

● ECO AWARENESS

# 'CTC to be phased out by yearend'

Express News Service  
 Tiruchy, June 18

VARIOUS aspects of Carbon tetrachloride (CTC) as a toxic solvent and the transition to safer alternatives were discussed at an Industrial Workshop on Phasing out of CTC from Indian gas Manufacturing/ Servicing industries organised here on Thursday on behalf of GTZ (Germany).

Dwelling on the role of GTZ, Technical Advisor C.J.Mathew referred to the Montreal Protocol which was signed on Sep 16,1987 by 193 countries including India to phase out production and consumption of CTC and other ozone depleting substances. CTC is dreaded for its role in destroying the stratospheric ozone layer which protects life on this planet from harmful ultraviolet B rays.

Since the signing of the Montreal Protocol, the CTC is on the way out and by the year end, there would be 100 per cent phasing out as a solvent. This could be effected by identifying the usages and the alternatives available. Alternatives should not be involved in the depletion of ozone. Dissemination of knowledge on CTC was also vital.

CTC could be very harmful in industries, foundries, jewellery and engineer-



C J Mathew, Technical Advisor, GTZ, addressing the workshop on Phasing Out of CTC on Thursday. Also seen are Susanta Deb, A K Ganguly, S Nagarajan and Sampath

ing works, offset printing, power plants and others. Practically, all solvents except water are toxic but the degree of toxicity varies. CTC has adverse effects on the skin as revealed by the changes in the pigmentation.

The main areas of concern regarding CTC are inhalation, absorption by skin,

impact on environment and flammability. Inhalation accounts for 60 per cent of the damages, skin and eye afflictions 30 per cent while ingestion takes 10 per cent.

As such, the hazardous solvent has to be replaced by less hazardous ones. Distance should be maintained between the

worker and the work being attended. Adequate ventilation should be provided to remove the vapours. Finally, the use of personal protective equipments such as masks, goggles, hard net gloves and other gadgets.

The major drawback on the use of solvents is the poor training of the users who hail from rural background. Many are not even aware of the hazards on health even though they might be undergoing the symptoms. They ought to be trained in the good practices which include minimum use of solvents with proper tools, good house keeping methods, good ventilation and safe disposal of solvents. Above all, the use of personal protective equipments should not be ignored, stressed Mathew.

Dr. A.K.Ganguly Sr DGM, Occupational Health and Safety, BHEL pointed out the chronic and acute effects of solvents. While some caused kidney and liver ailments, there were others that proved to be cancerous. The skin protective barrier creams are made available now but what is important is the acceptance level of the workers. They ought to be aware of using the substitutes, studying the level of the risk factor, he added. Susanta Deb, Field Consultant, GTZ, S.Nagarajan, Sr. DGM, HSE, BHEL and Sampath, BHEL SIA, were present.