

Experts: Now implement curbs on pollution

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The Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) has developed the index in consultation with IIT, Kanpur and other expert groups comprising medical professionals and scientists.

The move, which will not only enhance public awareness but also create a competitive environment among cities to take steps for air pollution mitigation, was welcomed by environmentalists and think tanks. They, however, said the government should also implement pollution emergency measures to bring down peak pollution levels in the same manner as is being done in other countries.

"For the first time, the government has taken the initiative to inform people about daily air quality with simple descriptions that people can understand. It is cautioning them about possible health consequences. This can help build public awareness as well as public support for hard decisions needed to get cleaner air," said Anumita Roychowdhury, executive director of Delhi-based Centre for Science and Environment.

Under AQI, hosted on CPCB's website, pollution levels have been classified in six bands with simple descriptions to help people understand it. Each band has cut-points of concentration with a colour code to express the level of severity. Air quality is classified 'good' if pollution levels are at least 50% below regulatory standards.

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Choking India joins global club, gets air quality index

Citizens Will Get Info On Health Hazards

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New Delhi: With Prime Minister Narendra Modi launching a national air quality index (AQI), India on Monday joined a global league of nations which includes US, France, China and Mexico that have implemented such an alert system. The system will give details of air quality and information on its likely health implications for city dwellers.

India's AQI will initially be available to people in 10 cities — Delhi, Faridabad, Agra, Kanpur, Lucknow, Varanasi,

KOLKATA TO COME UNDER SYSTEM SOON

10 cities where people can get information on actual air quality and its health implications:

Delhi, Agra, Kanpur, Lucknow, Varanasi, Faridabad, Ahmedabad, Chennai, Bangalore and Hyderabad



Ahmedabad, Bangalore, Chennai and Hyderabad. It will help people in these cities take pre-

► Most of the **monitoring stations** in these 10 cities **started displaying the index from Monday (April 6)**

► **Index can be accessed from websites** of Union environment ministry or respective state pollution control boards

► AQI scheme reflects '**one colour one code**' for different types of air quality (good, satisfactory, moderate, poor, very poor and severe)

► **46 other million-plus cities and 20 state capitals** will have **similar air quality index** in next one to two years

► Each of these **cities** will have **6-7 monitoring stations** with **AQI display boards**

cautions on days when the air quality is particularly poor.

Other cities, including

Mumbai, Kolkata and Chandigarh, will come under the national indexing network in a couple of months when their pollution control boards are ready with the new and updated round-the-clock monitoring stations. A similar facility will be made available to the remaining metropolitan cities and state capitals in another one to two years.

The central agencies have taken into account eight pollutants: PM2.5, PM10, nitrogen oxides, sulphur dioxide, ozone, carbon monoxide, ammonia and lead while calculating and releasing the AQI. The index, using continuous 24-hour average data, will be made available daily from various monitoring stations in those cities.

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