for integrating the exiting cold storages. In absence of cold chain cold storages are not even optimally used. Technology upgradation is also needed.
2. Design of the houses for animals and machinery etc. We have initiated
3. How we can use animal waste and bring back into the value chain system

For all these models/ technologies/ studies are available but have to select the best suitable one for particular place to build-up appropriate infrastructure.

### **Dr. P. K. Sahoo**

Solution oriented approach is required. How through agriculture technology with the help from the construction engineers, solutions can be achieved, may it be Post-harvest management or others. A Construction engineer to provide Farm management systems.

Chairman requested participants to jot down all the inputs given individually and send it on [brahma88@gmail.com](mailto:brahma88@gmail.com) and cc to Shri Sunil Mahajan on [cidcicw2020.agrotech@gmail.com](mailto:cidcicw2020.agrotech@gmail.com).

He further urged all to demonstrate a model/ project to showcase during the Conference & Exhibition and then present it to the Government. We have to create the facility.

**Mr. Sunil Mahajan** requested all participants to send their inputs for collation of knowledge particularly to establish connectivity between construction and agriculture.

Dr. Swarup, while extending vote of thanks to the participants, summarized the discussions and urged all the participants to send their inputs in terms of following parameters -

1. What type of structures to be constructed? We spoke about cold chain, warehousing, transportation, waste removal etc. All these are the requirement of agro, to be articulated, evaluated and enumerated.
2. To draw a blue print and draw the attention of government, we must come out with the idea that this is the kind of work we need to do, cost estimation for that and we would be listing out who can offer technical consultancy, money management and fiscal management
3. Listing out of persons, where and who can provide – skilling, money.

4. Estimation has to be made

This group of experts is going to closely associate with each other not only till the conference but thereafter also, to bring solutions for both the sectors, Infrastructure and Agriculture and present it to the Government.

The schedule and agenda of the next meeting shall be updated soon.