



## PRESS RELEASE

### **CEED: States along the Indo-Gangetic plain must collaborate to tackle air pollution**

Experts at national conference chalked out a consolidated clean air action plan involving Uttar Pradesh, Bihar & Jharkhand

**Patna, 31 October, 2017:** Shri Sushil Kumar Modi, Deputy Chief Minister of Bihar, inaugurated and convened a conference on air quality management. The national conference on Air Pollution was organised by Centre for Environment and Energy Development (CEED) in an attempt to bring government representatives from three states Bihar, Jharkhand, and Uttar Pradesh together to discuss a regional clean air action plan. Shri Anand Kishor, Commissioner, Patna along with Member Secretaries and senior representatives from the State Pollution Control Boards of Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, and Jharkhand also participated in the conference.

Honourable Environment Minister of Uttar Pradesh Shri Dara Singh Chauhan and Honourable Food, Public Distribution and Consumer Affair Minister of Jharkhand Shri Saryu Rai shared their thoughts through pre-recorded video messages.

While elaborating on the need for an Integrated regional clean air action plan, Mr. Ramapati Kumar, CEO, CEED, stated, "Poor air quality is causing public health nightmares. The need of the hour is to tackle this threat urgently. States must work collaboratively to formulate a concrete Regional Clean Air Action Plan with watertight policies and well-defined interventions on short, medium and long term basis."

Bihar, Jharkhand, and Uttar Pradesh all together comprising a population of more than 35 millions have only 78 manual monitoring stations installed to capture air quality data. Speaking on the issue of the lack of monitoring and data availability in setting up a collaborative and time-bound action plan for air pollution in India, Prof. Sachidanand Tripathi, Coordinator, Centre for Environmental Science & Engineering, Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Kanpur said, "In order to enhance air quality monitoring, we need to set up more monitoring stations across the states. There is also a need to conduct an elaborate study to understand the source of these emissions through the source apportionment study for all the major cities in the region." He further suggested that the need of the hour is to treat air as a resource and also supported the formation of a board along the lines of the California Air Resource Board to secure breathable air in the Indo-Gangetic region.

Expressing deep concern over the exponential rise in the number of private vehicles and its subsequent effect on public health in the Indo-Gangetic region, Anumita Roy Chowdhury, Executive Director, Centre for Science and Environment (CSE) said, "Vehicles are responsible for very high toxic exposure with serious health consequences in our cities. The cities in the Indo-Gangetic region that is at the early stages of motorisation needs urgent action to control growing dependence on personal vehicles, and scale up integrated and reliable public transport systems with good last mile connectivity. Also reduce emissions from on-road vehicles, especially diesel powered and older vehicles." She also

emphasised the need of a transition to cleaner vehicles (including electric vehicles) for maintaining the air quality in these regions.

Highlighting facts related to health implications from industrial pollution, Mr. Abhishek Pratap, Director-Programmes, CEED said, "Air pollution that claims around 3 million deaths annually affects 35 million people living across 29 cities in the Indo-Gangetic region. It adversely affects health and livelihood of the region far removed from the point of emission. We need to identify key challenges for cleaner transition in the existing industry of the region and the required financial, technological and regulatory support to reduce industrial emission impact on the air quality."

The conference helped identify key areas of engagement air quality management among the Pollution Control Boards and government agencies of Uttar Pradesh, Bihar and Jharkhand to regulate the ever rising air pollution levels in these regions. The conference was well attended by several other eminent speakers and environmental experts, including Dr. Rajeev Upadhyay, Chief Environmental Officer of Uttar Pradesh Pollution Control Board; Prof. S.N. Tripathi, Professor from IIT-Kanpur, Ms. Anumita Roy Chowdhary, Executive Director of Centre for Science and Environment (CSE), Dr. Sarath Guttikunda, Founder/Director of Urban Emissions.info; Mr. Bhargav Krishna, Manager of Public Health Foundation of India; Mr. Priyavrat Bhati, Programme Director of Centre for Science and Environment (CSE); Mr. Pawan Mulukutla, Head of Integrated Transport at World Resource Institute (WRI); Mr. Siddharth Kalhans, Senior Journalist, Business Standard, Ms. Vinuta Gopal, Campaign Director of ASAR, among others.

#### **Note to Editor:**

1. **Background Note:** The document gives an insight into the plausible solutions to deal with the rising issue of air pollution in the Indo-Gangetic Plain: <http://bit.ly/2ziyfgb>
2. **Factsheets:** The document which is a compilation of data on Air Quality, Transport, Solid Fuel, Brick Kilns and Energy provides facts related to source emission and its impact on air in the states of Uttar Pradesh, Bihar and Jharkhand: <http://bit.ly/2zZGCdA>
3. **Video message by Shri Saryu Rai**, Honourable Minister, Department of Parliamentary Affairs, Food, Public Distribution and Consumer Affairs, Government of Jharkhand: <http://bit.ly/2hluOe6>
4. **Video message by Shri Dara Singh Chauhan**, Honourable Minister, Department of Forest and Environment, Government of Uttar Pradesh: <http://bit.ly/2iNPq2p>

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