

Enviro Monitor

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Air quality



- Centre releases draft action plan to tackle air pollution in capital
- Centre approves Rs 100 crore project to tackle stubble burning.
- Nitrogen oxides an emerging air pollution threat
- `Environment marshals' to curb pollution in Delhi
- Polluting brick kilns to shut down for good after June 2018

Waste management



- India produced 2 million tonnes of e-waste in 2016
- CSE launches forum of 20 cities to help segregate waste
- Thiruvananthapuram generates 1,864 tonnes of hazardous waste

Climate change



- Faced with climate change, Nagaland to revive traditional rice varieties
- Major study to focus on micro-climatic changes in three cities of Kerala
- Global and Asian heat waves in 2016 due purely to climate change
- World's space agencies propose setting up climate observatory



Centre releases draft action plan to tackle air pollution in capital. A pollution app to register violations, action against brick kilns operating without environment clearance, prevention of landfill fires, identification of traffic congestion points, watering of roads to curb dust pollution and real-time stubble burning data - these are the cornerstones of Air Action Plan to improve air quality in Delhi and NCR.

Centre approves Rs 100 crore project to tackle stubble burning. Seeking to handle issue of stubble burning in a comprehensive and coordinated manner, the environment ministry has approved launching of a regional project to tackle the menace that adversely affects air quality and soil health. The project will be implemented in a phased manner under the National Adaptation Fund for Climate Change. The first phase of the project, costing approximately Rs 100 crore, was approved for Punjab, Haryana, Uttar Pradesh and Rajasthan. Initially, awareness generation and capacity building activities will be undertaken to encourage farmers to adopt alternate practices which would also help diversify livelihood options and enhance farmers' income.

Increased mechanisation, declining number of livestock and absence of economically viable alternative to use crop residue are some of the reasons for residues burning.

Nitrogen oxides an emerging air pollution threat. The number of cities where the standards of nitrogen oxides (NOx) exceeded norms increased from 18% to 29% in 10 years, according to the Centre for Science and Environment. The main sources of NOx pollution are vehicles and thermal power plants. The CSE listed Amritsar, Aurangabad, Delhi, Faridabad, Jaipur, Kolkata, Meerut, Navi Mumbai, Pimpri-Chinchwad, Pune, Thane and Vijaywada as hotspots for NOx pollution.

'Environment marshals' to curb pollution in Delhi. The Delhi government has started deploying "environment marshals" to help curb various sources of air pollution, including the burning of waste. The marshals, who are Home Guard volunteers, would stop people from illegally burning garbage and other materials as well as dust pollution and improper management of garbage dumps.

Polluting brick kilns to shut down for good after June 2018. The Supreme Court-mandated Environment Pollution (Prevention and Control) Authority (EPCA) has said that polluting brick kilns will be given one last window to operate — from March to June 2018 — after which they will be shut down permanently. Brick kilns converted to zigzag system, certified by the pollution control boards and cleared by EPCA is allowed to operate during the winter season. The technology involved in zigzag kilns forces the air to spend more time inside the kiln. This ensures that there is a good transfer of heat, the emissions remain low, and that a high percentage of good quality bricks are produced. According to experts zigzag technology reduces pollution by 70-80%. Officials estimate that there are currently around 2,080 brick kilns in Delhi-NCR, including 700 in Ghaziabad, Gautam Budh Nagar and Hapur districts.

[Hindustan Times](#), 24 December 2018 | [The Economic Times](#), 27 December 2017 | [Hindustan Times](#), 27 December 2017 | [The Times of India](#), 28 December 2017 | [The Hindu](#), 28 December 2017



India produced 2 million tonnes of e-waste in 2016. The world produced 44.7 million tonnes of electronic waste (e-waste) in 2016, according to [Global E-Waste Monitor 2017](#), published by United Nations University in collaboration with International Telecommunication Union and International Solid Waste Association. This includes two million tonnes generated in India, which has one of the fastest growing electronics industries in the world. Besides, electronics import also adds to waste.

