

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE

RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 372
TO BE ANSWERED ON 06.02.2024

Steps to reduce air pollution

372. SHRI ANIL KUMAR YADAV MANDADI:

Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Government has taken note of the fact that Air Quality Index (AQI) of many of the cities/towns are deteriorating day by day due to which people are suffering a lot;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether Government has conceived any concrete policy to curb air pollution and make the cities/towns a healthy living space for its people;
- (d) if so, the details thereof; and
- (e) if not, the reasons therefor?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE
(SHRI KIRTI VARDHAN SINGH)

(a) to (e) :

As per daily Air Quality Index (AQI) data for the year 2024, in respect of 291 cities where AQI was monitored, only 25 cities have severe air quality days (AQI values more than 400) ranging from 1-17 days in a year. The details of cities (State-wise) which have recorded AQI more than 400 during the year 2024 are provided at **Annexure I**.

National Clean Air Programme (NCAP) was launched by Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC) in January 2019 with an aim to improve air quality in 130 cities (non-attainment cities and Million Plus Cities) including metropolitan cities in 24 States/UTs through implementation of National, State and City level clean air action plans. NCAP envisages reduction in PM10 levels up to 40% or achievement of national standards (60 microgram/cubic meter) by 2025-26.

NCAP is multi-sectoral initiative involving the coordinated efforts of the Central and State Governments, Urban Local Bodies (ULBs), and other stakeholders. It emphasizes source-specific mitigation measures through city, state, and national-level clean air action plans.

City Specific Clean Air Action Plans have been prepared by all cities to implement air quality improvement measures in respective cities. These plans target air pollution sources like soil & road dust, vehicular emissions, waste burning, construction & demolition activities, and industrial pollution. In addition, funding for implementation of City Action Plans (CAPs) is mobilized through the convergence of resources from various Central Government schemes such as Swachh Bharat Mission- Urban (SBM-U), Atal Mission for Rejuvenation and Urban Transformation (AMRUT), Smart City Mission (SCM),

Sustainable Alternative Towards Affordable Transportation (SATAT), Faster Adoption and Manufacturing of Hybrid and Electric Vehicles (FAME-II), and Nagar Van Yojana (NVY), as well as resources from State/UT Governments and agencies like Municipal Corporations and Urban Development authorities.

Further, an allocation of Rs. 19,611 crore has been made for 130 cities. It includes an allocation of Rs.16,539 crore to 48 million plus cities through 15th Finance Million Plus City Challenge Fund (MPCCF) for the period FY 2021-22 to 2025-26, and Rs.3072 crore to remaining 82 cities through Control of Pollution Scheme of MoEFCC for the period FY 2019-20 till 2025-26. These are performance linked grants for critical gap funding to implement air pollution mitigation measures, and an amount of Rs. 11,541.88 crore has been released based on achievement of air pollution reduction targets in respective cities.

Further, Commission for Air Quality Management in National Capital Region (NCR) and Adjoining Areas has been constituted for coordination, research, identification and resolution of problems surrounding the air quality index in NCR in co-ordination with the Govt. of National Capital Territory of Delhi and the States of Punjab, Haryana, Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh.

Some of the other key measures taken by the Central Government for air quality management are enclosed at **Annexure II**.

Due to efforts made under the programme, 97 cities out of 130 cities have shown improvement in air quality in terms of annual PM₁₀ concentrations in FY 2023-24 with respect to the levels of FY 2017-18. 55 cities have achieved reduction of 20% and above in PM₁₀ levels in 2023-24 with respect to the levels of 2017-18. 18 cities have met National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) for PM₁₀ (60 µg/m³) in FY 2023-24.

Details of cities with number of days having AQI more than 400 during year 2024

S. No.	State/UTs	City	Number of days with AQI more than 400
1	Bihar	Bhagalpur	3
2		Hajipur	5
3		Saharsa	2
4	Chandigarh	Chandigarh	1
5	Delhi	Delhi	17
6	Haryana	Bahadurgarh	3
7		Bhiwani	2
8		Dharuhera	1
9		Gurugram	2
10		Rohtak	2
11		Sonipat	1
12	Himachal Pradesh	Baddi	3
13	Jharkhand	Dhanbad	1
14	Manipur	Imphal	2
15	Odisha	Balasore	1
16	Rajasthan	Bhiwadi	1
17		Bikaner	1
18		Churu	1
19		Hanumangarh	1
20		SriGanganagar	2
21	Uttar Pradesh	Bulandshahr	1
22		Ghaziabad	3
23		GreaterNoida	1
24		Hapur	3
25		Noida	2

Measures taken by the Central Government for air quality management:

- i. Emission standards for more than 80 industries have been notified under Environment (Protection) Rules, 1986
- ii. Emission standards recently notified/revised:
 - a) Thermal power plants
 - b) Diesel/petrol/CNG generator sets
 - c) Industrial boilers;
 - d) Lime Kilns
 - e) Brick kilns and conversion of zig-zag technology
 - f) Calcinated petcoke industry
 - g) Hot mix plants
- iii. Leapfrogging to Bharat Stage-VI (BS-VI) emissions norms from 1st April 2020
- iv. Vehicle Scrapping Policy, Rules for Registered Vehicle Scrapping Facilities and Automated Testing Stations by MoRTH
- v. Waste management rules for solid waste, plastic waste, hazardous waste, e-waste, battery waste, biomedical waste, 100% ash utilisation by Thermal Power Plants
- vi. Market-based Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) regulations introduced for waste categories, viz. plastic packaging, e-waste, battery waste, waste tyres & used oil
- vii. 12 identified Single-Use Plastics (SUP) having high littering potential and low utility were banned from 1st July, 2022
- viii. Mandate for utilisation of minimum 5% of crop residue along with coal (pellets/brickettes) in thermal power plants in NCR and adjoining areas
- ix. Categorization of industrial areas as Critically and Severely Polluted Areas (CPAs/SPAs) based on Comprehensive Environmental Pollution Index (CEPI).
