

Call for full readiness and time-bound decisions to achieve Swachh Bharat Mission's aim of clean India by 2019

NEW DELHI, 1 June 2015: Mr. Praveen Prakash, Joint Secretary, Ministry of Urban Development, today urged the stakeholders of the waste management sector to take time-bound decisions and put systems in place to make the 'Swachh Bharat Mission' a success. The mission was launched by the Government of India on October 2, 2014. It aims to achieve clean India by 2019.

While addressing a seminar '**Waste2Value: Unlocking the Potential of Swachh Bharat Mission**' in line with the Swachh Bharat Mission, organized by **FICCI** along with the Ministry of Urban Development (MoUD), Government of India; Embassy of the Kingdom of Netherlands and Netherlands Waste2Value Consortia, Mr. Prakash said that at present, only 15% waste was being treated and managed but in the next four years the government has pledged to treat 100% waste. He added this was a great opportunity for both public and private players in the waste management sector to contribute towards a greener and cleaner India.

Mr. Prakash said that the Government of India would fund the preparation and approval of the Detailed Project Reports but would need the state governments and private sector to partner in driving waste management projects. He added that policy interventions at the federal level would be needed to make waste management projects viable, hence the government was working on amending many of its policies including the Electricity Act and Waste Management rules.

Referring to Netherlands' commendable work in the area, Mr. Prakash said that Netherlands had already begun work in waste management in some cities of India and was sharing its best practices and technology. He added that under the MoU signed between the two countries in 2013, waste management was a priority sector and now India needed to make the country litter-free by learning from its Netherlands counterparts and creating sustainable waste management projects.

On the occasion, MoUs were signed and exchanged between Netherlands Consortia Members and their counterparts in India.

In his special address **Mr. Alphonsus Stoelinga, Netherlands Ambassador to India,** said that the seminar had given a platform to the Dutch consortium to showcase its technology and expertise in the area of waste management. He added that it was impressive to witness the forward-looking and structured approach of India's Ministry of Urban Development towards waste management. However, he said that India needed to adopt an integrated approach for attaining a sustainable business model.

Speaking about India and Netherlands association in the waste management sector, Mr. Stoelinga said that in 2013, the Ministry of Infrastructure and Environment, Netherlands and Ministry of Urban Development (MoUD) India had signed a MoU to enable technical cooperation in various domains between the two countries and waste management was one of the focus areas under the partnership, which led to the spin off a private public consortia 'Waste to Value' by the Minister of Trade and Development, Netherlands. He urged the stakeholders to support the consortia and explore opportunities in the sector.

While introducing Netherlands Waste Management Consortia and their interventions in India, **Mr. Rutger de Bruijn, Chief Representative of Dutch Consortia in India and Director, Nexus Novus**, said that policies and a certain business environment were keys to resolving many complex issues of waste management. He suggested that pre-approved power purchase agreement for waste to energy, certification for compost, certification for RDF and single window clearances would be effective in increasing the share of PPP in waste management sector, which stood at a dismal 2% at present.

Mr. Bruijn said that the consortium was providing customized, adaptable and integrated waste management solutions to strengthen the Indian waste management sector. The consortium, currently moving at a very fast pace, has already signed a contract with the Himachal Pradesh Government to carry out feasibility studies to solve the issues faced by them in managing waste. He added that the consortium was working with other states of India as well such as Rajasthan, Karnataka, Punjab, Maharashtra, Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Telangana and Andhra Pradesh.

Ms. Rita Roy Choudhary, Head of Sustainability and Environment, FICCI, said that FICCI believes that sustainable waste management involves four pillars - policy, technology, financing, capacity building - all of which are being addressed in the seminar today. FICCI has been working closely with the government in giving private sector's feedback into the amendment of the waste management regulations, and in developing a framework for effective public private partnerships. We believe that private sector engagement in this space is critical and can be enhanced with appropriate enabling environment that involves mechanisms to incentivize waste management through viable business models, value creation for the entire chain of waste management, and creating awareness and capacities of different stakeholders. It will involve a paradigm shift from treating waste as a cost to treating it as a valuable resource.

In her vote of thanks, **Ms. Rima Yadav, Senior Policy Adviser, Embassy of the Netherlands**, said that commitment from the Government of India and private partners was essential for making the 'Swachh Bharat Mission' a success.

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