Improper disposal of e-waste leads to toxicity from exposure to lead, cadmium, chromium, brominated flame retardants and polychlorinated biphenyls through inhalation or because of buildup in the environment. India's e-waste production is likely to touch three million tonnes in 2018. Industries are the major contributors, generating 70% of the e-waste while about 15% comes from households, according to an ASSOCHAM-KPMG analysis.

CSE launches forum of 20 cities to help segregate waste. The Centre for Science and Environment (CSE) launched a forum of 20 cities that have adopted or are willing to adopt waste segregation and management practices. Including the South Delhi, East Delhi and the New Delhi municipal councils, municipal bodies of 20 cities (across 13 states) like Bangalore, Patna, Gurugram, Gangtok, Greater Hyderabad, Bhopal, and Balaghat also participated in the forum discussion.

Thiruvananthapuram generates 1,864 tonnes of hazardous waste. Thiruvananthapuram, in Kerala, generates 1,864.98 tonnes of hazardous waste a year. The inventory of hazardous waste (HW) prepared by State Pollution Control Board shows that 1,032.34 tonnes of hazardous waste are disposed through landfill method while 832.64 tonnes are given to recycling in Thiruvananthapuram in a year. As per the guidelines, the hazardous waste can be disposed at captive treatment facility installed by the individual waste generators or at Common Hazardous Waste Treatment, Storage and Disposal Facilities. The state capital is yet to have one such facility.

[The Hindu](#), 13 December 2017 | [The Tribune](#), 13 December 2017 | [The Times of India](#), 4 January 2018



Faced with climate change, Nagaland to revive traditional rice varieties.

Rising temperature, erratic rainfall and occurrence of moderate drought are beginning to impact food production in Nagaland. In order to meet the challenge of climate change, the state is now turning to its forgotten resource – traditional food crops which can withstand higher

temperatures and water-stressed conditions. The hilly state has initiated steps to revive traditional rice as well as millet varieties which over the years gave way to high yielding crop varieties for various reasons. Though farmers are not growing traditional varieties for sustenance, they are still the custodian of knowledge about them.

The biodiversity of rice in the state is vast – 867 traditional 'land races' of rice have been identified by the State Agriculture Research Station at Mokokchung. These rice varieties are broadly categorized as glutinous, brown and aromatic, and most of them are grown under the jhum/shifting cultivation system practiced by different Naga tribes.

Major study to focus on micro-climatic changes in three cities of Kerala. With scientists working on climate change predicting the possibility of Kerala being faced with 'above normal heat wave

conditions' triggered by urban heat island, a major study on the micro-climatic changes in the state is on the anvil. The study to be undertaken by the Institute for Climate Change Studies, Kottayam, will cover three major cities -- Thiruvananthapuram, Kochi and Kozhikode. During this two-year study, the change in micro-climate will be measured through a time series analysis of effects on permanent vegetation, ambient temperature and rainfall amounts of these cities in the past 25 years.

Global and Asian heat waves in 2016 due purely to climate change. 2016's global heat record, extreme heat in Asia and unusually warm waters off the coast of Alaska happened purely because the planet is getting warmer due to human activities like burning fossil fuels. The findings mark the first time that global scientists have identified severe weather that could not have happened without climate change, said the peer-reviewed report, [Explaining Extreme Events in 2016 from a Climate Perspective](#).

World's space agencies propose setting up climate observatory. The heads of several of the world's space agencies have proposed the creation of a climate observatory to pool acquired data and share it with scientists around the globe, according to a declaration adopted in Paris. According to the statement by France's National Centre for Space Studies, satellites are vital tools for studying and gaining new insights into climate change in order to mitigate its effects and help societies devise coping strategies. It added that more than half of the 50 essential climate variables could be measured only from space. The Paris Declaration that was adopted proposes to set up a Space Climate Observatory that will act as a hub between space agencies and the international scientific community. The countries that adopted the declaration initiated by France were China, Japan, India, Europe, Britain, Germany, Italy, Switzerland, Austria, Sweden, Norway, Romania, Israel, Ukraine and the United Arab Emirates.

[The Times of India](#), 12 December 2017 | [The India Saga](#), 14 December 2017 | [The Japan Times](#), 14 December 2017 | [The New Indian Express](#), 31 December 2017