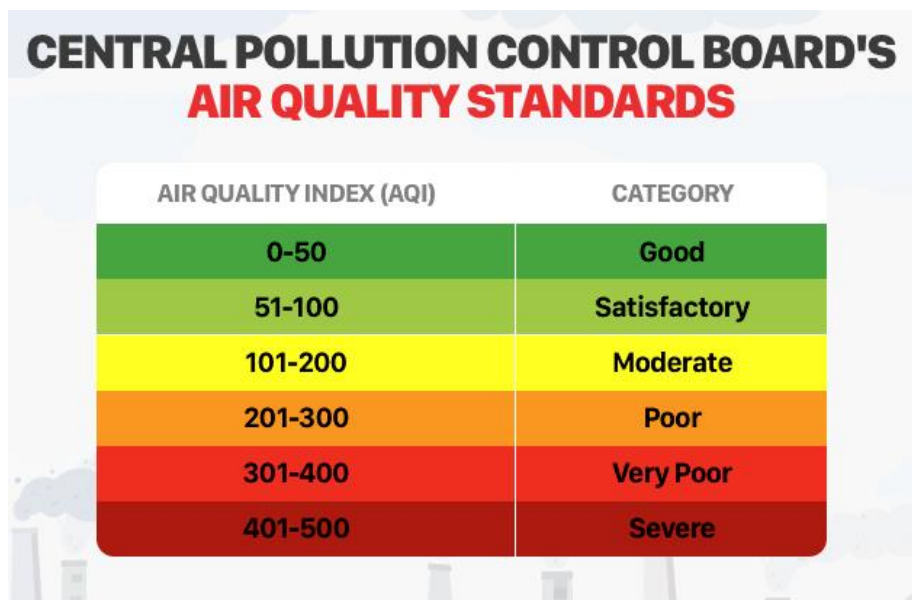


No respite for the Delhi NCT citizens till 3rd January, 2021 as air quality to remain in 'Very Poor' category

New Delhi, 30 December 2020 (Vigyan Samachar)

An early air quality forecast issued by Indian Institute of Tropical Meteorology (IITM) for National Capital Territory (NCT) of Delhi states that the overall Air Quality Index (AQI) of NCT is now in the POOR category due to low level of surface winds.

According to IMD, the Northwesterly surface wind is likely to be very calm along the low boundary layer height which would not provide any respite to the people as the ventilation would remain at extremely low level from 31st December 2020 to 1st January 2021.



The image shows a chart titled "CENTRAL POLLUTION CONTROL BOARD'S AIR QUALITY STANDARDS". It is a table with two columns: "AIR QUALITY INDEX (AQI)" and "CATEGORY". The rows are color-coded: Green for Good (AQI 0-50), Light Green for Satisfactory (AQI 51-100), Yellow for Moderate (AQI 101-200), Orange for Poor (AQI 201-300), Red for Very Poor (AQI 301-400), and Dark Red for Severe (AQI 401-500).

AIR QUALITY INDEX (AQI)	CATEGORY
0-50	Good
51-100	Satisfactory
101-200	Moderate
201-300	Poor
301-400	Very Poor
401-500	Severe

According to System of Air Quality and Weather Forecasting And Research (SAFAR), the Air Quality Index of Delhi is going to be deteriorated to the '**High End**' of the **VERY POOR CATEGORY** by 31st December and may touch the **SEVERE CATEGORY** for a brief period on New Year's Eve due to *calm wind-low ventilated condition*. SAFAR, also forecasts that fresh Western Disturbance is very likely to improve surface wind speed by 3rd January resulting in better ventilation along with rainfall which would provide some respite to the citizens.

As per Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) standard, AQI between **401 and 500 is categorized as “SEVERE”**; **between 301 and 400 is in “VERY POOR” category** and **between 201 to 300 is categorized ”POOR”**.

As per AQ-EWS models, Pune and Ahmedabad are in the MODERATE category and Mumbai is in the POOR category. The lead pollutant for the city of Mumbai is PM2.5 whereas for Ahmedabad it is PM10 due to higher dust load. As PM10 particulate matters are filtered at the top of the respiratory system our nose, they don't pose health threat while PM2.5 is the most hazardous as these particulate matters which are 30 times smaller is diameter than the human hair crosses body's natural barriers to reach the lungs. 70-80 per cent of the health issues are caused by PM2.5. Ozone is the second most dangerous pollutant which aggravates lung diseases like asthma, emphysema, and chronic bronchitis.

VS/MoES/MFA/30.12.2020