

Delhi misses NCAP budget allocation from CPCB in first year of programme: RTI

January 10, 2020, New Delhi: One year since the Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change (MoEFCC) launched the National Clean Air Programme (NCAP) on 10th January 2019, climate and energy news aggregator site, www.carboncopy.info has launched a dashboard - ncap.carboncopy.info - to track the progress of India's national air pollution management plan, across a range of parameters like budget spending and improvement in PM levels.

The NCAP has identified 122 non-attainment cities in the country which did not meet the National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) for the period of 2011-15 under the National Air Quality Monitoring Programme (NAMP). The programme aims to reduce 20-30% PM 2.5 and 10 levels across these 122 cities by 2024, taking levels in 2017 as the base year. The initial data on the NCAP tracker is based on responses received under Right to Information Act 2005 from the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) on budget disbursed to 28 non-attainment cities so far and the breakdown of expenses.

Ronak Sutaria, CEO of Urban Sciences, the low-cost air quality monitoring start-up said, *"The NCAP is an important landmark policy to enable coordination between states and for air pollution control & mitigation interventions to be implemented at scale. Understanding what actions 122 cities - tier 1, 2 and 3 -- across the country have taken and how much impact it has had in reducing particulate matter level is key to India's success in taking on the air pollution challenge that we're facing right now. The dashboard is a live interactive tool which provides data and information for better engagement between citizens and policy makers for clean air."*

According to the NCAP dashboard, INR 280 crores have been disbursed to 28 non-attainment cities by the CPCB so far, which include cities like Varanasi, Lucknow, Hyderabad, Mumbai, Kolkata and Bengaluru. Delhi has not made it into this list so far. Based on the list of actions each city is undertaking to meet its NCAP goals, the dashboard has identified 5 metrics -- monitoring coverage, pollution mitigation, pollution clean-up, public engagement & awareness and miscellaneous activities.

While Hyderabad has spent the maximum of INR 7.8 crores on increased monitoring efforts among all 28 cities, Ahmedabad is trailing at INR 80 lakhs on installation and commissioning of CAAQMs. Meanwhile Raipur is leading the way with green paving activities worth INR 4.2 crores, while Surat has spent INR 50 lakhs on this activity so far as the only effort one year since NCAP came into effect.

Aarti Khosla, Director of CarbonCopy.info which was set up in 2017 said, *"Air pollution is no longer an unseen unknown phenomenon. Its public health effects are being experienced far and wide. China is the closest example for India on how it controlled its emissions and penalised polluters to control the airpocalypse in Beijing from 2012 to 2017. If India wants to create a success story in air pollution management and mitigation, proper implementation, enforcement and execution in NCAP is crucial to that effect. This tracker is meant to add transparency in tracking implementation. While India is one of the few countries which is on*

track to meet its international climate commitments, the country's highest health burden due to air pollution make it imperative for India to address this problem at its root cause and urgently."

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About Carbon Copy

CarbonCopy is a media portal that tracks developments in the climate and energy sector. It publishes a subscriber-based newsletter – 'Climate Fortnightly' – which is focused on India's climate and energy news and developments.

CarbonCopy also curates content from guest authors and experts, as well as publishes original content that covers international developments from an Indian perspective.

It is supported by Climate Trends, an agency that works towards simplifying complex environmental issues through research and communications.