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**Press Release**

**Say a Big No to diesel**

**New Delhi, 14th November 2017:** Vehicular emissions are a well-recognized source of air pollution. Diesel vehicles contribute more to air pollution by releasing particulates directly into the air and by emitting nitrogen oxides and sulfur oxides, which transform into "secondary" particulates in the atmosphere.

Padma Shri Awardee **Dr KK Aggarwal**, **National President IMA & President Heart Care Foundation of India (HCFI)** and **Dr RN Tandon Honorary Secretary General IMA**, in a joint statement said, “Emissions from diesel vehicles are alarmingly high and contribute in a major way to nitrogen oxides and particulate matter in the air. Incomplete combustion of diesel fuel generates soot or particulate matter. About 80-95% of diesel soot is ultrafine particulates, which are less than 0.1 microns in size and can travel deep into the lungs and exert their harmful effects by inducing inflammation. More children may have asthma in the future.”

Diesel exhaust is the gaseous exhaust plus any contained particulate matter. Nitrogen emissions from diesel vehicles form ground level ozone, which is a health hazard. Ozone pollution increases risk of respiratory health problems such as asthma. Diesel is a major source of nitrogen oxide.

Industrial toxicants in the air have been also linked to Parkinson’s disease and deterioration of cognitive functions.

Adding further, **Dr Aggarwal** said, “It is important that the public is aware of the toxic pollutants emitted from diesel engines and say a Big No to diesel. This way, they can contribute to efforts in controlling the escalating problem of air pollution. It is our responsibility to educate the public about the harmful health effects of diesel exhaust fumes.”

**Dr TK Joshi, Director, Centre for Occupational and Environmental Health** said, “Diesel exhaust has been classified as Class I carcinogen by the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the International Agency for Research on Cancer, which is part of the World Health Organization (WHO) based on compelling evidence that exposure to diesel exhaust increases risk of lung cancer. The risk increases proportionately with the extent of exposure. So we expect to see more cases of lung
cancer in future. A positive association between diesel exhaust and increased risk of bladder cancer has also been observed.”

Children, the elderly, pregnant women, smokers and those who have preexisting heart and respiratory conditions are generally considered as vulnerable to air pollution and so they must be cautious. But, a new research done by the US-based National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences has shown that the impact of air pollution may be trans generational when the fetus is exposed to air pollution. This has come as a revelation and is a very disturbing development”, Dr Joshi further added.

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About IMA: Indian Medical Association is the only representative, national voluntary organization of Doctors of Modern Scientific System of Medicine, which looks after the interest of doctors as well as the well being of the community at large. It has its Headquarter in Delhi and State / Terr. Branches in 30 States and Union Territories. It has over 2, 60,000 doctors as its members through more than 1765 active local branches spread across the country.

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