



PRESS RELEASE

CEED urges Patnaites to celebrate a pollution-free Holika Dahan Burning tyres, plastics and thermocol may adversely affect public health in Patna

Patna, 11 March, 2017: With Holika Dahan just a few days away, Centre for Environment and Energy Development (CEED) conducted a survey on the bonfire practices in the city. The results of the survey revealed that 16 out of 25 bonfire samples were found with heaps of garbage such as plastic bags, old tyres, rubber products, leather cuttings and other waste materials along with wood.

Senior Programme officer of CEED, Ms. Ankita Jyoti urged the citizens of Patna to adopt eco-friendly ways to celebrate Holika Dahan. Ms. Jyoti quoted that “Holika Dahan is essentially about the triumph of good over evil, but by burning plastics and other harmful substances, we are giving rise to one of the greatest present day evils, i.e. pollution.”

The survey conducted by this environmental think-tank covered almost every part of Patna, extending over 65 kms of the total area. Owing to the rising levels of air pollution in Patna, this survey focused on the various dangerous kind of materials used for the bonfire all across the city and the possible impacts of the same on public health and environment of Patna. The open burning of these substances and other non-biodegradable waste emits copious amounts of pollutants in the air, among which dioxin and furan are the most harmful. Dioxin is classified as a "known human carcinogen" by IARC and its short-term exposure may result in skin lesions such as chloracne and patchy darkening of the skin, and altered liver function. Further, CEED also investigated the rise in concentration of particulate matter (PM2.5) during last year's Holi. The ambient air quality in that period had subsequently suffered with sudden rise in particulate matter count; it increased 3 times as compared to the concentration noted on 22nd March 2016, i.e. two days before Holi.

Date	PM2.5	National Standard (24Hr)
20/03/2016	65.48 $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$	60 $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$
21/03/2016	79.83 $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$	60 $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$
22/03/2016	39.41 $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$	60 $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$
23/03/2016	145.47 $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$	60 $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$
24/03/2016	163.08 $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$	60 $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$

Table: Concentration of Particulate matter (PM2.5) during the week of Holi in 2016

Ms. Jyoti further added that “While we must respect the tradition of the festival and light the bonfire, we must absolutely shun ourselves from burning thermocol, plastic, wet wood, rubber tyres and other non-biodegradable substances in order to create a pollution-free Patna.”

For more information:

1. Ms. Ankita Jyoti, 07858864847, ankita@ceedindia.org
2. Ms. Pragya Shanker, 09661511497, pragya@ceedindia.org
3. Mr. Faiyaz Iqbal, 08084814723, fiqbal@ceedindia.org

Note to Editor:

1. Effects of Dioxins on Human Health: <http://www.who.int/mediacentre/factsheets/fs225/en>
2. CPCB data: <http://www.cpcb.gov.in/CAAQM/frmReportdisplay.aspx>
3. The ambient Air Quality of Patna in last ten days was found in Poor category where the concentration of particulate matter (PM2.5) varies in a range of 81 µg/m³- 173 µg/m³
4. Locations covered: Danapur Cantonment- Bailey Road- Dak Bungalow Road- Kadamkuan-- Bari Path- Dargah Road- Agamkuan Mandi- Gulzarbagh Railway Line Road- Patna City- S.K. Puri- Ashiana Digha Road- Baansghat Dujra- Gandhi Maidan- Ashok Rajpath- Gaighat Ghat Kankarbagh
5. Link to photographs:
https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/0B_u89rTJGpRARTlpUVM3am52TTA