



PRESS RELEASE

CEED urges the government to include Bihar cities in the National Clean Air Programme

Patna, 11 May 2018: The Centre for Environment and Energy Development (CEED) welcomes the Bihar Government's decision to formulate a Clean Air Action Plan (CAAP) for Patna and believes that this regulatory framework will help in identifying and reducing pollution from key polluting sectors like transport, brick-kiln, solid fuel burning and construction dust. The Clean Air Action Plan is a comprehensive regulatory framework to control air pollution through an integrated approach and inter-disciplinary efforts. CEED also believes that a CAAP will help increase pollution monitoring in the city through improved and increased number of the air quality monitoring stations.

Patna, along with two other cities of Bihar figures in the WHO's list of 20 most air-polluted cities of the world. Patna ranked 5th in the list while Gaya stood at the 4th position and Muzaffarpur at the 9th position (1). The report finds Kanpur as the most air-polluted city in the world, followed by Faridabad and Varanasi.

While speaking at the press conference, Mr. Ramapati Kumar, CEO, CEED said, "The government's initiative to draft a Clean Air Action Plan is a welcome step, taken at the right time. We have been demanding the government to take such path-breaking initiatives for a long time. The recent WHO report listing out three Bihar cities as the most polluted ones reinforced our belief that strong regulatory framework is needed to address this environmental and public health crisis, along with an incentive for a cleaner transition." Speaking further, Mr. Kumar added, "A similar exercise will be done for other polluted cities like Gaya and Muzaffarpur." He further outlined the need for sufficient air quality monitoring stations to improve data adequacy so that the pollution profile in these cities is not based merely on single monitoring stations, as is the case with the WHO pollution database report."

Recently the Government of India released a draft concept note for the National Clean Air Programme and invited public comments to improve the programme which focused on improving air quality in 100 non-attainment cities through improved air quality monitoring; efficient data dissemination and public outreach mechanism; and feasible management plan for control and prevention of air pollution with collaborative and cross-sectoral approach. However, quite surprisingly, not a single city of Bihar made it to the list of non-attainment cities, as prepared by the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB), where this programme will be

implemented in 17 cities of Maharashtra, followed by 15 cities of Uttar Pradesh and 8 cities of Punjab (2).

Talking about the NCAP, Mr. Abhishek Pratap, Director-Programs of CEED said, “The NCAP broadens the focus of air pollution mitigation from Delhi to other small and big cities across the country and identifies cross-sectoral approach as the key to address the rising pollution. It is interesting that the NCAP has acknowledged the growing health concerns from air pollution and a study on air pollution health impact has also been commissioned by the central government. Under the NCAP, efforts to control air pollution will include expanding monitoring networks; conducting source apportionment studies; setting up of a 10-city Super Network to understand the overall air quality dynamics of the nation; air information centre and greater public involvement. The total estimated cost for the NCAP is Rs. 637 crore. However, whether Bihar will benefit from this or not, is an important issue to understand knowing that none of the cities from the state figure in the list.” He further adds that “The list of non-attainment cities available at the CPCB website doesn’t include the name of any Bihar city, though the draft document of NCAP has mentioned the Bihar. I request the authorities to look at the discrepancy so that the actual benefit of the program reaches Bihar and the state doesn’t miss the bus”, he concluded.

CEED has released annual ambient air quality reports for Patna, Muzaffarpur, and Gaya that highlighted the high levels of pollution in the year 2017 (3).

Note to Editor:

1. WHO Global Pollution database report 2018: <http://bit.ly/2ls59ix>
2. Draft Concept note of National Clean Air Programme (NCAP): <http://bit.ly/2jOZK7o>
3. CEED’s annual ambient air quality reports for Patna (<http://bit.ly/2KLvW81>), Muzaffarpur (<http://bit.ly/2G2ICEQ>)

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