

# Vietnam can help India deal with stubble: top official

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'We had a vast amount of stubble and we had a smog crisis in the Mekong delta region every year. So we used the stubble to grow mushroom and create fertilizer'

KALLOL BHATTACHERJEE



Governor of Vinh Long province Bùi văn Nghiêm | Photo Credit: Special Arrangement

Vietnam can provide a solution to the deadly smog that torments north India during the winter months, a senior Vietnamese official has said.

In an exclusive chat with *The Hindu*, Governor of Vĩnh Long province Mr Bùi văn Nghiêm said that Vietnam has successfully dealt with a similar crisis that plagued the Mekong delta region, the heart of agriculture activities in south Vietnam.

## Smog solution

“We had a vast amount of stubble and we had a smog crisis in the Mekong delta region every year. So we came up with a solution. We used the stubble to grow mushroom and create fertilizer,” said Bùi văn Nghiêm. Vietnam is the third largest exporter of rice in the world at present and Vĩnh Long is located in the heart of the paddy growing Mekong delta region. The politically important province is a major transport and commercial hub.

The Governor is on a weeklong visit to India covering Delhi, Mumbai and rural areas in the National Capital Region. During his stay in Delhi, he visited villages near Delhi to see agricultural activities and witnessed smog. “We have much to learn from each other. India has created infrastructure that aids economic growth. Your markets, shopping malls are located near agriculture areas that are helping in expanding national trade,” said Bùi văn Nghiêm. He also suggested that India should use agricultural machinery that Vietnam has been using successfully to deal with stubble left in the Mekong delta.

The governor who led a delegation of the Communist Party of Vietnam (CPV) met Congress General Secretary K. C. Venugopal here on Tuesday.

### **Revive green revolution**

The visiting dignitary pitched Vietnam's agriculture sector as a partner for India and said both sides should collaborate and revive the spirit of green revolution that swept India in the late 1960s and early 1970s. A similar green revolution happened in Vietnam from the late 1960s till 2012 which changed the Vietnamese economy and made it a major global agricultural producer. Apart from sharing of technology, the two sides should also welcome more bilateral trade in the agriculture sector. "My dream is to hold an annual festival of Indian and Vietnamese food in both the countries that will encourage tourism and exchange of food culture," said Bùi văn Nghiêm.

Vietnam is of central importance to India's Act East policy and the two sides upgraded their relationship from a strategic partnership to Comprehensive Strategic Partnership in 2016. Apart from cooperation in areas like defence the two sides are also closely connected through Buddhism which is the main religion of Vietnam. As a sign of that cultural cooperation the Vietnam government set up a Vietnamese monastery in Bodh Gaya which has emerged as a major centre of attraction for Vietnamese tourists in India. The Governor of Vĩnh Long said that agriculture, tourism, religion, food are some of the areas that require greater attention. "India can help Vietnam in getting better access to generic drugs and we can bring our best practices in the agriculture sector."