

India cities experiencing hazardous air quality

9th November, 2016



Many of India's big cities are experiencing such hazardous air pollution that it almost defies belief. The standard measurement for healthy, normal, breathable air is set at a level of 50 according to the Air Quality Index

(AQI). A level of 300 means the air is hazardous to breathe. The AQI website says 300 represents a health alert and the city should be put under emergency conditions. The website says that, "everyone may experience more serious health effects". On November 8, the city of Chandrapur in Maharashtra reached an AQI level of 824, to become India's most polluted city. The capital New Delhi has reached an AQI of 724. Environmentalists say many cities are now like "gas chambers".

A toxic haze shrouds India's capital and residents are being warned to wear masks. Schools were ordered closed for three days. New Delhi generally has its fair share of pollution problems due to the nine million vehicles that clog its streets, most not conforming to emissions standards. The situation has been made worse recently due to a number of factors. These include chemical pollution blowing in from nearby states, farmers setting fire to straw as autumn arrives, and a lack of wind. To alleviate the crisis, city officials have ordered roads to be doused with water to stop dust from rising. They have also banned diesel-powered electricity generators for 10 days, except at hospitals and cellphone towers.

Sources: qz.com / bostonglobe.com / IndianExpress.com

Writing

Companies that aren't carbon neutral should pay huge taxes. Discuss.

Chat

Talk about these words from the article.

cities / hazardous / pollution / healthy / health alert / emergency / environmentalists / toxic / haze / vehicles / emissions / farmers / dust / electricity / hospitals / towers

True / False

- All of India's cities now have hazardous air quality. T / F
- The standard used to measure air quality is called the Pollution Index. T / F
- A website says everyone's health may suffer with hazardous air quality. T / F
- New Delhi is India's most polluted city. T / F
- Schools in New Delhi closed for three days. T / F
- There are nine million vehicles on the streets of New Delhi. T / F
- Air quality is bad even though there are strong winds over New Delhi. T / F
- Hospitals are exempt from a ban on diesel electricity generators. T / F

Synonym Match

(The words in **bold** are from the news article.)

- | | |
|---------------------|-----------------|
| 1. hazardous | a. points |
| 2. standard | b. consequences |
| 3. alert | c. risen to |
| 4. effects | d. congest |
| 5. reached | e. accepted |
| 6. shrouds | f. prohibited |
| 7. clog | g. dangerous |
| 8. factors | h. ease |
| 9. alleviate | i. warning |
| 10. banned | j. covers |

Discussion – Student A

- What is pollution like in your city?
- How serious are world leaders about reducing pollution?
- What damage does pollution do?
- How can Indian cities cut their pollution?
- How can pollution levels in a city get so high?
- What actions do people need to take with hazardous air quality?
- What would you do if air in your town was hazardous to breathe?
- Who is to blame for high levels of pollution?

Phrase Match

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|----------------------------|
| 1. hazardous air | a. at a level of 50 |
| 2. it almost defies | b. electricity generators |
| 3. set | c. polluted city |
| 4. health | d. shrouds India's capital |
| 5. become India's most | e. belief |
| 6. A toxic haze | f. standards |
| 7. New Delhi generally has its fair | g. pollution |
| 8. not conforming to emissions | h. of wind |
| 9. a lack | i. alert |
| 10. diesel-powered | j. share of pollution |

Discussion – Student B

- What lessons should cities learn from this new crisis?
- What is happening with climate change treaties?
- In reality, is profit more important than air quality?
- What advice do you have for residents of India's cities?
- What clean energies can India use?
- How effective is dousing streets with water?
- Will the actions of city officials in New Delhi help?
- What questions would you like to ask air quality experts?

Spelling

- air optilunol
- it almost difees belief
- The standard aeemernsmut
- put under eycrngenme conditions
- more serious health fectesef
- nrtsnsoviieelnmta say...
- A toxic haze rsudosh India's capital
- most not cmingofnro
- inssemiso standards
- To aieaetlv the crisis
- roads to be eusddo with water
- ceptex at hospitals

Answers – Synonym Match

1. g	2. e	3. i	4. b	5. c
6. j	7. d	8. a	9. h	10. f

Role Play

Role A – Give cash for recycling

You think giving cash for recycling is the best way to tackle pollution. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them things that are wrong with their ways. Also, tell the others which is the least effective of these (and why): planting more trees, banning cars or taxing polluting companies.

Role B – Plant more trees

You think planting more trees is the best way to tackle pollution. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them things that are wrong with their ways. Also, tell the others which is the least effective of these (and why): giving cash for recycling, banning cars or taxing polluting companies.

Role C – Ban cars

You think banning cars is the best way to tackle pollution. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them things that are wrong with their ways. Also, tell the others which is the least effective of these (and why): planting more trees, giving cash for recycling or taxing polluting companies.

Role D – Tax polluting companies

You think taxing polluting companies is the best way to tackle pollution. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them things that are wrong with their ways. Also, tell the others which is the least effective of these (and why): planting more trees, banning cars or giving cash for recycling.

Speaking – Solutions

Rank these with your partner. Put the best solutions to reduce pollution at the top. Change partners often and share your rankings.

- | | |
|------------------------------|------------------------|
| • give cash for recycling | • plant more trees |
| • tax polluting companies | • invest in renewables |
| • become a vegetarian world | • ban cars |
| • convert all homes to solar | • ban fossil fuels |

Answers – True False

a	F	b	F	c	T	d	F	e	T	f	T	g	F	h	T
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Answers to Phrase Match and Spelling are in the text.