

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE

RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 3105
TO BE ANSWERED ON 19.03.2026

Air Quality Index

3105. SHRI P. WILSON:

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

- (a) whether the Central Government has rejected or disputed air quality data published by certain internationally reputed organisations claiming India as 5th polluted country and the reasons therefor;
- (b) the month-wise and city-wise official Air Quality Index (AQI) data for the past 36 months for the ten most polluted cities in the country, area-wise details for Delhi, along with pollutant-wise parameters; and
- (c) the prescribed air quality standards as per World Health Organization guidelines and the corresponding levels recorded in these cities?

ANSWER

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

(a) to (c): Air pollution is a collective result of multiple factors including high level of anthropogenic activities arising from various sectors viz. Vehicular Pollution, Industrial Pollution, Dust from Construction and Demolition Project activities, Road and Open Areas Dust, Biomass Burning, Municipal Solid Waste burning, Fires in Landfills, air pollution from dispersed sources, etc. Area specific geographical factors like lower temperature, lower mixing heights, inversion conditions and stagnant winds lead to trapping of pollutants also impact the intensity of pollution in the specific region.

Air Quality Index (AQI) of cities is measured through Air Quality Monitoring Stations established by Central Pollution Control Board and State Pollution Control Board/Pollution Control Committees in line with the guidelines issued by the Central Pollution Control Board in this regard.

Near real-time air quality data and hourly Air Quality Index (AQI) information of more than 280 cities is made available on web portal CPCB as well as on SAMEER mobile application. Further, CPCB issues a daily bulletin at 04:00 PM comprising AQI of various cities in the country.

“Swachh Vayu Survekshan” initiative of MoEF&CC is conducted annually to rank 130 cities covered under National Clean Air Programme (NCAP) on the basis of implementation of air quality improvement measures in three groups categorised based on population.

World Health Organisations Air Quality Guidelines serve as only a guidance document and as a non-binding reference for policy makers. These guidelines are recommended values for air pollutants to help countries achieve air quality. Countries are advised to consider their

geographical, socioeconomic, and environmental factors before adopting these guidelines as enforceable standards. Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change has notified the National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) for the country for 12 key air pollutants to safeguard public health and environmental quality. CPCB has identified 122 non-attainment cities (NAC) based on ambient air quality data levels exceeding National Ambient Air Quality Standards consecutively for five years for any of the notified parameters.

Air Quality Index (AQI) in India has been classified into Good Days having $AQI < 200$ (Good: 0-50, Satisfactory: 51-100, Moderate: 101-200) and Bad Days having $AQI > 201$ (Poor: 201-300; Very Poor: 301-400; Severe: 401-500).

The ten most polluted cities having highest number of bad days as per base year 2024, along with details of bad days during 2023, 2024 and 2025 are enclosed in **Annexure I**.

Annexure I

Details of ten cities having highest number of bad days (200+ AQI) as per base year 2024, along with details of bad days during 2023, 2024 and 2025

Sr. No.	State/UTs	City	2023	2024	2025
1	Uttar Pradesh	Greater Noida	178	186	114
2	Rajasthan	Sri Ganganagar	114	179	85
3	Assam	Byrnihat	187	171	90
4	Haryana	Gurugram	145	164	149
5	Delhi	Delhi	159	159	165
6	Uttar Pradesh	Noida	138	153	106
7	Bihar	Patna	163	148	54
8	Uttar Pradesh	Muzaffarnagar	126	141	83
9	Haryana	Faridabad	129	140	66
10	Uttar Pradesh	Ghaziabad	132	128	135