

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE

**RAJYA SABHA**  
**STARRED QUESTION NO. 135**  
TO BE ANSWERED ON 14.12.2023

**Pollution in NCR**

135. SHRI JAYANT CHAUDHARY

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

- (a) whether NCR is reeling under severe air pollution for the last two months;
- (b) if so, details thereof along with responsible factors;
- (c) whether Government has devised any foolproof mechanism to ensure pollution-free and clean air to capital's population;
- (d) if so, details thereof, if not, reasons therefor;
- (e) details of amount spent to combat air pollution in NCR during last three years, divided into categories of tools used;
- (f) whether Government is contemplating using artificial rain to mitigate this menace; and
- (g) if so, details thereof, including scientifically-proven positive and negative consequences of artificial rain on general pollution?

**ANSWER**

**MINISTER FOR ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE**  
**(SHRI BHUPENDER YADAV)**

(a) to (g) : A statement is laid on the table of the House.

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**STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PARA (a) TO (g) OF THE RAJYA SABHA STARRED QUESTION NO. 135 DUE FOR REPLY ON 14.12.2023 REGARDING POLLUTION IN NCR RAISED BY SHRI JAYANT CHAUDHARY, HON'BLE MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT**

**(a) to (g)**

The data of AQI in 29 Delhi-NCR Cities, during October 2023 shows that, there were 21 cities which were having more number of Good Days (Good, Satisfactory and Moderate category) as compared to Bad Days (Poor, Very Poor and Severe category), while 8 cities were having more number of Bad Days.

The data of November 2023 shows that there were 25 cities of Delhi-NCR, where more number of days were observed in Poor, Very Poor and Severe category of AQI while the number of Good, Satisfactory and Moderate Category days were more in 4 cities namely Mandikhera, Palwal, Alwar and Khurja.

The air quality during November 2023 may be attributed to prevailing meteorological conditions and contribution from local and regional emission sources. Air pollution in Delhi - NCR is a collective result of multiple factors including high level of anthropogenic activities in the high-density populated areas in NCR, arising from various sectors viz. Vehicular Pollution, Industrial Pollution, Dust from Construction and Demolition Project activities, Road and Open Areas Dust, Biomass Burning, Agricultural Stubble Burning, Municipal Solid Waste burning, Fires in Sanitary Landfills, air pollution from dispersed source, etc.

With a view to abatement and control of air pollution in Delhi / NCR, the Commission for Air Quality Management in NCR and Adjoining Areas (CAQM), constituted in 2021, has devised a comprehensive policy for abatement of pollution in NCR in July 2022, stipulating sector specific action points with quantifiable targets along with timelines and implementation plan by various agencies in NCR States. The policy framework details sector-wise interventions, quantified targets and timelines for various sectors contributing to air pollution.

Since inception the CAQM has so far issued 78 directions and 11 advisories, besides executive orders to various agencies concerned in the NCR including State Governments of Punjab, GNCTD, and various bodies of the Central and State Governments in the region. Due to these concerted efforts general improvements in the AQI level has been witnessed in the region.

Besides, to address the deterioration of Air quality actions under 'Graded Response Action Plan' are also imposed based on AQI. The GRAP calls for a set of emergent preventive/restrictive actions depending on air pollution levels, to be implemented by the identified agencies for combating the adverse air quality scenario generally prevailing in Delhi-NCR owing to unfavorable climatic and meteorological conditions during the winter months.

The CAQM has also constituted a statutory sub-Committee on Safeguarding and Enforcement represented by senior level functionaries of the NCR State Govts towards policy formulation and implementation & monitoring of field level actions. Graded Response Action Plan (GRAP) for abatement of air Pollution in Delhi & NCR was notified by the Ministry of Environment, Forest and

Climate Change in January 2017. The CAQM has issued revised GRAP in October, 2023 which is being operationalized by the Sub-Committee having representation from Pollution Control Boards/Committee of NCR State Governments and GNCTD, CPCB, IITM, Pune and IMD, New Delhi

Steps taken for abatement and control of air pollution are as following:

