

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE

RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 545
TO BE ANSWERED ON 23.07.2026

PM 2.5 levels

545. SHRI GOLLA BABURAO:

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

- (a) whether China has recorded a sharp decline in urban PM_{2.5} in the past decade whereas India's average level remained unchanged;
- (b) whether China has implemented sustained, coordinated and result-oriented measures, whereas India's uneven action and rapid urban pressure has been a hindrance in bringing down pollution levels;
- (c) whether global PM_{2.5} levels have fallen by 10 per cent between 2011 and 2022 and China's average has dropped by 32 per cent and Beijing's 52 per cent whereas India's average has dropped by 0.4 per cent only during that period;
- (d) whether cities Pune, Surat, Hyderabad, Mumbai and Delhi are worst performers; and
- (e) how Government is planning to move ahead in dealing with the pollution?

ANSWER

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

(a) to (e): Pollution levels across countries are not directly comparable due to differences in geographical settings, weather conditions, and national circumstances. Air pollution is the collective result of multiple anthropogenic factors vehicular and industrial emissions, dust from construction & demolition activities, roads and open areas, burning of biomass and municipal solid waste, landfill fires and other dispersed sources compounded by adverse meteorological conditions.

Government of India has notified the National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) for 12 air pollutants including PM₁₀ and PM_{2.5} to safeguard public health and environment quality. To provide air quality information and associated health implications in an easily understandable manner, Air Quality Index (AQI) was launched by the Government in 2015.

To address air pollution in urban areas in Mission mode, National Clean Air Programme (NCAP) was launched in 2019 by the Government in 130 Cities across the country which includes Pune, Surat, Hyderabad, Mumbai and Delhi. It is a multi-sectoral initiative involving the coordinated efforts of the Central and State Governments, Urban Local Bodies (ULBs) and other stakeholders. NCAP emphasizes source specific mitigation measures through city, state, and national-level clean air action plans and it is monitored by various committees constituted at Central, State and District level. State level Clean Air Action Plans prepared by States/UTs address both PM₁₀ and PM_{2.5} through coordinated approach by implementing various policy and enforcement measures.

Air quality performance based incentive grant of ₹ 16423.56 crore has been released to targeted cities under National Clean Air Programme (NCAP) as a critical gap funding to implement air pollution mitigation measures, during FY 2019-20 till 2025-26.

To address air pollution in Delhi-NCR, 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. CAQM 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.

The focused and coordinated actions by 130 cities under NCAP have shown positive results with 108 cities recorded reductions in annual PM₁₀ concentrations during 2025-26, compared to 2017-18, with 72 cities achieving reductions of more than 20% and 26 cities achieving reductions of more than 40%. Further, 14 cities met the National Ambient Air Quality Standards in FY 2025-26 (Standards $\leq 60 \mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$), compared to six cities in 2017-18.

Further, out of the 130 cities under NCAP, 65 cities have met the National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) for PM_{2.5} levels (Standard $\leq 40 \mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$) in 2025-26. The PM_{2.5} level in Pune, Hyderabad, Surat, Delhi and Mumbai during 2025-26 was 41,34,32,102,33 $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ respectively.
