

Source : <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/home/environment/pollution/dedicated-plan-for-100-cities-to-reduce-air-pollution-levels/articleshow/62905770.cms>

The Times of India

Dedicated plan for 100 cities to reduce air pollution levels

Vishwa Mohan | TNN | Updated: Feb 14, 2018, 06:48 IST

HIGHLIGHTS

- It'll be part of the Centre's ongoing National Clean Air Programme where the environment ministry in coordination with the state governments would work on achieving results within the set time-line.
- The ministry also spoke about the ongoing efforts to increase green cover in Delhi and other cities.

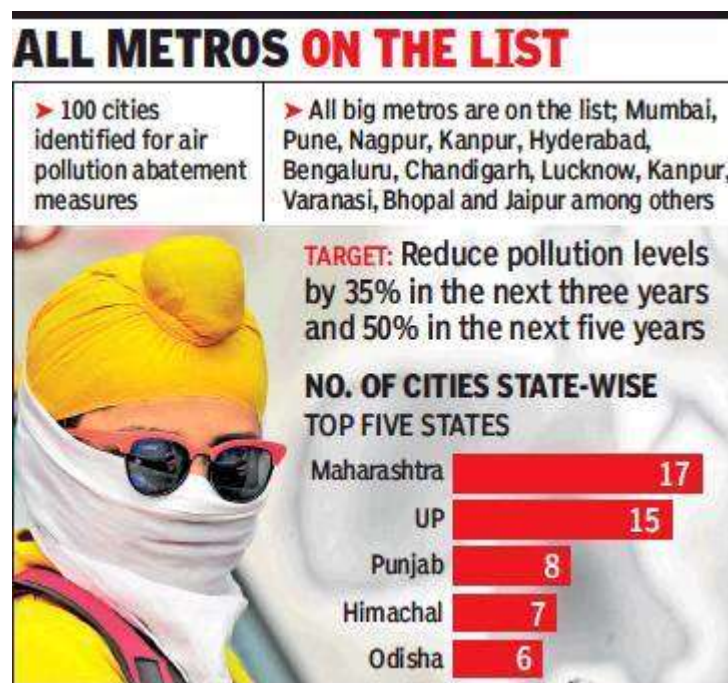


NEW DELHI: Looking beyond Delhi which has long been in focus due to its bad air quality, the Centre has decided to launch dedicated air pollution abatement programmes soon in around 100 additional cities with a target to reduce pollution levels in each of these cities by 35% in the next three years and 50% in the next five years.

It'll be part of the Centre's ongoing National Clean Air Programme where the environment ministry in coordination with the state governments would work on achieving results within the set time-line.

The list of 100 cities, identified on the basis of level of pollutants such as NO₂,

PM2.5 and PM10, include all the major cities including Mumbai, Pune, Nagpur, Lucknow, Kanpur, Varanasi, Chandigarh and Kolkata among others. Maharashtra has the maximum number of cities (17) in the list followed by Uttar Pradesh (15), Punjab (8), Himachal Pradesh (7), Odisha (6) and Madhya Pradesh, Andhra Pradesh, Assam and Rajasthan (5 each).



“We will strengthen the National Clean Air Programme in around 100 non-attainment cities where parameters (air quality) are not right and require attention”, said environment minister Harsh Vardhan while announcing the Centre’s target plan of abating air pollution in those cities.

The programme will include expanding monitoring network, setting up of air information systems, certification of monitoring institutions, air quality forecasting systems, strengthening of implementation mechanism, awareness and capacity building drives among others. All civic authorities in those cities will work in coordination with the respective State Pollution Control Boards (SPCBs).

Support for strict implementation of identified actions for abatement of air pollution from all sources will be the key component of the programme. “Idea is to

implement all the measures by taking lessons from the best practices of other countries”, said an official.

The ministry has also planned to replicate the ongoing ‘Clean Air for Delhi’ campaign in those cities in due course. The Campaign was launched in the Capital on February 10 jointly by the central and Delhi governments to address all sources of pollution.

As part of the Campaign, 70 teams have been deployed across the city to monitor sources of air pollution and also to take on-the-spot action against violators including those who do not adhere to rules pertaining to vehicular pollution, industrial emission, dust management, traffic congestion and construction and demolition activities. The campaign will conclude on February 23.

“Lessons learnt from the Campaign will help us further strengthen our measures. The ministry is trying to make it a model. Experiences gained from it will be replicated year-long in Delhi as well as in other cities of the country”, said Harsh Vardhan.

Underlining importance of forest and tree cover in combating air pollution, the ministry also spoke about the ongoing efforts to increase green cover in Delhi and other cities.

Speaking about larger issue of climate change, the minister pointed out that a plan has already been drawn up to tackle the challenges posed it. “The plan envisages planting 1,000 crore saplings over a period of 10 years, from 2021 to 2030. The plantation will be carried out in different parts of the country under various programmes,” he said.