# Ever growing air pollution levels – Where does the problem lie?

## Description

**Causes of Air pollution in India :-**

- Increasing usage of Automobiles.
- Dust kicked up by vehicles moving on roads.
- Increasing constructions and demolitions of buildings.
- Increasing demand for houses is leading to deforestation, which is worsening the quality of air further.
- Industrialization.
- Burning of crop residue. This is highly prevalent in Punjab and Haryana.
- Burning of garbage.
- Still many Indians are using firewood and cow dung for cooking.
- Greenhouse gas emissions due to burning of biomass residue.
- Usage of diesel vehicles.
- Adulterated fuel blends by many Indian taxis and auto rickshaws. These adulterants increase emissions of harmful pollutants from vehicles, worsening urban air pollution.

**Effects of Air pollution :-**

- Negative impact on health of humans as well as other living beings. Mainly, children and old people are vulnerable to adverse health effects caused by air pollution.
- Air pollution is the leading environment cause of death. In 2015, India reported 11 lakh deaths due to air pollution.
- Increase in spread of non-communicable diseases due air pollution has accounted for 62% of the total diseases in India.

**Steps Taken by Indian Government :-**

- Government of India enacted the "Environment (Protection) Act, 1986 (EPA)" under article 253 of the constitution after the dreadful incident of Bhopal gas tragedy.
- Indian government removed subsidies for polluting cooking gases to improve access to clean fuel for household cooking.
- The Delhi government has tried odd-even rule to reduce air pollution.
- Supreme Court banned registrations of diesel cars above 2000cc in Delhi, which is one of the highest air polluted cities of India.
- Indian government banned firecrackers on weddings.
- Burning of solid waste is banned.

**What more needs to be done :-**

- Allocation of more funds for afforestation projects.
- Betterment of public transportation.
- Enhancing the quality of roads.
- Encouraging community forests.
- Incentives for Eco-friendly buildings.
- Encouraging the usage of clean fuels.
- Investing more in energy generation from renewable resources.
- Encouraging work from home culture to reduce vehicular pollution.

**Best Practices in Other Countries:-**

- 'Paris' has set few good practices such as implementing odd-even bans on vehicles, making public transport free during high pollution days and encouraging car & bike-pooling.
- 'Netherlands' is working on plans to to ban the sale of all petrol and diesel cars from 2025 and allowing only electric or hydrogen vehicles.
- 'Copenhagen' now has more bicycles than people.

**Conclusion :-**

Everyone has a right to clean environment. Air pollution also needs attention just like cleanliness issue. With the help of technological advancement and public support, government needs to work for the reduction of air pollution levels on a war-footing.

**Your Turn…**

What is your viewpoint of this topic? Express your thoughts in the comment section below.