

Commission for Air Quality Management in NCR and Adjoining Areas

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PRESS RELEASE

- Delhi's daily average AQI clocked 431 today at 4PM, as per the Daily AQI Bulletin by CPCB, which further rose to 441 today at 6PM;
- The GRAP Sub-Committee holds an emergency meeting in wake of the rising trend in AQI owing to unfavourable meteorological conditions in Delhi-NCR;
- The Sub-Committee took stock of the current air quality scenario and forecasts for meteorological conditions and air quality index made available by IMD/ IITM;
- The Sub-Committee observed that at 4PM today the average AQI for Delhi was recorded as 431 which started to steadily rise further. At 5PM today, the average AQI for Delhi clocked 436, which further escalated to 441 at 6PM due to the continuing unfavorable meteorological and climatic conditions;
- The Sub-Committee accordingly decides to invoke 5-point action plan as per Stage-IV of the extant GRAP in the entire NCR with immediate effect, in addition to all actions under Stage I, II and III to prevent further deterioration of air quality in the region;
- All actions as envisaged under Stage-IV of the extant schedule of GRAP - 'Severe+' Air Quality (Delhi's AQI > 450), be implemented in right earnest by all the agencies concerned in NCR with immediate effect, in addition to all Stage-I, II and III actions of GRAP already in force;
- Continuing unfavorable meteorological conditions, with low wind speed and lack of dispersal of pollutants are the major causes for sudden spike in AQI;
- CAQM urges citizens to cooperate and follow the Citizen Charter of extant GRAP;
- Agencies responsible for implementing measures under GRAP including Pollution Control Boards (PCBs) of NCR States and DPCC addressed to ensure successful and strict implementation of actions under Stage-IV of extant GRAP in addition to actions under Stage-I, II and III of extant GRAP;
- CAQM is keeping a close watch on the situation and will review the air quality scenario on a regular basis in the coming days;

- The extant schedule of GRAP may be accessed from the Commission's official website, i.e., <https://caqm.nic.in>

NEW DELHI:

Today, Delhi's daily average AQI clocked 431 at 4PM, as per the Daily AQI Bulletin by Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB), which further rose to 441 today at 6PM. In view of the rising trend in AQI owing to unfavourable meteorological conditions in Delhi-NCR, the Sub-Committee of Graded Response Action Plan of the Commission for Air Quality Management in NCR and Adjoining Areas (CAQM) called on an emergency meeting today.

The Sub-Committee while comprehensively reviewing the overall air quality scenario in the region as well as the forecasts for meteorological conditions and air quality index made available by IMD/ IITM during the meeting observed that at 4PM today the average AQI for Delhi was recorded as 431 which started to steadily rise further. At 5PM today, the average AQI for Delhi clocked 436, which escalated to 441 at 6PM due to the continuing unfavorable meteorological and climatic conditions.

The significant reason for this spike is not contributed by the emissions but the feeble Western Disturbance approaching north-west India. This prevailing meteorological condition has marked reduction in wind speed, at times becoming calm, a shift in wind direction from westerly to easterly, and an increase in moisture content in the lower atmosphere. Such conditions during the winter season are conducive to the formation of smog and fog, resulting in poor dispersion and trapping of pollutants near the surface. Owing to these adverse meteorological conditions, a sudden deterioration in air quality has been observed.

Keeping in view the prevailing trend of air quality and in an effort to prevent further deterioration of air quality in the region, the Sub-Committee today has taken the call to invoke all actions as envisaged under Stage-IV of extant GRAP - 'Severe+' Air Quality (Delhi's AQI > 450), with immediate effect in the entire NCR. This is in addition to the preventive/ restrictive actions mentioned under Stage-I, II and III of extant GRAP already in-force. Various agencies responsible for implementing measures under GRAP and Pollution Control Boards (PCBs) of NCR and DPCC have also been advised to ensure strict implementation of actions under Stage-IV of extant schedule of GRAP in addition to all actions under Stage-I, II, III of extant GRAP already in force, during this period.

A 5-point action plan as per Stage-IV of extant GRAP is applicable with immediate effect in the entire NCR. This 5-point action plan includes steps to be implemented/ ensured by different agencies and Pollution Control Boards of NCR and DPCC. These steps are:

1. Stop entry of BS-IV truck traffic into Delhi (except for trucks carrying essential commodities/ providing essential services.)

All LNG/ CNG / Electric/ BS-VI Diesel trucks shall however be permitted to enter Delhi.

2. Enforce strict ban on plying of Delhi - registered diesel operated BS-IV and below Heavy Goods Vehicles (HGVs) in Delhi, except those carrying essential commodities / providing essential services.
3. Ban C&D activities, as in the GRAP Stage-III, also for linear public projects such as highways, roads, flyovers, overbridges, power transmission, pipelines, tele-communication etc.
4.
 - i. State Govts. in the NCR and the GNCTD to mandatorily conduct classes in schools for children even for higher classes i.e. from class VI to IX and XI in a “Hybrid” mode i.e., both in physical and online mode (wherever online mode is feasible) in the territorial jurisdiction of the NCT of Delhi and in the districts of Gurugram, Faridabad, Ghaziabad and Gautam Buddha Nagar.
 - ii. The NCR State Governments may also consider conducting classes for students as above in a “Hybrid” mode in other areas in NCR.
Note: The option to exercise the online mode of education, wherever available, shall vest with the students and their guardians.
5. State Governments may consider additional emergency measures like closure of colleges/ educational institutions and closure of non-emergency commercial activities, permitting running of vehicles on odd-even basis of registration numbers etc.

Further, CAQM appeals to the citizens of NCR to adhere to the Citizen Charter under GRAP and assist in effective implementation of the GRAP measures aimed towards sustaining and improving the Air Quality in the Region, in addition to the Citizen Charter of Stage-I, Stage-II and Stage-III. Citizens are advised to:

- Children, elderly and those with respiratory, cardiovascular, cerebrovascular or other chronic diseases to avoid outdoor activities and stay indoors, as much as possible. If required to move outdoors, they are advised to wear mask.

The extant schedule of GRAP is available on the Commission’s website and can be accessed via <https://caqm.nic.in>
