



**EMBASSY OF INDIA
ABU DHABI**



Press Release

Ministry of Climate Change and Environment and Embassy of India Co-host event marking World Environment Day

The UAE Ministry of Climate Change and Environment (MOCCAE) and the Indian Embassy co-hosted today a landmark event marking World Environment Day 2018 at the Ministry's headquarters in Dubai. India is the global host of World Environment Day which was celebrated on 5th June 2018.

The Embassy of India mobilised the participation of high-level officials from Pharmaceutical and Retail sector of UAE including LuLu Group International, Aster DM Healthcare, Apparel Group, BRS Ventures and others who attended the event and signed a pledge to reduce plastic pollution in their operations.

In his keynote speech, His Excellency Dr Thani bin Ahmed Al Zeyoudi, Minister of Climate Change and Environment, said: "While plastic may be an essential component in many modern industries in the world and has proven economic value in securing our livelihoods, we now realize the dire need to strike a balance between its economic value and protecting the environment against its adverse effects through opting for greener choices when using and disposing of plastic."

He added: "I call on each and every one of you gathered here today, and our world at large, to support and commit to reducing plastic pollution now through adopting smarter habits and more efficient practices to make planet earth green again. Only that will make this World Environment Day truly meaningful."

In his address, His Excellency Navdeep Singh Suri, Indian Ambassador to the UAE, said: "Today we seem to be at some kind of a tipping point where we get a feeling that we allowed a silent killer to come in our midst and take over almost surreptitiously the environment in which we live. This is not a battle which anyone of us can fight alone. It means the government, the corporate sector and the individual, each one of us has to take responsibility in our own way."

Ambassador recalled that it was the Indian state of Sikkim which was first in banning plastic.

Ambassador said “We are delighted to join hands with the Minister of Climate Change and Environment to launch the Beat Plastic Pollution campaign in the UAE. It is truly heartening to see such a positive response from the Indian business community and to note their strong commitment to this cause. The fight against plastic pollution must begin now.”

Speaking on the signing, Dr. Azad Moopen, Founder Chairman and Managing Director at Aster DM Healthcare, said: “We are glad to partner with the Embassy of India to UAE and the UAE Ministry of Climate Change and Environment to contribute in the reduction of plastic pollution through adoption of sustainable practices. At Aster DM Healthcare, our efforts are always directed towards adoption of innovative measures that can not only preserve the health of our patients and customers but also enhance the environment in which they live.”

Neeraj Teckchandani, CEO of Apparel Group, said: “Our goal, at the Apparel Group, is to significantly reduce plastic use. In 2010, we launched our loyalty program, which was plastic free. Today our scheme, which we called it “No Cards, Only Rewards”, has over 2.2 million members. Another measure that we took was handing out reusable water bottles to our employees, as we consume about 2.5 million one-use water bottles in our offices every year.”

Celebrated every year on June 5, World Environment Day aims to urge governments, businesses, communities and individuals to come together to reduce the production and excessive utilization of single-use plastic that is polluting oceans, damaging marine life and threatening human health, and explore sustainable alternatives.

Abu Dhabi, 5th June, 2018

For photographs: (<https://bit.ly/2sDKIq3>)