

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE

RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 541
TO BE ANSWERED ON 04.12.2025

Deaths due to pollution

541. DR. LAXMIKANT BAJPAYEE:

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

- (a) whether it is a fact that one in every seven deaths in Delhi can be traced to the city's toxic air as claimed by several studies and reported in media but Government as usual continue to maintain that there is "no conclusive evidence";
- (b) in what manner hazardous pollution levels are affecting the health of masses in Delhi NCR and what are various diseases & health issues which are/would be prevalent in future; and
- (c) what remedies/ protection Government provides to these helpless citizens?

ANSWER

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

(a) to (c): Various studies have been conducted by academic and research institutes on impact of air pollution. During the year 2025, not a single day the AQI has reached severe plus level in Delhi.

To address air pollution in Delhi-NCR, the following measures have been taken:

- i. Government has established the Commission for Air Quality Management (CAQM) under the Commission for Air Quality Management in NCR and Adjoining Areas Act, 2021 for better coordination, research, identification and resolution of problems of air pollution in Delhi- NCR and adjoining areas. Commission has been provided powers under the Act to take measures and issue directions to the various agencies in the National Capital Region for protecting and improving air quality.
- ii. The Commission has been addressing the issue of air pollution in Delhi-NCR in a collective, collaborative and participative mode involving all the major stakeholders. The Commission has so far issued 95 Statutory Directions to specifically guide and direct various actions towards abatement of air pollution in the region. A monitoring mechanism to oversee the implementation of these directions has been put in place.

- iii. Commission has come up with much stringent emission norms for various polluting activities in NCR, as compared to the national standards. These directions are rigorously monitored for implementation through periodic progress reviews, issuing subsequent orders and directions from time to time.
- iv. Commission has prepared Graded Response Action Plan (GRAP) which provides set of emergency response actions, depending on severity of air pollution levels, to be implemented by identified agencies for minimizing air pollution, a situation that generally persists in the Delhi-NCR during the peak winter months.
- v. Based on the dynamic model and weather forecast provided by IMD (Indian Meteorological Department) / IITM (Indian Institute of Tropical Meteorology) on a day-to-day basis, actions under Stages I, II, III and IV of the GRAP are invoked in advance in anticipation of the AQI of Delhi reaching to the projected levels of that stage based on the overall meteorological conditions and anthropogenic activities.
- vi. The Commission has recently conducted comprehensive review of the contours of the existing GRAP and made the actions more stringent under the various stages of the GRAP. Details of recent amendments in GRAP are enclosed at Annexure I.
- vii. The Government has regularly reviewed and monitored the actions taken to address air pollution including stubble burning related issues in Delhi-NCR and adjoining areas. Some of the recent key meetings are as below:
- viii. Regular review meetings have been held on 08.08.2025, 16.09.2025, 10.10.2025 11.11.2025 and 03.12.2025 under the chairmanship of the Hon'ble Minister for Environment, Forest and Climate Change, on the issues relating to air pollution control in Delhi-NCR, to deliberate upon the undertaking of air pollution abatement measures and strategies for further strengthening air quality management across the region;
- ix. Minister level Inter-Ministerial meeting was held on 07.10.2025 under the Co-chairmanship of Hon'ble Minister for Environment, Forest and Climate Change and Hon'ble Minister for Agriculture & Farmers' Welfare on the issues of management of Crop Residue Burning.
- x. In the review meeting, it was agreed that the Government of NCT Delhi to utilize the funds in expeditious manner to implement air pollution mitigation measures along with other important measures such as awarding work for evacuation of construction dust and drainage silt, implementation of FASTag and ANPR cameras at all tolls points for restriction of the entry of banned commercial vehicles, prepare integrated waste collection and management plan, identification and repair of stretches with potholes, end-to-end pavement of roads, feeder centres for Construction and Demolition (C&D) waste processing facility, steps to improve the offtake of recycled products from C&D waste, monitoring of large construction sites, mechanised road sweeping for roads with 20-60 ft as well as roads <20 ft wide, decongestion of 62 identified traffic congestion points, increasing the green cover along Yamuna flood plains, time bound action plan for plantation of 1 crore trees under 'Ek Ped Maa ke Naam', installation of Online Continuous Emission Monitoring Systems (OCEMS) and Air Pollution Control Devices (APCD) in all air polluting industries in a time bound manner.
- xi. Critical gap funding has been provided to 6 cities of Delhi NCR (Alwar, Noida, Delhi, Faridabad, Ghaziabad and Meerut) under National Clean Air Program (NCAP) to take measures to improve air quality. To implement air pollution mitigation measures, NCAP also leverages the mobilisation of resources through convergence of Central Government

schemes and programmes, such as, AMRUT 1.0 & 2.0, Swachh Bharat Mission & 2.0, FAME II/PM E-DRIVE and Grand Challenge Scheme.

- xii. A centralised air quality portal and mobile app-SAMEER are functional for tracking and dissemination of near real time air quality data and hourly Air Quality Index to the public. CPCB issues a daily bulletin at 04:00 PM comprising AQI of various cities in the country including Delhi-NCR. SAMEER app also serves as a grievance redressal mechanism which allows the citizens to report pollution related complaints for quick resolution by the concerned agencies.
- xiii. PRANA- ‘Portal for Regulation of Air Pollution in Non-Attainment Cities’ has been operationalised for managing and monitoring the progress of implementation of activities implemented by 130 targeted cities under NCAP.

With coordinated efforts, number of good days (AQI<200) in Delhi have increased to 200 days in 2025 from 110 days in 2016. While there is an overall improvement in the AQI this year, very poor days (AQI: 301-400) and severe days (AQI more than 401) have reduced from 71 days in 2024 to 50 days in 2025. Delhi has observed lowest average AQI in the past 8 years i.e., from 2018 to 2025 (barring 2020 – COVID lockdown).
