

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE

**RAJYA SABHA**  
**UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 4394**  
TO BE ANSWERED ON 02.04.2026

**NCAP and health emergency**

4394. SHRI K.R.N. RAJESHKUMAR:

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

- (a) the findings of the August 2025 independent evaluation of the National Clean Air Programme (NCAP) regarding reduction of PM 2.5 and PM 10 levels in the 130 nonattainment cities;
- (b) the reasons for continued exclusion of nearly 1,700 chronically polluted towns from NCAP framework and whether Government plans to declare air pollution as a "Structural Public Health Crisis"; and
- (c) the amount of Environmental Compensation (EC) funds currently lying unutilized in the National Green Tribunal (NGT) account and the reasons for freezing on these funds since January 2025?

**ANSWER**

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE

(SHRI KIRTI VARDHAN SINGH)

**(a) to (c):** The third-party independent evaluation of the Control of Pollution Scheme including the component 'National Clean Air Programme (NCAP)', was carried out in August, 2025. The evaluation report in its findings has mentioned that the Scheme has played a catalytic role in improving the operational capacity of CPCB, SPCB/PCCs and urban local bodies for air quality management and recommended for air quality performance based linked incentives to urban local bodies with focus on addressing air pollution in hotspots. The report has also mentioned that Field evidence demonstrates that the Control of Pollution Scheme has contributed to measurable improvements in ambient air quality in select jurisdictions, aligning partially with the NCAP's 40% PM<sub>10</sub> reduction target by 2025–26.

Cities under the NCAP are identified based on the approved Non-Attainment Cities (NAC) criteria. The approved criteria for defining NAC are as follows:

- i. Ambient air quality data monitored under NAMP (manual) and Continuous Ambient Air Quality Monitoring (CAAQM) station during last consecutive five years.

- ii. The cities exceeding the annual National Ambient Air Quality Standards with respect to any one of the notified parameters for consecutively five years shall be taken as a NAC
- iii. A city with adequate number of ambient air quality monitoring stations shall only be considered for NAC calculation. Minimum three (3) stations shall be considered as adequate number of monitoring stations in a city / town.
- iv. A city with adequate ambient air quality data shall only be considered for NAC calculation. Adequate data of a city / town shall be taken as at least 104 days/observations of monitoring a year for all monitoring station in a city.

Accordingly, 122 cities were identified under the NCAP (Control of Pollution and XV Finance Commission grants) by the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) for the period 2019–20 to 2025–26.

Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Government of India issues Health Advisory on Air Pollution to all States/UTs every year to support them on preparedness for such health problems at all levels of health care facilities across the country. Government is taking all kind of efforts through multidimensional measures for prevention and mitigation of air pollution.

The Environmental Compensation amount of ₹603.66 crore, imposed by the Hon'ble National Green Tribunal (NGT), is available as deposit with the CPCB on behalf of the NGT and is to be spent as per the NGT's directions.

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