

Press Release

9th July 2021

CeSRAC and NRAI launch Consumer Empowerment Campaign on Safe and Responsible Alcohol Consumption in 4 Metros

With an objective of enhancing the country capacity in the application of a risk-based approach for food safety with added focus on responsible serving in both unorganized and organized alcohol sector, Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) and International Spirit and Wine Association of India (ISWAI) joined hands to launch the Centre for Safe and Responsible Alcohol Consumption (CeSRAC) as a collaborative initiative in 2019. In continuation to that effort, the 2nd CeSRAC Stakeholder E-Forum on Assuring Safety of Alcoholic Beverages at the Market Place using Technology and Stakeholder Collaboration was organized on 9th July 2021 as a Digital event, addressed by domain experts from Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI), Alliance Against Counterfeit Spirits (AACS), International Organization of Vine and Wine (OIV), Scotch Whisky Research Institute (SWRI), Central Forensic Science Lab(CFSL), ANI Technology, National IP Committee CII and State Excise, Karnataka.

Towards empowering consumers, CeSRAC in collaboration with NRAI launched the Consumer empowerment campaign for impactful dissemination of Collaterals on Safe and Responsible Drinking. As a pilot program, these consumer facing collaterals would be used across 100+ Restaurants in New Delhi, Bangalore, Kolkata, and Mumbai. These would also be available in a downloadable format at www.cesrac.in;

CeSRAC in its effort to strengthen and build capacity in the manufacturing sector will also be rolling out a customized training program for the Alcoholic Beverage sector under FSSAI's Fostac Training program

In his keynote address, **Dr. N. Bhaskar**, Advisor (Science and Standards), Food Safety and Standards Authority of India appreciated the efforts of CeSRAC in creating awareness on assuring Safety of Alcoholic Beverages at the Market Place using Technology and Stakeholder collaboration and making distribution more authentic. He stated the need for advanced and validated technologies in our labs for authenticity testing of IMFL (Wines and spirits) and for our traditional liquors

Dr. K Anu Appaiah, FSSAI Panel member for Alcoholic Beverages emphasized on the need for hand held devices to check the authenticity of the liquor as these would be useful for Govt officials, sellers, and consumers & urged the industry to support research and development in this area.

Mr. S.L. Rajendra Prasad, Additional Commissioner of Excise (IML), Karnataka conveyed that all stakeholders and regulatory agencies including government can work in tandem towards eliminating, counterfeiting and move towards responsible drinking. Karnataka being in the fore front and as a model state looks forward to this happening.

Mr. Prakul Kumar, Secretary-General, National Restaurant Association of India (NRAI), expressed his appreciation on the collaboration of National Restaurants Association of India (NRAI) with CeSRAC for taking forward the Consumer Empowerment campaign on safe and responsible drinking.

The other eminent speakers included **Mr David Francis** -MD AACS Ltd, **Mr. Jagdeep Kairon** is Country Head AACS. India, **Dr Jean Claude RUF**-Scientific Co-ordinator OIV, **Dr Ian Goodall**-Senior Scientist Scotch Whisky Research Institute (SWRI), **Dr. Sukhminder Kaur** - Director & Scientist 'E', Central Forensic Science Laboratory, Pune and **Capt. Shakil Ahmed** - Member of the National IPR Committees of CII and Group Vice President- ANI Technologies. The Panel discussion on **Assuring Safety of Alcoholic Beverages at the Market Place using Technology and Stakeholder Collaboration** was moderated by **Ms Nita Kapoor**-CEO, ISWAI

The deliberations were focused on the following areas

Alliance Against Counterfeit Spirits representing the world's major international spirits producing companies works on combating counterfeits. There was a need for stakeholders working together with such bodies to protect consumers across the country. It was also discussed that guarantee of authenticity and fighting counterfeiting is a real challenge for the wine sector. For addressing this issue, it is important to distinguish the container and the content. New analytical techniques as well as different container identification systems can provide some robust response on the authenticity of the product. However, education of the consumer would play an important role since training the consumer allow to better recognize the information mentioned on the packaging and on label. Producers of counterfeit alcoholic beverages don't comply with food law and good manufacturing practices. Detection of such non-authentic, and potentially unsafe, products is however complicated by the unique nature of alcohol beverages. Sharing both the challenges and best practices in counterfeit alcohol detection amongst industry, enforcements agencies, regulators and technology providers is key to success in this area.

The pandemic has seen in an increasing incidence of counterfeiting activities.as supply chains and logistics are hit badly for genuine players. From consumer safety, brand erosion, job losses; the dangers of counterfeiting are significant, and stakeholders need

to take a fresh look at the complex situation, strategize and come together to fight this menace. For Safety and Authenticity testing adoption to compliance parameters through OIV methods and Block Chain can be explored. Towards using advanced technologies for authenticity testing of different wines and spirits, CeSRAC would work together with OIV for strengthening methods of analysis and testing FSSAI was also making

Stakeholders benefit from the One nation One law. There was already an effort by FSSAI in bringing about a convergence of different regulators and different states with Excise /State Commissioners on board.

This Stakeholder forum was attended by more than 100 stakeholders including eminent Scientists, government officials and professionals from Academia and Industry.