

Press Release, 5th June 2012

Developed countries must fulfill their commitments; Editors discuss sustainable development and Rio+20

Many prominent journalists and editor's today converged in Delhi on Environment Day to discuss the Rio+20 sustainable development Summit, which will take place in June at Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. The Summit will be celebrated as twentieth anniversary of Rio Summit (1992), and seeks to enhance political commitment of countries towards sustainable development. Media persons found it very surprising that media has not been able to take up this event of such global significance, and there is hardly any media coverage on Rio+20 in Indian mainstream media. More than 150 heads of the state including Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh has confirmed their participation in this important event.

Speaking at the occasion, Mr. Hari Jaisingh, former President of Editor's Guild, said that it is unfortunate that today's media does not have much space for environmental and social development issues, however, advent of alternative media and specially internet has created ample opportunities to bring these important issues in public conversation. Mr. Om Thanvi, Editor Jansatta, said that now with ownership of media lying with business houses, media also operates under great restrictions and has to give priority to issues that have salability and unfortunately environment is not one of that. Mr. Punya Prasun Vajpayee, political editor of Zee News, said that politicians have a clear interest in business, and therefore, they cannot be expected to raise issues against business in the media or even at international forum. Earlier talking about the latest developments in run up to Rio+20, Mr. Ajay Jha, from PAIRVI, said that it is highly unfortunate that there is a huge divide between developed and developing countries on many major issues that the Summit seeks to address, and developed countries have not only renege on their previous commitments made at Rio(1992), but they are also challenging the fundamental principles those were laid down at Rio, and were supposed to be foundation of international cooperation for sustainable development. He added that with less than ten negotiating days remaining, there is a seemingly big difference between developing and developed countries on green economy, Institutional framework for sustainable development, means of implementation, and Sustainable development goals, which the summit seeks to define.

Mr. Soumya Dutta, speaking on United Nations Secretary general's Initiative on sustainable energy for all, which is a simultaneous process with Rio+20, said that the process is highly influenced by business and power companies, and there is no thought on how to make energy accessible to people who do not have purchasing power. Mr. Vijay Pratap, South Asian Dialogue on Ecological democracy, said that The Consultation demanded that developed countries must fulfill their previous commitments and provide enhance their ambitions in providing financial, technological and capacity building assistance to developing and poor countries to enable them to build green development pathways. The Consultation was organized by a pan Indian group of civil society organizations including Beyond Copenhagen, Bharat Jan Vigyan Jathha, CECOEDCON, SADED and PAIRVI. Eminent media persons including Madhukar Upadhyaya, Ravish Kumar, Arvind Mohan Mishra, Nand Kishor Tirkha, were present in the Consultation.