

“CII and Industry needs to initiate a nation-wide movement on water” Mr. U P Singh, Secretary, Ministry of Water Resources, River Development & Ganga Rejuvenation, Government of India

For exemplary and innovative work undertaken in the field of Water Management, DCM Shriram Ltd, Mahindra & Mahindra Limited (Auto, Farm & Agri Sector), Bajaj Corp Limited and RBS Services India Private Limited were adjudged as the winners in Beyond the Fence Category of the National Awards for Excellence in Water Management 2018 while Himadri Speciality Chemicals Limited, Bindals Papers Mills Limited, Hindustan Zinc Limited Dariba Smelter Complex, ITC Limited Paper Boards & Specialty Papers Division, Orient Paper & Industries Limited (Unit of CK Birla Group), Solaris Chemtech Industries Limited, Talwandi Sabo Power Limited, Tamil Nadu Newsprint and Papers Limited and Vedanta Limited - Cairn Oil & Gas were adjudged as winners in “Within the fence” category.

Inaugural Session:

Mr U P Singh, Secretary, Ministry of Water Resources, River Development & Ganga Rejuvenation, Government of India, in his address, explained the grave situation of water in the country citing the increasing interstate disputes that are being addressed in the ministry every day. Mr. Singh said that the increase in frequency and amplitude of extreme events over the past few years have reduced the efficiency of surface storages. Hence, emphasis has to be on replenishment of sub surface storages. Mr. Singh expressed his concern on the excessive draft of groundwater in the Ganga basin which has hampered the baseflow in the basin during lean periods. He further elaborated upon the various schemes formulated to tackle the water issues by the central and state governments. Mr. Singh concluded by calling upon the industry to initiate a nationwide movement in water conservation.

Ms Karlene Maywald, Former Minister & Chair, National Water Commission, and International Adviser, South Australian Government lauded the Water Institute for providing the industry with tools like WATSCAN and WatSmart which helped the industry manage water at a local level inclusive of the local community. Ms Maywald called upon the industry to work with the farmers in developing a business model which facilitates a bankable investment on farmers which would lead to sustainability. She highlighted the importance of a strong leadership to promote collective agreement between states. Ms. Maywald spoke about the management of water by private sector in Australia which led to improved efficiency of the system by developing a profitable financial model. She concluded by highlighting that reforms on water in India was crucial to the world.

HE Mr. Yogesh Punja, High Commissioner of the Republic of Fiji, introduced the audience to the perspective on water issues in the Pacific region. Mr. Punja stressed upon the need to translate technology to farmers through effective communication. He explained about the impact of cyclone Winston which hampered the GDP of Fiji by about 20%. Mr. Punja emphasized the need to employ sustainable practises like water harvesting and adoption of drought resistant crops as practised in Australia. He concluded by congratulating CII for encouraging the water conservation initiatives of the industry.

Mr Rajiv Arora, Additional Chief Secretary to Government of Haryana, Public Health Engineering Department & Chief Resident Commissioner, Government of Haryana, emphasized that the Haryana government was focussed on the management of issues to offset the water stresses arising as an offshoot of development. Mr. Arora spoke about the policy being adopted to facilitate reuse of wastewater. He highlighted upon the need to develop low cost, effective and sustainable interventions for water resources management.

Mr. Arora stressed upon the need for development of solutions on a macro level inclusive of urban and rural water stressed areas.

Mr J P Gupta, Principal Secretary (WS) & Chairman, Gujarat Water Supply & Sewerage Board (GWSSB) Government of Gujarat, in his address said that the Gujarat government looked at the management of water resources with special emphasis on Quantity, Quality and Efficiency (QQE). Mr. Gupta highlighted the special importance accorded by his government in tackling the issues of drinking water. He stressed upon the need to introduce an efficiency paradigm in different aspects of water cycle. Mr. Gupta concluded by calling upon the need to initiate immediate actions to tackle the challenges before the water situation deteriorates.

Mr Dhruv M Sawhney, Past President, CII & Chairman CII – Triveni Water Institute, emphasized that economic growth and human development cannot be achieved without tackling the issues of water scarcity and quality. Mr. Sawhney explained that The Water Institute was established to control these twin problems. He briefed the audience about the various services offered by the institute and called upon the industry to play their role in developing solutions at grassroot levels. Mr. Sawhney highlighted the need for pricing of water for urban communities and industries to ensure availability to the weaker sections of the society.

Mr N K Ranganath Member of Jury, CII National Awards for Excellence in Water Management, stressed upon the need for identifying the pockets of excellence in the context of water conservation in India and linking these pockets to enhance efficiency. Mr. Ranganath called upon a central leadership for water basins to avoid interstate water disputes. He called upon the need to develop a holistic approach for food, water and sustainability.

5TH October, New Delhi