

## Sustainable irrigation system is pivotal to improve the standard of living - Water Resources Secretary

**New Delhi, January 21, 2016:** Delivering the keynote address **Dr Amarjit Singh, Special Secretary, Ministry of Water Resources**, River development and Ganga Rejuvenation (MoWR, RD & GR) emphasised that “sustainable irrigation system is pivotal to improving the standard of living of 60% of Indians whose livelihoods depend on agriculture”. Lauding Israel’s efforts harnessing nearly 98% of annual rainfall, he stressed that “India must strive to enhance its storage capacity to effectively utilise the annual precipitation of 700 billion cubic metres (BCM)”.

He was speaking at the seminar organised by FICCI in partnership with the Israel Embassy on fostering “India – Israel Cooperation Opportunities in Sustainable Water Management” with an objective to explore areas of engagement between the two countries to create synergy between policy and practice in water domain.

**Dr Amarjit Singh** underlined that “FICCI should play an important role in working with the government to develop mechanisms that enhances private sector capacity and engagement for sustainable management of industrial and urban wastewater”.

His Excellency **Mr Daniel Carmon, Ambassador of Israel to India** in his special address mentioned that water is on top of Israel’s agenda and that it is keen on actively partnering with the Indian government on its various initiatives on water.

Mr Harshvardhan Neotia, President, FICCI reaffirmed that FICCI will work with its industry members towards alleviating the challenge of inequitable distribution of India’s scarce water resources.

**Ms Sara Elhanny, Director, Water Quality and the National Water Monitoring Laboratory, Israel Water Authority**, highlighted how Israel, with the help of supportive policies and technologies, has overcome extreme water shortage and is now using recycled wastewater to fulfill 50% of its total water consumption. Mr Jonathan Raz, Expert, Irrigation and Water of agriculture used case studies to underscore that reclaimed water is a legitimate resource for irrigation provided there are strict regulation, monitoring systems and awareness programmes in place.

**Shri S. Masood Hussain, Director General, National Water Development Agency (NWDA)** stressed that cooperation between central and state government is essential to overcome challenges of water management.

While giving the industries’ perspective, **Mr Sanjiv Lal, CIO & Vice President Corporate Projects at Tata Chemicals**, and Co-Chair, FICCI Water Mission mentioned the FICCI Water Mission is working on developing industry linkages on water with government and other stakeholders to create a growing understanding of the water risks to industry and society. He also highlighted examples where companies are engaging with communities on sustainable water management.

**Mr Anshuman, Senior Director, TERI** mentioned the need for setting benchmarks for improving the industrial water use efficiency. He stressed that while Israel can provide practical solutions based on technologies the larger push for reforms in water sector needs to come from Indian policymakers.





# FICCI MEDIA DIVISION