

India's First Sustainability Summit: Asia 2006

New Delhi, Delhi, India, December 19, 2006 -- The CII-ITC Centre of Excellence for Sustainable Development, which advises corporate organisations on sustainable technologies and practices, will host India's first Sustainability Summit: Asia 2006. Focusing on 'Promoting Excellence for Sustainable Development', the two-day Summit, starting tomorrow in New Delhi, is being organised in partnership with Development Alternatives, a non-governmental organisation.

Set against the background of India's poor resource base - low forest cover (one percent of the world's forests), grave water crisis (four percent of the world's water resources are found in India) and land paucity (2.4 percent of the global land mass) - and large population (18 percent of the global population lives in India), the Summit will highlight the role of industry in ensuring responsible use of natural wealth. Using the CII-ITC Centre of Excellence for Sustainable Development approach of prioritising cost and risk reduction, clean technologies and innovation for economic and business growth, the Summit will discuss issues of measuring sustainability as well as issues of mining operations, forestry and innovation for sustainability; a special session will focus on Orissa.

One of the objectives of the Summit is to create awareness of the Triple Bottom Line (TBL) approach which proposes securing economic well-being, social development and environmental stability as the three pillars of sustainable development.

"Sustainability is a crying need for India as we embark on the path of rapid economic growth," said Mr Y C Deveshwar, chairman of the Advisory Council of CII-ITC Centre of Excellence for Sustainable Development, of ITC Ltd and a past president of the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII). "The Summit will focus on parameters of sustainable development applicable throughout the country regardless of different socio-economic and environmental concerns in the urban, rural and other geographical regions. The challenge is to do this and yet ensure poverty-reduction. India ranks a poor 127 on the UNDP Human Development Index and desperately needs development on every economic and social front. Yet the path of development has to be such that we do not destroy the country's future even as we address current imperatives."

The Summit is being sponsored by ITC Ltd., partnered by Vedanta Industries, Rio Tinto, the Tata Group, Ernst & Young and Sesa Goa Limited.

The Summit is supported by the Government of Orissa, United Nations Environment Programme, Union ministries of Environment and Forests, Tribal Affairs, Heavy Industry and Public Enterprises, External Affairs and power. Bringing together senior bureaucrats and political leaders, corporate heads, leaders of development organizations and research institutions, the debate and discussions are expected to offer breakthrough ideas for directing action on sustainable growth.

Among the prominent speakers who will address sessions at the Summit are Thiru A Raja, Union Minister for Environment & Forests, Government of India, Mr. B J Panda, Member of Parliament - Rajya Sabha, Dr. Kirit S Parikh, Member, Planning Commission, Dr. Prodipto Ghosh, Secretary, Ministry of Environment & Forests, Dr. R C Panda, Secretary, Ministry of Heavy Industry & Public Enterprises, Ms. Meena Gupta, Secretary, Ministry of Tribal Affairs, Dr. T Ramasami, Secretary, Ministry of Science & Technology, Mr. Mechai Viravaidya, Founder & Chairman, Population & Community Development Programme, Thailand and Former Minister for Prime Minister's Office, Thailand, Prof. Emil Salim, Member, UN High Level Advisory Board on Sustainable Development, Chairman, National Economic Board, Indonesia and Former Minister for Population & Environment, Indonesia, Prof. David Jackman, Chair, British Standards (BSI) Committee on Sustainable Development and Director, London Financial Academy, Mr. Ben Mellor, Head-International, Extractive Industry Transparency Initiative, U.K., Dr. Jamshed J Irani, Director, Tata Sons Ltd., Mr. Vikram S Mehta, Chairman, The Shell Group of Companies in India, Mr. Kishor A Chaukar, Managing Director, Tata Industries Ltd., Mr. Y C Deveshwar, Chairman, ITC Limited, Mr. M S Mehta, CEO, Hindustan Zinc Ltd., Mr. Nik Senapati, Managing Director, Rio Tinto India Private Limited, Mr. Ravindra Kastia, Business Head & Group Executive President, Aditya Birla Group, Dr. Ashok Khosla, Chairman, Development Alternatives, and. Mr. Ravi Singh, CEO & Secretary General, WWF-India.

About CII - ITC Centre of Excellence for Sustainable Development:

Formed in Jan. 2006 in New Delhi, the CII-ITC Centre of Excellence for Sustainable Development makes available the services of expert resources to advise Indian industry on adopting Sustainability best practices. It also engages in research on issues of Sustainable Development that are relevant to the industry. Instituted in January 2006, it focuses as much on small enterprises as large corporations in its advisory capacity.

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