

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE

RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 78
TO BE ANSWERED ON 29.01.2026

Controlling pollution

78. SHRI MUKUL BALKRISHNA WASNIK:

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

- (a) whether it is a fact that several parts of India, particularly urban areas have high levels of pollution and if so, the details thereof;
- (b) whether any study has been conducted to assess the adverse impact of pollution on public health, particularly among children, women and elderly;
- (c) if so, the details thereof and the steps taken by Government to ensure a significant reduction in pollution levels; and
- (d) the amount spent by Government under various schemes aimed at environment protection and pollution control?

ANSWER

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

(a) to (d): Government has identified 122 non-attainment cities in 2019 where the air pollution levels have consecutively exceeded the National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) for five years for PM10 levels during 2014-18. List of 122 non-attainment cities are enclosed at **Annexure I**.

MoEF&CC notified National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) prescribing the limits for 12 air pollutants in industrial, residential, rural and ecologically sensitive areas for maintaining ambient air quality and protection of public health.

The SAMEER mobile application and web portal provide near real-time air quality data and hourly Air Quality Index (AQI) information of more than 280 cities. CPCB issues a daily bulletin at 04:00 PM comprising AQI of various cities in the country. SAMEER app also serves as a grievance redressal mechanism, enabling citizens to report pollution-related complaints for prompt action by concerned authorities.

Further, 296 Polluted River Stretches have been identified based on pollution load of rivers measured in terms of Biochemical Oxygen Demand (BOD) concentrations, across on 271 rivers. In addition government has identified 69 industrial areas as critically and severely polluted areas based on Comprehensive Environment Pollution Index (CEPI).

Government of India enacted the Water (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1974 and various provisions under The Environment (Protection) Act, 1986 for protection of water bodies and The Central & State Pollution Control Boards are implementing the provisions of both The Water (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1974 & The Environment (Protection) Act, 1986 to prevent and control pollution of aquatic resources.

Ministry of Environment Forest and Climate Change (MoEF&CC), Government of India notifies “Standards for Emission or Discharge of Environmental Pollutants from various Industries” under Schedule-I of the Environment (Protection) Rules, 1986. So far, 79 industrial specific environmental standards have been notified. The industrial sectors, for which specific standards are not available, general standards as notified under Schedule-VI of the Environment Protection Rules, 1986 are applicable.

SPCBs/PCCs have been directed under Section 18(1) (b) of The Water (Prevention & Control of Pollution) Act, 1974 vide order dated 21.04.2015 to direct concerned agencies in the State/UT to develop infrastructure for sewage treatment.

For rejuvenation of polluted river stretches, action plans were prepared by River Rejuvenation Committees (RRC’s) constituted by the respective State Government/UT Administration, under the overall supervision and coordination of Principal Secretary, Environment Department of the concerned State/ Union Territory. Progress of implementation of action plans is reviewed by the RRC’s at State Level and by Central Monitoring Committee (CMC) constituted under the Chairmanship of Secretary, Ministry of Jal Shakti at Central Level.

Measures such as mandatory installation of effluent treatment plants, monitoring of sewage treatment plants, inspection of grossly polluting industries, online continuous effluent monitoring systems, and sector-specific pollution reduction charters have contributed to reduced industrial effluent discharge and pollution load, particularly in major rivers like the Ganga and Yamuna.

Studies conducted by some academic and research institutes on impact of air and water pollution have found that pollution is one of the triggering factors for respiratory ailments and associated diseases.

Government of India has launched the National Clean Air Programme (NCAP) as a long-term, time-bound, national-level strategy to address air pollution in 130 non-attainment and million plus cities/urban agglomeration in 24 States/UTs

City Specific Clean Air Action Plans have been prepared for all 130 cities under NCAP to implement air quality improvement measures in respective cities to target air pollution sources like soil & road dust, vehicular emissions, waste burning, Construction & Demolition activities and industrial pollution.

Performance linked grant of ₹ 13,852.20 crore has been released to 130 cities under National Clean Air Programme (NCAP) as a critical gap funding to implement air pollution mitigation measures, since 2019-20 till date.

In addition to this, NCAP emphasizes mobilization of resources through the convergence of resources from various Central Government schemes such as Swachh Bharat Mission (Urban), AMRUT, Smart City Mission, PM e-Bus Sewa, PM E-DRIVE, SATAT, and Nagar Van

Yojana, as well as resources from State Govts./ UT administration and agencies like Municipal Corporations and Urban Development authorities. Various Ministries/Departments of Govt. of India provide funding under their Schemes/ Programmes as per their budgets.

To tackle air pollution in emergencies, Graded Response Action Plan (GRAP) for Delhi-NCR has been prepared, which provides set of emergency response actions, depending on severity of air pollution levels, and implemented by identified agencies for minimizing air pollution, a situation that generally persists in the Delhi-NCR during the peak winter months.

Emergency Response System (ERS) in line with Graded Response Action Plan (GRAP) of Delhi-NCR, has been developed in identified non-attainment/ million plus cities under NCAP. The higher emission zones/hotspots within the city have been identified and detailed action plan for the identified sources in these hotspots have been prepared. Public Grievance Redressal System also been developed in non-attainment/ million plus cities wherein air pollution issues are addressed.

Air Quality Forecast and Early Warning System (AQEWS) in 47 cities operated by IMD and IITM provides information to public as well as authorities on air quality 3-4 days in advance enabling them for timely implementation of air pollution control measures under the Graded Response Action Plan (GRAP)/Emergency Response Plan (ERP).

