

Commission for Air Quality Management in NCR and Adjoining Areas

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PRESS RELEASE

- CAQM Sub-Committee for operationalization of actions under GRAP in its earlier meetings had invoked actions under Stage-I, Stage-II, Stage-III and Stage-IV of revised GRAP on 06.10.2023, 21.10.2023, 02.11.2023 and 05.11.2023 respectively; On periodic review of the air quality of Delhi and forecast provided by IMD/ IITM, the Sub-Committee had revoked actions under Stage-IV and Stage-III of GRAP on 18.11.2023 and 28.11.2023 respectively and invoked actions under Stage-III of GRAP again on 22.12.2023, which were later revoked on 01.01.2024 in view of notable improvement in the overall air quality of Delhi;
- CAQM Sub-Committee for operationalization of GRAP called on an emergency meeting today morning in view of sudden deterioration of air quality of Delhi-NCR from last evening and accordingly took stock of the air quality scenario;
- The Sub-Committee observed that AQI of Delhi has witnessed a spurt due to unfavourable climatic conditions like very low wind speed, rise in the moisture levels, low mixing heights and local pollution sources including large scale open burning in the last about 24 hours and at 10AM and 11AM on date, the average AQI for Delhi stood at 458 and 457 respectively;
- The Sub-Committee further deliberated that the spike in Delhi's average AQI (> 450) may not last for long as per the forecast made by IMD/ IITM and is expected to largely remain in the 'Severe' category (401-450) for few days, owing to the continuing unfavorable meteorological and climatic conditions;
- The Sub-Committee decides to re-invoke 8-point action plan as per Stage-III of GRAP in the entire NCR with immediate effect, to prevent further deterioration of air quality in the region;
- All actions as envisaged under Stage-III of the revised GRAP - 'Severe' Air Quality, be implemented in right earnest by all the agencies concerned in NCR with immediate effect, in addition to all Stage-I and Stage-II actions of GRAP already in force;
- CAQM urges citizens to cooperate and follow the Citizen Charter of 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-III of GRAP in addition to actions under Stage-I and Stage-II of 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 detailed revised GRAP document may be easily accessed from the Commission's official website, i.e., <https://caqm.nic.in/>

NEW DELHI:

In view of sudden deterioration of air quality of Delhi-NCR from last evening, the Sub-Committee for operationalization of the Graded Response Action Plan (GRAP) of Commission for Air Quality Management in NCR & Adjoining Areas (CAQM) called on an emergency meeting today morning. 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 overall Air Quality Index (AQI) of Delhi has witnessed a spurt due to unfavourable climatic conditions like very low wind speed, rise in the moisture levels, low mixing heights and local pollution sources including large scale open burning in last about 24 hours and at 10AM and 11AM on date, the average AQI for Delhi stood at 458 and 457 respectively. The Sub-Committee however further deliberated that the spike in Delhi's average AQI (> 450) may not last for long as per the forecast made by IMD/ IITM and is expected to largely remain in the 'Severe' category (401-450) for few days, owing to the continuing unfavorable meteorological and climatic conditions.

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 re-invoke all actions as envisaged under Stage-III of revised GRAP - 'Severe' Air Quality (Delhi's AQI ranging between 401-450), today with immediate effect in the entire NCR. This is in addition to preventive/ restrictive actions under Stage-I and Stage-II of GRAP already in force in NCR. 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-III of GRAP in addition to actions under Stage-I and Stage-II of GRAP during this period.

An 8-point action plan as per Stage-III of GRAP is applicable with immediate effect from today in the entire NCR. This 8-point action plan includes steps to be implemented/ ensured by different agencies and Pollution Control Boards of NCR and DPCC. These steps are:

1. Further intensify the frequency of mechanised/ vacuum-based sweeping of roads.

2. Ensure daily water sprinkling along with dust suppressants, before peak traffic hours, on roads and right of ways including hotspots, heavy traffic corridors and ensure proper disposal of the collected dust in designated sites/ landfills.
3. Further intensify public transport services. Introduce differential rates to encourage off-peak travel.
4. Construction & Demolition activities:

(i) Enforce strict ban on construction and demolition activities in the entire NCR, except for the following categories of projects:

- a. Projects for Railway services / Railway stations
- b. Projects for Metro Rail Services and stations
- c. Airports and Inter State Bus Terminals
- d. National security/ defence related activities/ projects of national importance;
- e. Hospitals/ health care facilities
- f. Linear public projects such as highways, roads, flyovers, over bridges, power transmission/distribution, pipelines etc.
- g. Sanitation projects like sewage treatment plants and water supply projects etc.;
- h. Ancillary activities, specific to and supplementing the above noted categories of projects.

Note: The above exemptions shall be further subject to strict compliance of the C&D Waste Management Rules, dust prevention/ control norms including compliance with the directions of the Commission issued from time to time in this regard.

(ii) Other than the projects exempted under (i) above, dust generating/ air pollution causing C&D activities to be strictly banned during this period shall include:

- Earthwork for excavation and filling including boring & drilling works.
- All structural construction works including fabrication and welding operations.
- Demolition works.
- Loading & unloading of construction materials anywhere within or outside the project sites.
- Transfer of raw materials either manually or through conveyor belts, including fly ash.
- Movement of vehicles on unpaved roads.
- Operation of batching plant.
- Laying of sewer line, waterline, drainage work and electric cabling by open trench system.
- Cutting and fixing of tiles, stones and other flooring materials.
- Grinding activities.
- Piling work.
- Water Proofing work.
- Painting, Polishing and varnishing works etc.

- Road construction/ repair works including paving of sidewalks / pathways and central verges etc.

(iii) For all construction projects in NCR, non-polluting / non-dust generating activities such as plumbing works, electrical works, carpentry related works and interior furnishing / finishing / decoration works (excluding painting, polishing and varnishing works etc.) shall be permitted to be continued.

5. Close down operations of stone crushers
6. Close down all mining and associated activities in NCR.
7. NCR State Govts. / GNCTD to impose strict restrictions on plying of BS III petrol and BS IV diesel LMVs (4 wheelers) in Delhi and in the districts of Gurugram, Faridabad, Ghaziabad and Gautam Budh Nagar.
8. State Govts. in NCR and GNCTD may take a decision on discontinuing physical classes in schools for children up to Class V and conducting classes in an online mode.

Further, CAQM appeals to the citizens of NCR to cooperate in effective implementation of GRAP measures aimed towards sustaining and improving the overall air quality in the region and follow the steps mentioned in the Citizen Charter under GRAP. Citizens are advised to:

- Walk or use cycles for small distances.
- Choose a cleaner commute. Share a ride to work or use public transport.
- People, whose positions allow working from home, may work from home.
- Do not use coal and wood for heating purpose.
- Individual house owners may provide electric heaters (during winters) to security staff to avoid open burning.
- Combine errands and reduce trips.

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