

SDC EC [The Society of the Dyers and Colourants Education Charity (India)] Decennial Celebrations

Our Colourful life and Chemistry's role captured well by Dr. S. Sivaram

Colour is only a perception and this is due to a marvellous combination of three components – light, the chemical material and the human brain. Isaac Newton demonstrated the fundamental aspects of colour that originates when light interacts with matter and it is not an intrinsic property of any material. So said, Padma Shri Dr. S. Sivaram INSA, senior scientist at NCL, in his scintillating and very comprehensively enlightening keynote address, 'Colours in our life: From aesthetics to Functions' at the 10th anniversary celebration of SDC EC held

recently at the Mumbai Cricket Association Indoor Cricket Academy hall. Special Guest Prof. G D Yadav, Vice Chancellor of ICT graced the occasion.

Expatiating with a broad sweep, Dr. Sivaram in his address explained from the human fascination of colour, from times immemorial, attempts to understand what colour is, how the contemporary chemical industry started with the manufacture of synthetic dyes to the current expanding world of myriad applications in conventional areas like textiles, surface coatings, printing inks, food to latest generation electronics. He spoke how Adolf von Bayer synthesized the synthetic indigo for which he won the 1905 Nobel Prize; BASF, putting up a manufacturing plant for synthetic indigo in 1897 and much earlier how India was a major exporter of natural indigo from around 1780 onwards.

Colours have been a mystery for a long time with people questioning why the sky was blue, the ocean was blue and water was colourless, Dr. Sivaram quipped. And interestingly, he added, colours were also related to human moods. Today colour is not limited to texture, perception or decor but encompasses a wide range of products and industries. From traditional applications, colour has moved to display systems like TV and mobile phones, biomedical and imaging systems, energy harvesting devices like dye sensitised solar cells, organic solar cells, light emitting diodes, inkjet printers and so on, Dr. Sivaram elaborated.

Dr. Sivaram also provided a review of the colourants industry in India and globally. He stated that in India the industry was fragmented, confronted with raw material availability problems and environmental issues. He lamented that we continue to export low priced commodity products and much of the technology intensive products came from other parts of the world. Dr. Sivaram empha-



Dr. S. Sivaram

sized that the colourants field is R&D intensive and "One must focus on R&D as our R&D intensity is extremely low."

He highlighted the marvellous way nature produces colours with ease just by physical layering without the use of chemicals and learning from nature, Dr. Sivaram commented, could lead us to the next generation of colours.

While chemistry did so many colourful and wonderful things, Dr. Sivaram stated that despite this "Chemistry is becoming invisible and because of in-

visibility, people to not understand that there is so much chemistry in life.

Earlier, Dr. (Mrs.) Ela Dedhia, Chairperson welcomed the gathering and provided glimpses of SDC EC journey till now. The emphasis has been on ecological regulations, sustainable colourations, innovations and issues of water, energy and environment, she stated.

For their unstinting contribution to the colourants industry, few scientists were also felicitated at the event.

- Dr. K S Murthy

Stahl opens Pielcolor Application Lab in Kanpur of India

Stahl opened a new Pielcolor Application Lab in Kanpur. The lab focuses on the latest developments in leather finish and excellent customer service and enables the Pielcolor team to develop high-quality products as per customer needs. With this new Application Lab and the recently inaugurated Stahl Dyes Center of Excellence in Thane, Stahl has strengthened its position in the Indian leather industry.

"The decision to open this Pielcolor Application Lab is fully in line with our position as industry leader in the leather finish segment," explains CEO Huub van Beijeren, who formally inaugurated the center. "The ultramodern facilities enable us to optimize our customer service for the development of innovative products," adds Tuncay Deriner, Managing Director of StahlIndia, Pakistand and Banglades (IPB) region.