

**NATIONAL SEMINAR ON ‘FOOD SAFETY – ROLE OF STANDARDS’
HELD AT MUMBAI, 25TH JUNE 2012**



A national seminar on Food Safety – Role of Standards was organized by Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS) on 25th June 2012 at Courtyard by Marriott, Andheri (E), Mumbai. His Excellency Shri K. Sankaranarayanan, Governor of Maharashtra inaugurated the seminar. In his inaugural address, Shri Sankaranayanan complemented BIS for organizing the seminar on such a topical subject especially with raising expectations of people regarding safety of food consumed by them. He emphasized the importance of consumer education in prevention of food borne illnesses. He also mentioned that when consumers are quality and safety conscious, they complement the efforts of regulating agencies in ensuring quality and safe food.

Shri Sankaranayanan stressed that the existing legislative requirements put required emphasis on Food Hygiene, Good Manufacturing Practices, Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points (HACCP), Food Safety Management Systems (FSMS) and nutritional labeling in the entire food chain . He further added that Bureau of Indian Standards has played an increasingly important role in this scenario and has already formulated a bouquet of guidelines, best practices and management system standards in the field of food safety. He added that BIS has recently published three new standards on food safety i.e. Food Retail Management (FRM), Good Hygienic Practices (GHP) and

Good Manufacturing Practices (GMP). The governor said that producers of food should not be intimidated by the implementation of the standards, but should view the standards as tools to improve the quality & safety of the food they produce.

Prof. K. V. Thomas, Hon'ble Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Consumer Affairs, Food & Public Distribution, Govt. of India presided over the seminar. He appreciated the initiatives taken by BIS and emphasized that food safety should be taken as a challenge and standards are powerful tools in responding to this challenge. In his keynote address, Prof K V Thomas said that consumers are taking unprecedented interest in the way food is produced, processed and marketed and are increasingly calling for initiatives from government, industry and other stakeholders for food safety and consumer protection.

Prof Thomas also emphasized, that Indian Standards have immense potential in safeguarding public health and promoting consumer confidence, if they are implemented efficiently. He further opined that the main objectives of formulating standards in food safety were to protect the consumers from unsanitary, unhygienic, mislabeled or adulterated food. He also drew attention to food safety issues of street foods and added that BIS has recently finalized an Indian Standard on basic requirements for street food vendors which would prove to be very useful.

Sh. Rajiv Agarwal, Secretary (Consumer Affairs), Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution, Govt. of India while addressing the gathering on this occasion stated that our mutual goal should be to resolve all food safety issues in a way that take into account the interest of consumers and industry and other stakeholders.

Earlier, Sh. Alinda Chandra, Director General, Bureau of Indian Standards while welcoming the dignitaries and the participants laid down the programme objectives and said that standards are a powerful tools in our hand to tackle the issue of food safety and the objective of this seminar. Sh.P. K. Gambhir, Scientist 'G' & Chief (Standardization), Bureau of Indian Standards proposed the vote of thanks on the occasion.

The seminar brought together a distinctive gathering of around 300 delegates from industry, labs, research organizations, government departments, agencies, media and consumers interest groups. A press conference was also held on the occasion. During the press conference, Prof. K. V. Thomas and senior officials from BIS responded to the questions of media.

The inaugural session was followed by Technical Session chaired by Dr. G. Venkateswara Rao, Chief Scientist and Acting Director, CFTRI Mysore. This session dealt with various aspects of Good Hygiene Practices, Good Manufacturing Practices and Food Retail Management (FRM)'.

The second Technical session was chaired by Shri Mahesh Zagade, Commissioner Food Safety, Maharashtra and focused on role of regulator in food safety. A presentation by Dr Sitaram Dixit of Consumer Guidance Society on various adulterants in food and methods of detection and adulteration in Milk by NDDB were found very interesting by the audience. Both the sessions were followed by interaction with audience.

The event was widely covered by print and electronic media, trade magazines related to food, highlighting the pertinent issues concerning food safety and the need for implementation of standards by all stake holders in the food chain.