



## Press Release

### Varanasi Air Quality needs immediate attention

#### [CEED demand for clean air action plan for Varanasi](#)

**Varanasi, 20<sup>th</sup> October, 2016:** Centre for Environment and Energy Development (CEED) launched a report, "Ambient Air Quality in Varanasi" that gives out a detailed analysis of the deteriorating air quality in the city. The report comprises of a critical analysis of the data on air pollution in Varanasi during the monsoon months. The study is based on the data acquired from real time air quality monitoring stations that have been installed by IndiaSpend. The sample duration of the study was from 1st August till the 30th September 2016. The findings of the report state that the particulate matter (PM<sub>2.5</sub> and PM<sub>10</sub>) concentration in the city has exceeded the prescribed World Health Organisation (WHO) standards by two to three times. Given the fact that the air quality during monsoon usually fares better than the rest of the season, the poor air quality in Varanasi is a serious concern for the city.

While addressing at the press conference, Mr. Ramapati Kumar, Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of CEED shared that the findings of the report were evidently disturbing since monsoon months are supposed to fare better in terms of particulate matter concentration in the air due to the heavy rainfall in the city. Unfortunately, such is not the case with Varanasi as the air quality has only deteriorated further due to lack of proper planning and the will to prevent air pollution. We need an immediate clean air action plan from the state government to curb the growing menace of air pollution in the city and improve the ambient air quality. It is imperative to chalk out a well defined policy and programme to give Varanasi a healthy environment to breathe in, Mr. Kumar, Concluded.

The details of the report was presented by Ms. Ankita Jyoti, Programme Manager - CEED, who expatiated on the findings of the study further. Ms. Jyoti highlighted that as per the study, the maximum 24-hour mean concentration for PM<sub>2.5</sub> was recorded on the 19th September 2016 with a value of 145ug/m<sup>3</sup>. This recorded value was 5.8 times higher than the prescribed WHO limit. As per the CPCB standards, the above mentioned value is likely to cause respiratory ailments to people with prolonged exposure to the air, and may cause severe health problems to patients with lung and cardiac diseases. During the sample period (August - September), the average PM<sub>2.5</sub> concentration was noted to be 56.2 µg/m<sup>3</sup>. As per the WHO guidelines, this value suggests a 2.5% increase in the short-term mortality rate. Ms. Jyoti further added that the period around midnight displayed better air quality as compared to the other three time-periods of the day. Such a result is attributed to the dilution due to higher boundary layer and lesser traffic.

The findings of the report demand corrective steps to be taken on an urgent basis in order to improve the air quality in Varanasi. The government must not only chalk out effective clean

air action plan, but should also maintain transparency at sharing the pollution data of the city.

CEED's initiative to share the air pollution levels in Varanasi is a part of its 100% UP Campaign that envisions a holistic perspective of creating a sustainable environment in terms of securing energy requirements through cleaner methods, working towards cleansing the air and water, and ensuring proper waste disposal facilities.

With this report, CEED demands to develop an efficient clean air action plan for the city. An action plan for each urban ward must be developed to provide healthy breathable air to its citizens. To achieve such a feat, CEED suggests to formulate a policy that includes a provision to adopt emergency measures where vulnerable communities receive constant alerts and updates about the area's air quality. The policy must also aim at efficient transport system, delinking diesel, reducing industrial emission with special focus on clean bricks manufacturing methods, strict banning of open waste burning, encouraging clean cooking methods, and controlling dust pollution by increasing the green cover.

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About CEED;

Centre for Environment and Energy Development (CEED) is a solution driven non-profit organization that works towards creating inspiring solutions to maintain a healthy, rich and diverse environment.

CEED is dedicated to finding solutions for clean energy, clean air, clean water and a toxic free future.