

Environment friendly approach and judicious use of raw materials: Key to the growth of the ceramics and glass Industry in Rajasthan

An environment friendly approach and judicious use of raw materials was the key to the growth of the ceramics and glass industry Rajasthan. This was the view that emerged at the **Conference on ‘Ceramics and Glass Raw Material from Rajasthan’ held as part of CeraGlass India 2010**, India’s first ever comprehensive ceramics, glass and allied products show organized by Rajasthan State Industrial Development & Investment Corporation (RIICO), Government of Rajasthan, Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) and Indian Ceramic Society (ICS) with the support of the Union Ministry of Commerce and Industry.

Elaborating further on the raw material availability, **Dr H S Maiti, Senior Advisor, CSIR** said that these natural resources were limited and could not be replenished. The need of the hour was to use them judiciously so they were available to the generations to come. He advocated the use of latest techniques and machinery in mining, processing of raw minerals and production. He explained about the advantages of using Hydro Cyclone, High intensity wet magnetic separator etc for better productivity along with an environment friendly approach. Maiti also talked about the competition the industry faced from abroad and he suggested that to counter this there should be constant upgradation of technology along with constant communication between mine owners, processors of these minerals coupled with strong interaction with technical institutions like CGRI and others for developing a strong competitive edge. He also spoke about the need to develop singular clay and advocated a cluster approach.

Mr L K Maheshwari, Chief General Manager, RIICO focused on the strong position that Rajasthan occupies in terms of abundant availability of ceramic and glass mineral raw material. The State is the sole producer of jasper and wollastonite and a leading producer of silica sand, soapstone, ball clay, china clay, calcite, felspar, natural gypsum, kaolin, rock phosphate, ochre etc, he said. Till March 2008, the State had received an investment of Rs 5,000 crores in the Ceramic and Glass Industry and its allied products. About 1500 processing units were in the state in both the organized and unorganized sector. He also elaborated on the efforts made by the state and central governments to fully utilize this immense potential in terms of mineral wealth of Rajasthan. A dedicated zone has been embarked at Gilot where piped natural gas would be provided to reduce production costs and the state government was fully committed to lead this industry to further growth, he stated.

In his Keynote Address, **Mr S N Eisenhower, Director-Operations, Saint – Gobain Glass India Ltd** said that silica sand, which is a major constituent of glass, was present in abundance in Rajasthan and nearly 80% of the raw material for making glass was present in the state. If proper value addition was done to this raw material, the State could become a hub for this industry not only in India but also in the world in the near future. He also spoke about responsible mining by taking due care of environmental concerns and support of the government in this endeavor

Mr Vikram Golcha, Past Chairman, CII Rajasthan State Council & Managing Director, Associated Soapstone Distributing Co Pvt Ltd urged the industry to not only achieve higher productivity but also fulfill its responsibility towards the environment. He said it was amazing to note that some minerals whose deposits were present in Rajasthan were still being imported from overseas. He also spoke about the optimism CeraGlass had generated and with good governmental support the industry was bound to take a big leap forward in the coming future, particularly in Rajasthan.

Jaipur

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