



PRESS RELEASE

CEED urges Government of Bihar to formulate Clean Air Action Plan

Experts expressed their opinions at the National Conference on Clean Air Bihar in Patna

Patna, 7 February, 2017: Environmental experts from all over the country gathered at the National Conference on Clean Air Bihar organised by Centre for Environment and Energy Development (CEED) in Patna. The conference aimed at discussing and demanding an immediate roadmap for a Clean Air Action Plan for Patna and other cities of Bihar, to protect the citizens from rising air pollution levels in the state. In the year 2016, the air quality of Patna reached to an alarming level with almost 99% of the total monitored days under the severe category (1).

The ambient air pollution is categorised as the fourth highest risk factor for death, globally. The ambient air quality data of Patna, collected between the years 2009 to 2014, have recorded extremely high levels of pollution. The year 2013 noted a threefold increase in pollution, with an average annual PM10 concentration touching close to 193 $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ (2).

While talking at the conference, Dr. Ashok Ghosh, Chairman of State Appraisal Committee under Bihar State Pollution Control Board, said that given the severe situation of air pollution in Patna, a clean air action plan for city is highly required. A roadmap for clean Air action for patna should focus on key sectors responsible for particulate emission with targets. Dr. Ghosh congratulated CEED for its initiative, and urged all the experts present in the conference to join hands to curb the menace of pollution by laying suggestions and feedback to formulate the clean air action plan.

As per the report by Bihar State Pollution Control Board, the major contributors of air pollution in Patna are from domestic fuel burning (21%), brick kilns (20%) and transport sector (20%); that account for 60% of the total emission. Diesel generator sets, open waste burning, industrial pollution and construction activities are other factors of pollution in the city(2).

While elaborating on the need for a Clean Air Action Plan, Mr. Ramapati Kumar, CEO of CEED, stated that “The air pollution levels in Patna has become toxic enough to dissuade any further debate on the same. The problem is starkly apparent and we need to act on it urgently to prevent it from getting any worse. We must work collaboratively to formulate a concrete Clean Air Action Plan with watertight policies and well defined interventions on short, medium and long term basis.” Mr. Kumar further insisted that “We must work on a war footing basis to create a plan that commands complete convergence without silos, and can be evaluated timely.”

The conference was graced by several eminent speakers and environmental experts like Dr. Sagnik Dey, Associate Professor, Centre for Atmospheric Sciences (IIT-Delhi); Ms.

Tanvi Bongale, Senior Project Associate, Climate Program, World Resources Institute (WRI); Dr. Arvind Kumar, Chief Scientist, Botanical Research Unit, Dhangain, Bikramganj, Rohtas; Dr. S.N. Jaiswal, Senior Scientist, Bihar State Pollution Control Board (BSPCB); and Dr. Ashok Ghosh, Chairman, State Environmental Appraisal Committee, Bihar; among others.

Ms. Ankita Jyoti, Senior Program Officer of CEED said that “Sectoral apportionment study for Patna is a critical element before any clean air action plan is formulated, so that it details the exact sources of pollution. Air quality monitoring must also be enhanced for which more monitoring stations are required.” Ms. Jyoti further requested the state government to issue a proper health advisory based on the level of air pollution in the city. She mentions that “The battle against air pollution is a collaborative one and the community is an equal stakeholder in this. CEED has partnered with jhatkaa.org to educate people to demand a proper health advisory.”

Note to Editor:

1. CEED report: <http://ceedindia.org/ceed-s-continuous-monitoring-of-air-quality-data-reveals-alarming-air-pollution-levels-in-the-schools-of-patna/>
2. Health Advisory : <http://ceedindia.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/02/health-advisory.pdf>
3. CEED’s Sectoral Report: http://ceedindia.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/02/Snapshot-patna_high-res.pdf

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