

Delhi chokes on ninth day of ‘very poor’ air; UP bans diesel autos in NCR to curb pollution

NEW DELHI, NOV 22

There was little respite from toxic air for Delhi on Saturday, with the city once again recording “very poor” pollution levels even as neighbouring Uttar Pradesh moved to clamp down on vehicular emissions by banning diesel autorickshaws in Noida and Ghaziabad.

According to the Central Pollution Control Board, Delhi’s 24-hour average Air Quality Index stood at 370, marking the ninth straight day in the very poor category.

Eleven of the 38 operational monitoring stations registered readings in the severe range where the AQI crossed 400.

These stations included DTU, Bawana, Anand Vihar, Mundka, Narela, Rohini and Vivek Vihar.

The city’s AQI trend through the week reflected persistent stagnation with an average of 374 on Friday, 391 on Thursday, 392 on Wednesday, 374 on Tuesday and 351 on Monday.

The CPCB categorises 0 to 50 as good, 51 to 100 as satisfactory, 101 to 200 as moderate, 201 to 300 as poor, 301 to 400 as very poor and 401 to 500 as severe.

Estimates from the Decision Support System of the Indian



Institute of Tropical Meteorology in Pune indicated that vehicular emissions contributed 14.9 per cent to the pollution load on Saturday.

Stubble burning accounted for 2.8 per cent. For Sunday, the respective shares are projected at 19.1 per cent and 2.6 per cent.

Satellite data detected 30 farm fires in Punjab, 11 in Haryana and 250 in Uttar Pradesh on Friday.

Weather conditions remained characteristically wintery. The minimum temperature settled at 11.8 degrees Celsius, which is 0.5 degrees below normal.

The maximum was recorded at 23.7 degrees Celsius, 0.6 degrees above normal, the India Meteorological Department

said.

For Sunday, the IMD has predicted moderate fog with maximum and minimum temperatures likely to hover around 26 and 11 degrees Celsius.

The Uttar Pradesh government on Saturday announced a phased ban on diesel autorickshaws across the state’s National Capital Region cluster as part of a comprehensive strategy to curb air pollution.

Diesel autos have been fully prohibited with immediate effect in Gautam Buddha Nagar and Ghaziabad. Baghpat will enforce a complete ban after December 31, 2025.

The Meerut Regional

Transport Authority has already halted the issuance and renewal of permits for diesel autorickshaws.

By December 31 next year, these vehicles will be phased out in Meerut, Hapur, Bulandshahr, Muzaffarnagar and Shamli.

Road dust has been identified as a key contributor to particulate pollution in the region.

The action plan focuses on road redevelopment, intensified dust suppression and large scale cleanliness drives. For coordinated execution, the principal secretary of the Environment, Forest and Climate Change Department has been named the nodal officer and a project monitoring unit has been set up at the state level under the environment department’s secretary.

Senior officials from Urban Development, Public Works, Housing and Urban Planning and Industrial and Infrastructure Development have been included in the panel.

Authorities in Noida and Greater Noida have begun deploying anti smog guns, sprinklers and mechanical sweeping systems to address roadside dust.

Centre to introduce bill in Parliament winter session to create single higher education regulator

NEW DELHI, NOV 22

The Narendra Modi government is planning to place a long-awaited higher education overhaul before Parliament in the upcoming winter session beginning December 1.

The Higher Education Commission of India Bill, listed in the Lok Sabha bulletin, seeks to reshape how universities and colleges are regulated across the country.

The proposed Higher Education Commission of India (HECI) is rooted in the National Education Policy 2020, which argues for structural change. “The regulatory system is in need of a complete overhaul in order to re-energise the higher education sector and enable it to thrive.”

It further notes that the new system must ensure “the distinct functions of regulation, accreditation, funding, and academic standard setting are performed by distinct,



independent, and empowered bodies.”

HECI is meant to replace three key institutions, the University Grants Commission (UGC), the All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE), and the National Council for Teacher Education (NCTE).