The focused actions by 130 cities under NCAP have shown positive results with 103 cities showing reduction in PM10 concentration in 2024-25 with respect to 2017-18, out of which 64 cities have shown reduction in PM10 levels by more than 20% and 25 of these cities have achieved a reduction of more than 40%. A total of 22 Cities have met National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) and have PM10 Concentrations less than 60 µg/m³.

To support the efforts of the Governments of Punjab, Haryana, Uttar Pradesh and NCT of Delhi to address air pollution caused due to paddy stubble burning and to subsidize machinery required for management of crop residue, a Central Sector Scheme on Crop Residue Management has been implemented by Ministry of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare (MoA&FW) since 2018-19.

During the period from 2018-19 to 2025-26 (as on 04.12.2025), Rs. 4090.84 crores have been released by MoA&FW for crop residue management. The States have distributed more than 3.46 lakh machines to the individual famers and established more than 43285 CHCs in the States.

Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) provides one-time financial support for establishment of pelletization and Torrefaction plants to promote utilisation of paddy straw. An amount of Rs. 15.58 crore has been released for 25 plants with capacity of 104.5 Tons per Hour (TPH) and these plants are expected to utilise 4.83 lakh tonnes paddy straw annually.

To address plastic pollution, the following identified single-use plastics (SUPs) having high littering potential and low utility were banned from 01.07.2022:

- a. Ear buds with plastic sticks, plastic sticks for balloons, plastic flags, candy sticks, ice-cream sticks, polystyrene [Thermocol] for decoration;

- b. Plates, cups, glasses, cutlery such as forks, spoons, knives, straw, trays, wrapping or packing films around sweet boxes, invitation cards, and cigarette packets, plastic or PVC banners less than 100 micron, stirrers.

A National Level Taskforce has been constituted by the Ministry for taking coordinated efforts to eliminate identified single use plastic items and for effective implementation of Plastic Waste Management Rules, 2016. All States and UTs have constituted a Special Task Force under Chief Secretary inter-alia for effective plastic waste management. Enforcement campaigns are undertaken by States / UTs and local bodies to implement the ban.

Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change has notified regulations on market based Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) framework in respect of waste categories of plastic packaging waste, battery waste, e-waste, waste tyres, used oil, end-of-life vehicles, construction and demolition waste, scrap of non-ferrous metals for the environmentally sound management of wastes and promote circular economy.

List of 122 Non-Attainment Cities

States	Sl. No.	Cities
Andhra Pradesh	1	Ananthpur
	2	Chittur
	3	Eluru
	4	Guntur
	5	Kadapa
	6	Kurnool
	7	Nellore
	8	Ongole
	9	Rajamahendravaram
	10	Srikakulam
	11	Vijayawada
	12	Visakhapatnam
	13	Vizianagaram
Assam	14	Guwahati
	15	Nagaon
	16	Nalbari
	17	Silchar
	18	Sivasagar
Bihar	19	Patna
	20	Gaya
	21	Muzaffarpur
Chandigarh	22	Chandigarh
Chattisgarh	23	Korba
	24	Durg Bhilai Nagar
	25	Raipur
Delhi	26	Delhi
Gujarat	27	Ahmedabad
	28	Surat
	29	Vadodara
Himachal Pradesh	30	Baddi
	31	Damtal
	32	Kala Amb
	33	Nalagarh
	34	Paonta Sahib
	35	Parwanoo
	36	Sunder Nagar
Jammu	37	Jammu
	38	Srinagar
Jharkhand	39	Dhanbad
Karnataka	40	Bengaluru

States	Sl. No.	Cities
	41	Devanagere
	42	Gulburga / Kalaburgi
	43	Hubli-Dharwad
Madhya Pradesh	44	Bhopal
	45	Dewas
	46	Gwalior
	47	Indore
	48	Sagar
	49	Ujjain
Maharashtra	50	Aurangabad
	51	Akola
	52	Amravati
	53	Badlapur
	54	Chandrapur
	55	Greater Mumbai
	56	Jalgaon
	57	Jalna
	58	Kolhapur
	59	Latur
	60	Nagpur
	61	Nashik
	62	Navi Mumbai
	63	Pune
	64	Sangli
	65	Solapur
	66	Thane
	67	Ulhasnagar
Meghalaya	68	Byrnihat
Nagaland	69	Dimapur
	70	Kohima
Odisha	71	Angul
	72	Balasore
	73	Bhubneshwar
	74	Cuttack
	75	Kalinga Nagar
	76	Rourkela
	77	Talcher
Punjab	78	Amritsar
	79	Dera Baba Nanak
	80	Dera Bassi
	81	Jalandhar
	82	Khanna
	83	Ludhiana

States	Sl. No.	Cities
	84	Mandi Gobindgarh
	85	Naya Nangal
	86	Patiala
Rajasthan	87	Jaipur
	88	Alwar
	89	Jodhpur
	90	Kota
	91	Udaipur
Tamil Nadu	92	Madurai
	93	Trichy
	94	Tuticorin
Telangana	95	Hyderabad
	96	Nalgonda
	97	Sangareddy
Uttar Pradesh	98	Agra
	99	Allahabad
	100	Ghaziabad
	101	Kanpur
	102	Lucknow
	103	Varanasi
	104	Anpara
	105	Bareilly
	106	Firozabad
	107	Gajraula
	108	Gorakhpur
	109	Jhansi
	110	Khurja
	111	Moradabad
	112	Noida
113	Raebareli	
Uttarakhand	114	Dehradun
	115	Kashipur
	116	Rishikesh
West Bengal	117	Asansol
	118	Barrackpore
	119	Durgapur
	120	Haldia
	121	Howrah
	122	Kolkata