

'Government has Made Serious Efforts to Deal with Air Pollution': Environment Ministry

Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change

'Government has Made Serious Efforts to Deal with Air Pollution': Environment Ministry**Air Quality Data for 2017 & 2018 Shows Improvement in Air Quality**

Posted On: 02 MAY 2018 6:10PM by PIB Delhi

A section of the media has carried reports today, quoting a World Health Organisation study that has highlighted the problem of air pollution till 2016 and has inferred that 14 most polluted cities in the world are located in India. The WHO report indicates that Delhi is placed at no. 6 with an annual average Particulate Matter (PM) 2.5 concentration as 143 micrograms per cubic metre in 2016. However, the Government has made serious efforts to deal with air pollution. Data for the year 2017 for PM 2.5 shows an improvement over 2016 and so far in 2018, it shows a further improvement, as compared to 2017. The Government has also taken several bold initiatives, including leap-frogging from BS-IV to BS-VI.

In the context of air pollution, CPCB data based on Continuous Ambient Air Quality Monitoring Stations (CAAQMS) indicates that the annual average PM 2.5 concentration in the year 2016 as 134 micrograms per cubic metre and as 125 micrograms per cubic metre in the year 2017. Similarly, for PM 10 the figures were 289 micrograms per cubic metre in the year 2016 and 268 micrograms per cubic metre in the year 2017. Therefore, even PM 10 levels have come down in the year 2017 against 2016.

The improvement in Particulate Matter concentration in Delhi has happened in spite of episodic events in two successive years in November 2016 and November 2017. During these months, in addition to local emissions, there was substantial contribution from regional sources, including smoke due to stubble burning in neighbouring states and dust from Gulf countries.

The newspaper reports also highlight observations by various experts suggesting that action similar to that in Delhi and NCR be also taken in other polluted cities.

Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) has already taken action in the matter. In July 2016, all non-attainment cities were given a set of 42 action points for improving on air quality. As a follow-up, 94 non-attainment cities were also asked to prepare detailed action plans for improving upon air quality depending on their local conditions. CPCB also organised seven workshops at various locations in different states, in which guidelines for preparing these plans were disseminated.

Subsequently, out of 94 non-attainment cities, action plans for 61 cities have already been received and concerned States have been requested to steer implementation of action plans in these cities.

Given that most of the polluted cities are located in and around Delhi and along the Indo-Gangetic plain, it is critical that the state governments of Uttar Pradesh, Bihar and West Bengal are further sensitised to take up urgent action on cleaning air in cities under their jurisdiction.

Significant action has been taken in Delhi and NCR, including the formulation of Graded Response Action Plan (GRAP) by CPCB. Other measures taken include - a comprehensive action plan by Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change; ban on petcoke in Delhi and NCR; strict surveillance over coal-fired plants; strict action against construction activities; regular field surveillance by CPCB teams starting from September 2017; augmentation of air quality monitoring stations in Delhi and NCR; upgradation of Central Control Room in CPCB; integration of data on air quality from stations of Indian Meteorological Department (IMD); Delhi Pollution Control Committee (DPCC) and Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB); launching a Mobile App called SAMEER for grievance redressal; coordinate action at national-level through a high-level task force in the PMO; Central government scheme to encourage in-situ management of crop residue and reduce stubble burning; regular monitoring and directions by the Minister and Secretary, MoEFCC.

Besides, National Clean Air Programme (NCAP) was launched by MoEFCC in April, 2018 and this was preceded by Clean Air Programme in Delhi in February 2018 to sensitise the public in general and implementing agencies in particular. It is noteworthy that almost 1 million vehicles are added on the roads of Delhi every year and in spite of increased construction activities and vehicular movement, air quality in Delhi is showing signs of improvement.

With similar intervention in other polluted cities and active participation of ULBs and state governments, air quality is expected to improve further.

HK

(Release ID: 1531036) Visitor Counter : 279

Read this release in: [Urdu](#) , [Tamil](#)

END

Downloaded from [crackIAS.com](#)

© **Zuccess App** by crackIAS.com