

CII WORKING IN 100 VILLAGES IN PUNJAB, HARYANA TO MAKE THEM STUBBLE BURNING FREE

Over 1,00,000 acres of farmland adopted to reduce air pollution

Delhi, 19 October 2019: To mitigate air pollution caused due to stubble burning, CII has adopted more than 100 villages and 100,000 acres of farm area in the districts of Ludhiana, Barnala and Patiala in Punjab, and Rohtak, Sirsa and Fatehabad in Haryana to enable zero crop residue burning.

CII has created an ecosystem to engage stakeholders including experts, corporates, state governments, village community and farmer groups to implement possible solutions to the issue of stubble burning. CII is proactively engaging with over 15,000 farmers to provide farm machinery, organize technical trainings and massive awareness drives in the adopted villages of Punjab and Haryana. Air quality monitors have been installed to monitor village level air pollution data, to measure the impact of reduced stubble burning. Over 3000 school students in Punjab, and youth & corporate volunteers are joining CII in this movement to enable zero stubble burning.

The intervention is supporting farmer groups to procure a range of farm machineries including Happy Seeder, Zero Till, Mulcher, etc and make these available to farmers on a nominal rent. Use of these machineries, on a shared basis is enabling farmers to adopt in-situ straw management practices, leading to zero stubble burning and sustainable farming. Potential ex-situ straw management models are also being piloted and research is being conducted with an aim to develop a road map for straw value chain.

CII's intervention is an extension of its pilot project in 2018 in 19 villages and 16000 acres of farmland in Punjab, engaging over 3000 farmers. The impact of the intervention was encouraging. Post the intervention, 80% farmers adopted no stubble burning approach and a total of 12,000 acres of farmland (75% of the total area under paddy in the adopted villages) became free of stubble burning in 2018, compared to 550 acres (3.5% of farm land) in 2017. Many of these farmers adopted alternate technology to stubble burning, for the first time ever. About 25,000 tonne of rice straw was recycled back into the soil under the project and 115 tonne fine particulate matter (PM2.5) was saved from being released into the air.

Chandrajit Banerjee, Director General, CII said, "CII's Cleaner Air, Better Life initiative is implementing and piloting optimal solutions to help farmers adopt zero stubble burning. From our pilot of 19 villages in 2018, we have now scaled to 100 villages. The initiative is not just implementing models for in-situ management of straw, but also piloting ex-situ models which can create potential business models for rural entrepreneurs and SMEs. We are doing in-depth research for designing district action plans for biomass management and advocating on relevant policy issues. I urge all stakeholder to partner us and test technologies/ approaches in adopted villages for improved crop residue management."

CII partnered with SIAM, to enable 9 villages in Patiala to go stubble burning free under 'Sukh da Saah' initiative. Rajan Wadhwa, President, Society of Indian Automobile Manufacturers (SIAM) said, "Sukh da Saah is a unique initiative where the Automobile Industry is partnering with CII to educate Farmers across the adopted 7400 acres of farmland, in the 3 Farmer Cooperative Societies of Jasso Majra, Bholey and Mallewal covering 9 villages in Patiala District in the State of Punjab on feasible alternate solutions to manage crop stubble without burning them. We are deploying in-situ technology and providing equipment like Happy Seeders, Mulchers and others, to Farmers in these identified villages. Last year, the pilot project was successful in making 71% of the target area free from crop stubble burning. This year, our aim is to ensure stoppage of crop stubble burning across 90% of the targeted 7400 acres of farmland. For us at SIAM this is yet another way for the Automobile Industry to participate in Building the Nation, Responsibly"

The initiative is being implemented with the support of numerous stakeholders, including Punjab Agricultural University, Haryana Agriculture University, Hisar, District Agriculture Offices of Department of Agriculture and farmer Welfare and Krishi Vigyan Kendras. Various industry members, including BPCL, Birlasoft, ONGC, Royal Enfield, CLP India, PTC India, Cummins, ReNew Power and SIAM; and field volunteer groups like GBDSGNS Foundation and Doctors for You have joined the initiative in promoting ground level action in Punjab and Haryana to help solve the problem of stubble burning.

About CII

The Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) works to create and sustain an environment conducive to the development of India, partnering industry, Government, and civil society, through advisory and consultative processes.

CII is a non-government, not-for-profit, industry-led and industry-managed organization, playing a proactive role in India's development process. Founded in 1895, India's premier business association has more than 9100 members, from the private as well as public sectors, including SMEs and MNCs, and an indirect membership of over 300,000 enterprises from 291 national and regional sectoral industry bodies.

CII charts change by working closely with Government on policy issues, interfacing with thought leaders, and enhancing efficiency, competitiveness and business opportunities for industry through a range of specialized services and strategic global linkages. It also provides a platform for consensus-building and networking on key issues.

Extending its agenda beyond business, CII assists industry to identify and execute corporate citizenship programmes. Partnerships with civil society organizations carry forward corporate initiatives for integrated and inclusive development across diverse

domains including affirmative action, healthcare, education, livelihood, diversity management, skill development, empowerment of women, and water, to name a few.

India is now set to become a US\$ 5 trillion economy in the next five years and Indian industry will remain the principal growth engine for achieving this target. With the theme for 2019-20 as 'Competitiveness of India Inc - India@75: Forging Ahead', CII will focus on five priority areas which would enable the country to stay on a solid growth track. These are - employment generation, rural-urban connect, energy security, environmental sustainability and governance.

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