These bodies currently handle non-technical education, technical education, and teacher education. Medical and law colleges will continue under their existing frameworks and will not be shifted to HECI.

Under the bill, HECI will take charge of regulation, accreditation, and setting professional standards. Funding, considered the fourth vertical in the NEP’s structure, will remain with the administrative ministry rather than the new regulator.

This separation has been part of discussions since 2018, when the draft Higher Education Commission of India (Repeal of University Grants Commission Act) Bill, 2018 was opened for public consultation.

Efforts to revive the plan gathered pace after Dharmendra Pradhan became Union education minister in 2021. Since then, the ministry has pushed for a single regulator to streamline processes that have been handled by multiple bodies for decades.

Why farmers in Pune now wear barbed-wire collars to work and the leopard fear behind it

NEW DELHI, NOV 22

In Pimparkhed village, about 75.9 kms away from Pune, barbed-wire collars have become part of farm work.

To the onlooker these appear crude and painful.

But residents of Pimparkhed say they are now as essential as a sickle or a spade. Leopards, they say, can appear anywhere, at any moment.

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Parts of rural Maharashtra are depending on the wired collars for now.

“We wear these collars because leopards can come at any time. Farming is our livelihood; we can’t stay at home out of fear,” Vitthal Ranganath Jadhav told ANI.

“We see leopards every day. A month ago, my mother was killed by a leopard. Before that, a little girl had died.” Villagers say, this is the reality of Pimparkhed today. His mother had stepped out early one morning to feed the cattle. It was 6 AM. The leopard struck without warning, dragged her through dense

Akbar and Tipu no longer mentioned as 'great' in NCERT history books: RSS leader

NEW DELHI, NOV 22

Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) leader Sunil Ambekar said that history textbooks have undergone “many positive changes,” including the removal of the epithet “the great” for Mughal emperor Akbar and Mysore ruler Tipu Sultan.

Speaking at the Orange City Literature Festival in Nagpur, organised by the SGR Knowledge Foundation, Ambekar said the National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT) had introduced these revisions but emphasised that “nobody has been removed” from the books because the new generation “should know their cruel deeds.”

Ambekar, the Akhil Bharatiya Prachar Pramukh of the RSS, said India’s ancient knowledge traditions offer rich resources that can benefit society. “This rich knowledge can be given to the world as well, but for that we also need to focus on that knowledge,” he said.

He noted that NCERT has updated textbooks for 11 of 15



Classes 9, 10 and 12 will be implemented next year. “I could see that many good changes have been brought in the history books, and more could be done in the future,” he said.

“But now, they do not have ‘Akbar the Great’ nor do they have ‘Tipu Sultan the Great’.”

Ambekar added that some object to such revisions, but “this cannot happen and it should be told.”

Ambekar also talked about Nalanda University and said that people think that only Ved Puran, Ramayana and Mahabharata were taught there.

“But if you go through the syllabus of Nalanda University,

you will get to know what was taught there. It is a very old university,” he said.

Along with literature, 76 types of skill-based courses were also taught in Nalanda University, which were taught to all and these skills included farming, urban planning, make-up, secret agent, political governance, mechanisation and several others, Ambekar said.

According to the RSS leader, India is prospering and we should think about what our future society should be like.

People across the world kept compromising on their civilisation and culture in the process of development, and surrendered to the markets and

new technologies. Although it brought facilities, it came at the cost of personal and family life, our values and relations, he added.

Talking about Ram temple in Ayodhya, he said some people think why RSS put all its strength for the construction of this temple.

“I would say it was not just about building the temple..It was built, but we should think about our relation with Lord Ram along with the temple. What is our relationship with the culture of Lord Ram, what is the meaning of the culture of Ram and what relationship does it have with the culture of our country and our future life. It was a campaign to make people understand all this and it was done very nicely and I think now the youth are keeping self respect about the dharma,” he said.

Ambekar praised the country’s youth, saying the new generation is very able and has all the exposure.