1. The CAQM has deputed 40 teams of Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) officers in Delhi-NCR since December 2021, for conducting incognito inspections of air polluting industries, C&D sites, DG sets in Delhi-NCR to check implementation status of pollution control measures and compliance of other provisions of the Air (P&CP) Act, 1981. A total of 16037 units/entities/ projects have been inspected as on November 24, 2023. Based on these inspections, CAQM has issued Closure Directions in 899 cases and out of these resumption orders have been issued in 708 cases while 132 cases are still under closure and cases of 59 balance units have been transferred to State Pollution Control Boards (SPCBs) / Delhi Pollution Control Committee (DPCC) for final decision.
2. CPCB has come out with System and Procedure for Emission Compliance Testing of Retro-fit Emission Control Devices (RECD) for Diesel Power Generating Set Engines up to Gross Mechanical Power 800 kW. RECDs have been developed for DG sets of 209-799 kW capacity and installation of RECDs is in progress in Delhi-NCR. In order to control DG set emissions, CPCB is also funding retrofitment/ upgradation of DG sets in Govt. hospitals in Delhi-NCR and guidelines have been issued in this regard. Under the said guidelines, 100 % funding support is provided for RECD and dual fuel kit installation while 40% funding support is provided for procurement of new gas based Generator sets.
3. CPCB has issued guidelines/ mechanism for use of anti-smog guns in Construction and Demolition projects. Also, CPCB has published guidelines for dust mitigation measures in handling construction materials and C&D waste.
4. CPCB has framed guidelines for promoting setting up of paddy straw based pelletization and torrefaction plants wherein one-time financial assistance is provided to individual entities/entrepreneurs/ companies for setting up of such plants. A corpus of Rs. 50 crores has been earmarked for utilisation through the guidelines. A total of 10 plants have been approved so far.
5. CPCB has also issued an addendum under which one-time financial assistance is provided to Municipal Corporations, Municipal Councils and Zilla Parishads of the states of Punjab, Haryana, NCT of Delhi and NCR districts of Uttar Pradesh and Rajasthan, for establishing paddy straw based briquetting plants for use of briquettes for cremation purpose only.
6. Installation of VRS system at 3256 petrol pumps in Delhi-NCR in compliance with orders of Hon'ble Supreme Court and Hon'ble NGT.
7. Trial study of various new technologies for control of air pollution have been got conducted by CPCB out of which encouraging results were observed in case of Dust Suppressant for control of emissions at construction sites and road dust. Advisory have been issued for use of dust suppressant by road owning and construction agencies in Delhi-NCR.

Comprehensive actions taken by the Government have had a positive impact on air quality and improvement was noted in the year 2022 in comparison to 2016 with the number of 'Good', 'Satisfactory' and 'Moderate' days increasing to 163 against 108 in 2016, and number of 'Poor', 'Very Poor' and 'Severe' days decreasing to 202 against 246 in 2016.

Government has launched National Clean Air Programme (NCAP) in 2019 as a national level strategy to reduce air pollution levels across the country. Taking into account the available

international experiences and national studies, the tentative national level target under NCAP is 20%–30% reduction of particulate matter concentration by 2024.

Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) has identified 131 million plus/non-attainment cities (cities exceeding National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS), consecutively for five years). City Specific Clean Air Action Plans have been prepared and rolled out for implementation in these 131 non-attainment/million plus cities to improve the air quality including Delhi NCR. There are 03 Non-attainment cities in NCR – Delhi, Noida, and Alwar being funded under and 03 Million Plus cities- Meerut, Ghaziabad and Faridabad, being funded under Fifteenth Finance Commission Grant (XV-FC) grant. Detail of funds released and utilized during last three years to combat air pollution is annexed at **Annexure-I**.

The major significant work done by cities for the improvement in air quality from Approved City Action Plan (CAP) as per the utilization certificate (UC) received are as follows:

- i. End-to-end paving of roads along with black-topping and maintaining potholes free roads.
- ii. Greening of traffic corridors, open areas, gardens, community places, schools and housing societies.
- iii. Creation of public awareness on pollution source and control measures.
- iv. To create multiple separate space/zones to handle C&D waste in the city.
- v. Regular cleaning of street surfaces and spraying of water to suppress dust.
- vi. Regular collection, segregation and scientific disposal of municipal solid waste.
- vii. Remove road dust/silt regularly by using mechanical sweepers.

Further, Ministry of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare (MoA&FW) launched a scheme in 2018 for providing subsidy for purchase of crop residue management machinery and establishment of custom hiring centres (CHCs) in NCT of Delhi and the States of Punjab, Haryana and Uttar Pradesh. During 2018-2022, total fund released to Delhi and other States under the said Scheme is Rs. 2440.07 crores using which, over 2 lakh crop residue machineries have been delivered to individual farmers and CHCs, and over 39,000 CHCs have been established. No plan for the artificial rain to mitigate air pollution has been contemplated yet.

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**Annexure-I****Details of funds released and utilised in last three years (FY 2019-20 to 2023-24)**  
**under NCAP & XVFC (in Crores)**

<b>S. No</b>	<b>City</b>	<b>Total Fund Released</b>	<b>Total Fund Utilised</b>
<b>Under NCAP</b>			
<b>1.</b>	<b>Delhi</b>	38.22	10.77
<b>2.</b>	<b>Noida</b>	26.42	0.95
<b>3.</b>	<b>Alwar</b>	15.00	0.04
	<b>Total</b>	<b>79.64</b>	<b>11.76</b>
<b>Under XV-FC</b>			
<b>4.</b>	<b>Meerut</b>	139.19	81.93
<b>5.</b>	<b>Faridabad</b>	73.53	-
<b>6.</b>	<b>Ghaziabad</b>	136.25	76.89
	<b>Total</b>	<b>348.97</b>	<b>158.82</b>

**Total fund released under NCAP and XV-FC to NCR-Cities: Rs. 428.61 Cr**

**Total fund utilized under NCAP and XV-FC by NCR-Cities: Rs. 170.58 Cr.**

