

Commission for Air Quality Management in NCR and Adjoining Areas

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PRESS RELEASE

- **CAQM allows State Governments of NCR and GNCTD to re-open schools, colleges and educational institutions in a phased manner in the NCR**
- **Resumption of physical classes in schools (standard VI onwards), colleges, educational institutions, skill development & training institutes, other training institutes and libraries with immediate effect**
- **Physical classes for students up to V standard can begin from 27th December, 2021**
- **A large number of representations were received in the Commission arguing the compelling necessity to open the schools and educational institutions**
- **Following the directions of Hon'ble Supreme Court, the Commission examined the requests of various organizations regarding relaxations on restrictions imposed**

NEW DELHI:

The Commission for Air Quality Management in NCR and Adjoining Areas (CAQM) today reviewed the restrictions imposed on opening of schools, colleges and educational institutions vide Direction No. 46 dated 02/12/2021. The Commission today directed all the State Governments of NCR and GNCTD to follow a phased re-opening approach in respect of schools, colleges and educational institutions located within the NCR. State

Governments of NCR and GNCTD have been advised to take immediate decision for resumption of physical classes in schools (standard VI onwards), colleges, educational institutions, skill development & training institutes, other training institutes and libraries. The Commission also directed the State Governments of NCR and GNCTD to take the decision for resumption of physical classes, for students up to V standard, w.e.f. 27th December, 2021, duly considering the Air Quality Index (AQI) and the winter vacation schedule.

The Commission had earlier informed the Hon'ble Supreme Court that a decision on re-opening of schools, colleges and educational institutions, will be taken by 17/12/2021.

The Commission vide Direction No. 44 dated 16/11/2021 directed that *“all public and private schools, colleges and educational institutions shall remain closed until further orders allowing only online mode of education”*. Further, the Commission via Direction No. 45 dated 25/11/2021 had decided that *“the NCR States and GNCT of Delhi may take appropriate decisions for resumption of physical classes in schools, colleges and educational institutions in the NCR. However, wherever the State Governments / GNCTD opt to continue with online mode of education, such schools / colleges / educational institutions shall be permitted to open for the purpose of conduct of examination and practical etc.”* Subsequently, the Commission vide Direction No. 46 dated 02/12/2021 directed that *“All Schools, Colleges and Educational Institutions in the NCR shall remain closed, allowing only online mode of education, except for the purpose of conduct of examinations and laboratory practical etc.”*

A large number of representations were received by the Commission arguing the compelling necessity to open the schools and educational institutions with immediate effect. The main arguments that were made for re-opening of schools included:

- (i) Children are out of school for about two years leading to frustration among children with serious adverse effect on their studies;

- (ii) Large number of students are not able to get the facility of online education because of connectivity issues;
- (iii) As per the academic programme schools are required to impart education to children for about 220 days annually;
- (iv) Not opening schools are hampering physical and mental health as well as emotional growth of children;
- (v) Learning is far beyond books and child's holistic development can happen only by physical schooling;
- (vi) Students and parents have been approaching school authorities to reopen schools;

Taking into consideration the submissions made and in light of improvement of Air Quality Index (AQI) of Delhi from 'Severe' to 'Very Poor' category, the Commission via its Direction No. 50 today directed the State Governments of NCR and GNCTD allowed re-opening of schools and educational institutions in a phased manner.
