

# Commission for Air Quality Management in NCR and Adjoining Areas

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## PRESS RELEASE

- In respectful compliance of the Hon'ble Supreme Court's directives, CAQM relaxes certain restrictions under Stage-III and Stage-IV of the Graded Response Action Plan (GRAP);
- In its latest Order issued on date, CAQM relaxes Clause 11 of GRAP Stage-III, Clause 5 of GRAP Stage-IV and Clause 8 of GRAP Stage-IV (to the extent it relates to colleges / educational institutions), with immediate effect and until further orders;
- State Govts. in the NCR and the GNCTD shall ensure that all classes upto 12<sup>th</sup> Standard in schools and those in colleges / educational institutions are conducted in a "Hybrid" mode i.e., both in "physical" and also in an "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 Buddh Nagar in the NCR. The option to exercise online mode of education, wherever available, shall vest with the students and their guardians.;
- The NCR State Governments may also consider conducting classes in a hybrid mode as above in all other areas in NCR.

NEW DELHI:

Today, the Hon'ble Supreme Court vide its Order dated 25.11.2024 in WP (C) No. 13029 of 1985 titled as M. C. Mehta Vs. Union of India & Ors., *inter alia*, directed as under:

*"...we direct the Commission to consider the grant of relaxation of actions in terms of clauses 5 and 8 of Stage IV measures (only in relation to educational institutions) as well as clause 11 of Stage III measures. The Commission may consider of grant of exemptions to certain classes from the aforesaid actions/measures. The Commission will have to consider the grant of relaxation/exemption as regards the actions under the aforesaid three clauses for various reasons, including the following:*

- (i) *A large number of students are being deprived of the facility of Mid Day Meals as the schools and anganwadis are closed;*

- (ii) *A large number of students do not have the facilities to take benefit of online education. Many educational institutions do not have facilities to provide online education; and*
- (iii) *The residences of many students do not have air purifiers, and therefore, there may not be any difference between the children sitting at home and the children attending school.*

*...We also leave it to the Commission to decide on the continuation of the ban on conducting physical classes of X and XII standards on the same grounds.*

*Various options can be considered by the Commission. One can be of granting relaxation to those schools and educational institutions which do not have the facility of online education, and the other can be of granting relaxation to those students who do not have the facilities of attending online education at their respective homes. We make it clear that we are leaving it to the Commission to decide to what extent, if any, the measures relating to education which are otherwise applicable in Stages III and IV of the GRAP can be either relaxed or exceptions can be carved out. We expect that a decision shall be taken by the Commission during the course of the day or, at the latest, by tomorrow morning so that it can be implemented..."*

Further, in respectful compliance of the above noted directives of the Hon'ble Supreme Court, the Commission further deliberated upon the related issues and has taken note of the following key factors:

- (i) All the primary schools in the NCT of Delhi and also those in other areas of NCR do not have capabilities / access for conducting classes purely in an online mode;
- (ii) The adverse air quality scenario, primarily owing to highly unfavourable meteorological and climatic conditions, generally prevails for a long duration during winter months typically from November till January and going by the AQI trend in Delhi during such periods, GRAP Stages - III / IV are required to be invoked for considerable periods of time during these months. Such restrictions have an impact on the functioning of the educational system and the quality of education;
- (iii) Students of classes X and XII and the associated school authorities are most impacted by the GRAP Stage - IV restrictions, considering the Board examinations facing them and the various competitive exams which follow. These students are required to attend classes in a physical mode considering the practical classes as also the practical examinations. Besides, the students are also required to attend to extra classes / tutorials for the Board examinations;
- (iv) The Commission also considered various representations relating to conduct of physical classes in schools during such restrictive GRAP stages.

Considering all the above noted aspects and in respectful compliance of the Hon'ble Supreme Court's directives, the Commission, today has ordered the following with immediate effect and until further orders:

- Clause 11 of GRAP Stage-III, Clause 5 of GRAP Stage-IV and Clause 8 of GRAP Stage-IV (to the extent it relates to colleges / educational institutions) are relaxed to the extent that State Govts. in the NCR and the GNCTD shall ensure that all classes upto 12<sup>th</sup> Standard in schools and those in colleges / educational institutions are conducted in a “Hybrid” mode i.e., both in “physical” and also in an “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 Buddh Nagar in the NCR. The option to exercise online mode of education, wherever available, shall vest with the students and their guardians.
- NCR State Governments may also consider conducting classes in a hybrid mode as above in all other areas in NCR.
- Further, wide publicity shall be given for immediate implementation by all the concerned authorities in Delhi-NCR.

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