



PRESS RELEASE

Only 1 % days of ‘Good’ air quality found in Patna in 2017, claims CEED report

Patna under grip of perennial air pollution with no improvement

Patna, 6th January 2018: In a recent analysis by Centre for Environment and Energy Development (CEED), Patna has perpetually been under dangerous levels of air pollution throughout in the year 2017, putting its citizens at serious health risks. CEED studied the ambient air quality data from the real time monitoring station of Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) to understand the air quality of Patna for the year 2017 (<https://goo.gl/L8vRSU>). In 2017, only 1% (3 days) days were found under ‘Good’ air quality category. More than half of the total monitored days were found to be under ‘Poor’ to ‘Severe+’ air quality. The remaining days had ‘Moderate’ (19%), and ‘Satisfactory’ (25%) air quality. Evidently, on the day when the nation celebrates Children’s Day, i.e. 14th November; Patna suffered with the worst air quality of the year with 643 $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ PM_{2.5} recorded, which is over 10 times higher than the national standard.

CEED had published a similar air quality bulletin for 2016, intended to understand the air quality of Patna. Comparing the two factsheets, it was noted that the annual average concentration of PM_{2.5} in Patna was slightly better at 138.6 $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ (in 2017) compared to previous year (2016) when it was 144.2 $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$. However, it was still 4 times more than the national standard and 14 times more than that of the WHO safety limits.

Talking about the air quality trend of Patna, CEED’s Director–Programmes, Mr. Abhishek Pratap said that “While the weather plays its role in deteriorating air quality in the city, Patna didn’t get a respite from bad air quality even in the months when it is expected to have cleaner air, and the reasons are obvious. We should be clear in our approach that air pollution is not a seasonal affair, but a year–round phenomenon with profound severity. Our approach requires consistent efforts throughout whole year and therefore, we urge the Bihar Government to come up with a time–bound implementation strategy with targeted action plan to prevent perennial air pollution episodes.”

Elaborating on the findings, Ms. Ankita Jyoti, Senior Program Officer at CEED, says that “The air pollution in the city is a serious problem, with serious threat

of particulate matter (PM_{2.5}) concentration. Vehicular emissions including road dust, solid fuel burning for cooking and heating, brick kilns emission, open burning of waste and contribution of sources outside city's airfield are major contributors of particulate matter, particularly PM_{2.5} in Patna. The city has an estimated 15% of the annual PM_{2.5} pollution sourced only from the transport sector¹." Ms. Jyoti further added that "While keeping the urgency of the situation in mind, the state government should chalk out an affirmative 'Clean Air Action Plan'. The action plan identifies a set of action priorities as per emission source, recognised regulations, and also includes institutional arrangement that will set it on track to mitigate pollution. It is essential for the city to have a source apportionment study in order to understand the emission profile of each of the polluting sectors."

Additional analysis of the 24-hour concentration of PM_{2.5} for 311 monitored days shows that the concentration of PM_{2.5} was recorded within its safety limits for only 81 days, which is 60 µg/m³. In 2017, the 24-hour concentration of PM_{2.5} in 71 days was 3-6 times higher than the safety standard, and there were 11 days when the pollution level (PM_{2.5}) was measured more than 6 times of the safety standards. For 106 days, the concentration was measured as 1-2 times more than the safety limits.

Bihar should work out a targeted action plan to reduce emissions from all sources, and stringent measures should be employed to clean the ambient air. CEED urges the Bihar Government to take concrete measures to improve the air quality of the state.

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Note to Editor: <https://goo.gl/L8vRSU>

¹ Urban emissions.info