



## Stringent anti-emission measures kick in; primary schools to remain shut November 8.

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Air pollution in the Capital reached severe levels on Tuesday, forcing the implementation of stringent emission control measures and health precautions, including closure of primary schools on Wednesday. A combination of smoke from stubble burning in Punjab and Haryana and moisture turned Delhi into a "gas chamber", prompting the authorities to announce a series of preventive measures, including a four-fold hike in parking fees and slashing of metro fares.

The smog brought down visibility levels, affecting flight and train operations. The heavy air permeated living rooms and even the underground metro stations in the city, making it difficult to breathe, turning eyes watery.

According to the Central Pollution Control Board, the air quality index (AQI) for Delhi was 448 as of 4 p.m., making it 'severe' — the worst category and one that comes with the warning that healthy people are also affected at this level. The AQI, calculated using data from 15 monitoring stations, also showed that particulate matter — both the smaller PM2.5 and the coarse PM10 — were the prominent pollutants in Delhi. Across the National Capital Region, Faridabad, Ghaziabad and Noida also had severe pollution, while Gurugram fell in the 'very poor' category.

In L - Lavo, level of the harmful PM2.5, which is small enough to get embedded in the lungs causing serious respiratory illness, was several times over the standard of 60 micrograms per cubic metre.

At the Delhi Pollution Control Committee station at Anand Vihar, the concentration of PM2.5 at 7.10 p.m. was a whopping 732 micrograms per cubic metre or more than 12 times the safe level.

Sir, for the current news article I have chosen the article from the Times Of India with the HEADLINES "Smog turns Delhi into a Gas Chamber", which was published on 7th Nov in New Delhi, with a population of 20 million, has today

become one of the most populated cities of the world, even surpassing Beijing. Today the scenario is such that makes all of us worry. As per the Central Pollution Control Board, the air quality index (AQI) for Delhi was 4 on 7th Nov which is a cause of concern as now it is life difficult even for the healthy people. The AQI, calculated using data from 15 monitoring stations, also showed that both, the smaller PM2.5 and the coarse PM10 were the main pollutants in Delhi. Situation is almost the same in all the regions in Delhi like, Faridabad, Ghaziabad and Noida, while Gurugram was amongst the worst affected areas..

Actually, Delhi has reached to this situation mainly because of 4 reasons..

1. smoke from crop burning in Punjab and Haryana
2. dust from construction sites
3. smoke and harmful gases released by the Firecrackers during Diwali,
4. toxic mix created by pollution from diesel engines, coal-fired power plants and industrial emissions and a
5. High levels of moisture in the air and a lack of wind which traps the harmful gas emissions from leaving the environment.

All this brought down the levels of visibility in Delhi considerably. People are facing a lot of difficulty because of this. Their daily routine has got disturbed. Many pedestrians and bikers wear masks or cover their faces with handkerchiefs and scarves, while on the roads. Many flights, trains and buses to Delhi are either delayed or cancelled. Even some of the underground services are suspended.

Not only this, keeping in mind the probability of five-million-students whose age is enrolled in nearly 1000 government and private schools in Delhi, the deputy chief minister of Delhi, Mr Manish Sisodia, had announced sure



of all the schools till 12th November. Actually, the government took such a serious step as the level of the harmful PM2.5, which is small enough to get embedded in the lungs causing serious respiratory illness, was several times over the standard of 60 micrograms per cubic metre. It was recorded to be of approximately 732 micrograms per cubic meter, which was a lot.

Sir, when I shared this news with my father, he said that it is a similar situation every year in Winters in Delhi as cooler air traps pollutants near the ground and prevents them from dispersing into the atmosphere. The government should not think of temporary solutions like no crackers, odd-even driving, increasing of parking fees so as to encourage the use of public transport. All this won't help in the long run.

They need to find out something better, bigger and more effective to pull Delhi out of this crisis.

(Sir, I personally feel that another important thing that the government should do is to completely stop outdoor sports and other such activities in schools to protect the health of children. Also, the people too Delhi should together work upon this matter and follow the new changes that have been made for the long run instead of just doing it for 2-3 months.)