They are very patriotic and patriotism is a cool thing for them, he said.

J&K Judicial Academy Srinagar organises workshop on Wildlife Protection Laws

SRINAGAR, NOV 22: Under the patronage of Justice Arun Palli, Chief Justice, High Court of Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh (Patron-in-Chief, J&K Judicial Academy), and under the guidance of the Chairperson and Members of the Governing Committee of the Academy, the Jammu & Kashmir Judicial Academy, Srinagar, in collaboration with the Wildlife Trust of India (WTI), organised a One Day Workshop on Wildlife Protection Laws for Judicial Officers of the Kashmir Province and the Union Territory of Ladakh at the Academy premises in Mominabad, Srinagar.

During the programme, Director, J&K Judicial Academy, Naseer Ahmad Dar, lighted the constitutional mandates enshrined in Article 48A and Article 51A(g), underscoring the duty of the State and every citizen to protect and

improve the natural environment and safeguard wildlife. He reflected on the unique ecological sensitivity of Jammu & Kashmir and the growing challenges related to illegal wildlife trade and habitat threats, stressing the urgent need for stronger enforcement and judicial awareness.

Senior Manager and Head, J&K WTI, Dr. Tanushree Srivastava, while speaking during the program outlined the scope and objectives of the workshop and emphasized the importance of enhancing institutional capacities to address wildlife crimes effectively.

Judge, High Court of J&K and Ladakh, Justice Rajesh Sekhri, in his keynote address, emphasized Jammu & Kashmir is not immune to the threats posed by wildlife crimes. He stressed the need for the judiciary to remain proactive and sensitive in enforcing wildlife

protection laws and called for consistency and rigor in adjudicating such offences to preserve the region’s fragile ecological balance.

Chief of Enforcement & CEO, WTI, Jose Louies, led Technical Session by tracing India’s long cultural legacy of wildlife protection, symbolized famously by the Ashokan Lion Capital, reflecting the country’s inherent commitment to coexistence with nature. He outlined the primary drivers of illegal wildlife trade including demand for pets, cultural and traditional practices. Highlighting that poachers have increasingly become aware of enforcement techniques, thus, posing serious challenges to effective detection. The guest lecture was delivered by Former Judge, Bombay High Court & Chairman, Maharashtra State Commission for Backward

Classes Justice Sunil B. Shukre. He provided an in-depth exposition of the Wildlife Protection Act, 1972, explaining its conservation-centric objectives and the strict standard of scrutiny adopted by the judiciary. Referencing Supreme Court judgments, he discussed the “broader probabilities” approach applied in wildlife cases, especially in light of evidentiary challenges arising from offences committed in remote wilderness areas.

Advocate, High Court of Delhi & Legal Advisor, WTI, Lovish Sharma led Technical Session II. He explained the structure and schedules of the Wildlife Protection Act, elaborating on key sections and significant case law. He also reviewed key provisions and significant case law shaping contemporary wildlife jurisprudence.

DLSA Srinagar holds awareness programme on Child Rights, Mental Health

29XNEWS SRINAGAR, NOV 22

District Legal Services Authority (DLSA), Srinagar in collaboration with The School Education Department today organized an impactful awareness programme at Govt. Girls Hr. Sec. School Rajbagh under the chairmanship of Haq Nawaz Zargar, Chairman District Legal Services Authority (Pr. Distt. & Sessions Judge) Srinagar and under the supervision of Tabassum Qadir Parray, Sub-Judge/Secretary, DLSA Srinagar.

The session focused on mental health

awareness and abuse. Students actively participated in the prevention of Child abuse, emotional interactive session and wellbeing, and shared their concerns and queries. The legal initiative aimed to empower young learners with knowledge, promote a safe environment and encourage early reporting of any violation of children’s right.

DLSA Srinagar reiterated its commitment to conducting such outreach programmes across educational institutions to create awareness, ensure child protection and promote overall wellbeing in the community.