# ‘Information Technology must be embedded into Pollution Control Regime; need to clear the Pollution of Corruption from the system’: Dr. Harsh Vardhan
# Environment Minister inaugurates 62nd Conference of Chairmen & Member Secretaries of Pollution Control Boards/Committees

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Union Minister of Environment, Forest & Climate Change, Science & Technology and Earth Sciences, Dr. Harsh Vardhan has made a strong pitch for embedding Information Technology into pollution control regime to enhance transparency and efficiency in efforts to contain and mitigate pollution. Addressing the inaugural session of the 62nd Conference of Chairmen & Member Secretaries of Pollution Control Boards/Committees here today, the Environment Minister said that there is a need to clear the pollution of corruption from the system, besides clearing air and water pollution. He emphasised that the use of Information Technology will ensure better compliance, as well as enhance the interaction and outreach between various stakeholders. He also said that IT will also help in resolving issues with State Pollution Control Boards. The Minister pointed to the urgent need for innovative thinking and an out-of-the-box approach to resolve various issues.

Expressing concern over the air quality status of Delhi, the Minister called for substantive action at the local level, along with a holistic action plan for air quality management. “Our Government is committed to promote economic well-being, along with environmental well-being”, Dr. Harsh Vardhan said.

Referring to the flagship schemes such as Swachch Bharat Abhiyaan, Make in India campaign, Smart Cities Project and Digital India Campaign, Dr. Harsh Vardhan said that Make in India will adopt a ‘Zero Effect Zero Defect’ policy, which will leave Zero Effect on the environment. The Minister stressed upon the need to address the gaps in the disposal of Solid Waste Management, as 50% of the waste collected is dumped unscientifically. He also pointed out that while 259000 tonnes of plastic waste is generated every day, only 14 States/Union Territories have banned plastic carry-bags. Dr. Harsh Vardhan also said that while the estimated quantity of E-waste generated is about 1.70 million TPA, the quantity of E-Waste that is recycled is about 462896 TPA. He also expressed dissatisfaction that E-waste inventorization had been completed by only five states - Jammu & Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh, Goa, Madhya Pradesh and Punjab. The Minister urged the remaining States to complete the process of inventorization of E-waste at the earliest.

The Environment Minister called for an emphasis on the implementation of the concept of 4 Rs – Reduce, Reuse, Recycle and Recover, for the proper management of solid waste and sewage. He directed the Boards to ensure strict adherence to timelines to achieve a reduction in waste generation, as incorporated in the amended Solid Waste Management Rules, 2016 and Plastic Waste Management Rules, 2016.

Dr. Harsh Vardhan suggested that people must be educated and motivated about the actions that they can take individually to bring about a quantitative and qualitative change on environmental issues. He sought inputs for creation of a Databank of good environmental actions and deeds that can be taken by individuals, as their contribution towards protection of environment.

The Minister also said that he has asked the Ministry of Science & Technology and Ministry of Environment, Forest & Climate Change to work together closely and to benefit from the scientific innovations in the field of science and technology. He pointed to the need to bring in a new perspective into the existing rules and laws, along with a commitment from the society on environmental issues.

Dr. Harsh Vardhan urged those present in the gathering to hold quality brainstorming sessions and incorporate all new innovative ideas emerging into action plans. He also asked all the agencies to involve the people of the country and to make efforts to restore the status of environment that our ancestors had given to us and which we have to deliver to future generations.

Chairman, Central Pollution Control Board, Dr. S.P.S Parihar made the welcome remarks. Member-Secretary, CPCB, Shri A.B Akolkar delivered the Vote of Thanks.

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