

## **Graded Response Action Plan - Delhi**

### **What is the issue?**

- Some stricter measures to fight air pollution will come into force in Delhi's neighbourhood starting October 15 2019, as part of the Graded Response Action Plan (GRAP).
- In this backdrop, here is an overview of the Graded Response Action Plan (GRAP).

### **What are the recent pollution control measures?**











- In 2018, the ban on using diesel generator sets was implemented only in Delhi. In the current year (2019), it is being extended to a few NCR towns.
- Notably, many areas here see regular power cuts.
- Rural areas are, however, being left out of this stringent measure because of unreliable power supply.
- The measures that are coming into force will be incremental.
- As pollution rises, and it is expected to rise as winter approaches, more measures will come into play depending on the air quality.
- All these measures are part of the Graded Response Action Plan (GRAP) that has been in effect for 2 years in Delhi and the National Capital Region (NCR).

### **What is GRAP?**

- The GRAP was formulated in 2016 and approved by the Supreme Court in the same year.
- It was notified in 2017 by the Centre, and draws its authority from this notification.
- It was planned after several meetings of EPCA (Environment Pollution (Prevention and Control) Authority) with state government officials and experts.
- GRAP institutionalised the measures to be taken when air quality deteriorates.
- It aims to roll out progressively tougher actions as pollution levels rise, without waiting for an emergency to impose strict measures.

### **How does GRAP work?**

- The plan is incremental in nature.
- So, it does not include action by various state governments to be taken throughout the year to tackle emissions.
- Rather, when the air quality shifts from poor to very poor, the measures listed have to be followed.
- If air quality reaches the severe stage, GRAP talks about shutting down schools and implementing the odd-even road-space rationing scheme.
- The plan requires action and coordination among 13 different agencies in Delhi, Uttar Pradesh, Haryana and Rajasthan (NCR areas).
- At the top is the *EPCA*, mandated by the Supreme Court.
- Before the imposition of any measure, EPCA holds a meeting with representatives from all NCR states.
- A call is taken on which actions have to be made applicable in which town.

<b>HOW THE GOVT WILL WORK TO CURB BAD AIR</b>	
<b>Graded Response Action Plan (GRAP) will be put in place from today and will be in force until February-end, 2018. People would be made aware about this through mass media</b>	
CATEGORY	ACTION PLAN
 <b>Moderate to Poor</b> PM2.5—61-120 µg/m3 PM10—101-350 µg/m3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Stop garbage burning, impose heavy fines</li> <li>▶ Enforce pollution regulations in all industries</li> <li>▶ Do periodic mechanised road sweeping</li> <li>▶ Stop plying of visibly polluting vehicles</li> <li>▶ Enforce SC order on diversion, ban on crackers</li> <li>▶ Ensure fly ash ponds are watered every alternate day from Mar - May</li> <li>▶ Use apps to inform people and register complaints</li> </ul> 
 <b>Very Poor</b> PM2.5—121-250µg/m3 PM10—351-430 µg/m3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Stop use of diesel gensets</li> <li>▶ Enhance parking fee by 3-4 times</li> <li>▶ Increase bus and Metro services</li> <li>▶ Stop use of coal/firewood in hotels and restaurants</li> <li>▶ RWAs to provide electric heaters to security staff to stop bonfires</li> <li>▶ Issue media alerts and advisories</li> </ul>  
 <b>Severe</b> PM2.5—250 µg/m3 PM10—430µg/m3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Close hot mix plants, stone crushers</li> <li>▶ Shut down Badarpur power plant and maximise generation from natural gas-based plants</li> <li>▶ Intensify public transport</li> <li>▶ Mechanised cleaning of road and sprinkling of water</li> </ul> 
 <b>Emergency</b> PM2.5—300µg/m3 PM10—500 µg/m3 <i>(persist for 48 hours or more)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Stop entry of trucks except those carrying essential commodities</li> <li>▶ Stop construction</li> <li>▶ Introduce odd-even scheme without exemptions</li> <li>▶ Task Force to decide on additional steps</li> </ul>  

### How effective has GRAP been?

- GRAP has been successful in doing two things that had not been done before
  - i. creating a step-by-step plan for the entire Delhi-NCR region
  - ii. getting on board several agencies: all pollution control boards, industrial area authorities, municipal corporations, regional officials of

## IMD and others

- The biggest success of GRAP has been in fixing accountability and deadlines.
- For each action to be taken under a particular air quality category, executing agencies are clearly marked.
- In a territory like Delhi, where a multiplicity of authorities has been a long-standing impediment to effective governance, this step made a crucial difference.
- Clear demarcation of responsibilities has made easier the coordination among as many as 13 agencies from 4 states.
- Three major policy decisions that can be credited to EPCA and GRAP are-
  1. the closure of the thermal power plant at Badarpur
  2. bringing BS-VI fuel to Delhi before the deadline set initially
  3. the ban on Pet coke as a fuel in Delhi NCR

## What are the shortfalls?

- A major concern with the EPCA and the GRAP has been the focus on Delhi.
- Delhi has always been the first one to have stringent measures enforced.
- Other states have managed to delay several measures, citing lack of resources.
- For GRAP as well as EPCA, the next challenge is to extend the measures to other states effectively.

**Source: Indian Express**

## Quick Fact

### EPCA

- The EPCA, headed by retired IAS officer Bhure Lal and including members from the Centre for Science and Environment, was constituted in 1998 by the Supreme Court.
- The initial mandate of the body was to ensure the shift of Delhi's bus and auto fleet to CNG.
- The body continues to monitor pollution and assists the Supreme Court in several pollution-related matters.