

Enviro Monitor

September-October 2020

Air quality



- Delhi-NCR: Government brings Ordinance to fix air quality
- Biomass plants to buy 8.58 lakh tonne of stubble in Haryana
- Air pollution biggest health risk in India, contributed to death of 16.7 lakh people in 2019
- 17% COVID-19 deaths linked to pollution
- Ramagundam, Vizag among worst SO₂ emitters in world

Climate change



- Dr Reddy's joins hands with SBTi, aims to cut greenhouse gas emissions by 55 per cent by 2030
- South India to witness extreme rainfall by end of this century: IIT study

Waste management



- India generated over 18,000 tonnes COVID-19 waste since June
- Hindalco turns environment-harming product into a money-minting resource
- Nod for integrated waste management project in Haryana
- Japanese method to give a green makeover to Delhi's mountain of shame

Water quality



- Haryana launches mobile testing lab to ensure potable water
- Scientists find new potential groundwater 'arsenic hotspots' in India



Delhi-NCR: Government brings Ordinance to fix air quality. The Centre has come up with a law, through an Ordinance, for tackling air pollution in the Delhi-National Capital Region (NCR) and setting up a commission for it. The commission will have the authority to shut down or regulate water and electricity supply to industries or sites which cause air pollution. It will also have the powers to seize and search under the Code of Criminal Procedure, 1973 and also issue a warrant.

Biomass plants to buy 8.58 lakh tonne of stubble in Haryana. In a bid to prevent stubble burning in Haryana, 1.75 lakh tonne of paddy stubble has been purchased by the biomass plants and 8.58 lakh tonne of the stubble is planned to be purchased during the entire season. The state government has reportedly made provision to allocate an amount of Rs 152 crore to provide machinery for stubble management at subsidized rates of up to 80 per cent through the Custom Hiring Centres. Besides this, 50 per cent subsidy for such machines will also be provided to every individual farmer.

Air pollution biggest health risk in India, contributed to death of 16.7 lakh people in 2019. An analysis reported in the [State of Global Air 2020](#) estimates that nearly 21 per cent of neonatal deaths from all causes are attributable to ambient and household air pollution. According to the report, outdoor and household particulate matter pollution contributed to the death of more than 1,16,000 Indian infants in their first month of life in 2019. More than half of these deaths were associated with outdoor PM2.5 and others were linked to the use of solid fuels such as charcoal, wood, and animal dung for cooking.

17% COVID-19 deaths linked to pollution. Around 17% of deaths due to coronavirus disease in India could be linked to long-term exposure to air pollution, higher than the 15% seen on average across the world, according to a [study](#) published in the journal Cardiovascular Research recently. The analysis was based on study of air quality data and distribution of fatalities across the world till the third week of June, which the researchers used to calculate a COVID-19 mortality rate attributable to pollution. The highest proportion of these was in Czech Republic (29%), Poland (28%), and China (27%).

A new, though preliminary, finding of the study is that a significant fraction of worldwide COVID-19 mortality is attributable to anthropogenic air pollution, of which ~50-60% is related to fossil fuel use (~70- 80% in Europe, West Asia, and North America).

Ramagundam, Vizag among worst SO2 emitters in world. Two thermal power stations in Telangana and Andhra Pradesh figures among the worst emitters of sulfur dioxide (SO2) globally in 2019, Greenpeace India and the Centre for Research on Energy and Clean Air said in their [report](#), even as India continued to occupy the top emitter's position for the fifth consecutive year. While Ramagundam in Telangana was ranked 31 among the top 50 global hotspots for coal-based SO2 emissions, Visakhapatnam in Andhra Pradesh was the 11th worst emitter.

[The Times of India](#), October 9, 2020 | [Business Standard](#), October 20, 2020 | [Deccan Herald](#), October 21, 2020 | [The Statesman](#), October 22, 2020 | [Hindustan Times](#), October 28, 2020



Dr Reddy's joins hands with SBTi, aims to cut greenhouse gas emissions by 55 per cent by 2030. Dr Reddy's Laboratories has committed to reduce its greenhouse gas emissions by 55 per cent by 2030. The Hyderabad-based drug major has joined hands with the Science Based Targets initiative (SBTi), thus becoming the first Indian and the third Asian pharmaceutical company to have set its science-based targets to further minimise environmental impact, Dr Reddy's Laboratories said in a statement. The company has committed to

reducing its Scope 1 and 2 greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions by 55 per cent by 2030 from 2017-18 base year, which are in line with the latest climate science of limiting global warming to below 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels.

South India to witness extreme rainfall by end of this century: IIT study. The pattern of monsoon in India could undergo a major shift by the end of this century with southern India likely to register the maximum increase in extreme rainfall compared to states in central and north India, researchers from the Indian Institute of Kharagpur in West Bengal have said. The scientists have also projected that extreme rainfall may increase in the Arabian Sea and south-Asian countries, including Myanmar, Thailand and Malaysia. As the Indian monsoon plays a crucial role in agriculture, which engages nearly half of the country's population a possible shift in the rains, as projected by the IIT study, could have a significant impact on agriculture.

[Hindustan Times](#), September 3, 2020 | [The Economic Times](#), October 5, 2020



Hindalco turns environment-harming product into a money-minting resource. The safe storage of red mud, a highly toxic by-product in the process of producing alumina, has been a perennial problem of aluminium manufacturers. Hindalco Industries' breakthrough in regenerating red mud for the construction industry addresses a serious environmental concern. The company has developed a "high grade material for the construction industry" from red mud.

Nod for integrated waste management project in Haryana. In a bid to further strengthen waste management system in Haryana, the state government has approved the Integrated Solid Waste Management Cluster Project. Under the first phase of the project, solid waste management plants will be set up in four clusters.

Japanese method to give a green makeover to Delhi's mountain of shame. To create a dense mini forest near the Ghazipur landfill, East Delhi Municipal Corporation has employed the Japanese method of Miyawaki urban forestry. The man-made patch is not only expected to improve the ambient air quality in the area, but also serve as a test for using the same approach to turn the infamous garbage mountain into a biodiversity park. More than 1,000 saplings of 40 native Indian species have been planted using the Miyawaki method over a 450 square metres.

[The Times of India](#), September 22, 2020 | [The Tribune](#), October 21, 2020 | [Business Standard](#), October 23, 2020



Scientists find new potential groundwater 'arsenic hotspots' in India.

Scientists, including those from the National Institute of Hydrology, have found an increased probability of high arsenic levels in well waters in parts of India where previously arsenic hazard was generally not considered to be a major concern. Researchers have constructed a prediction model focused solely on India. The new hazard model, published in the [International Journal for Environmental Research and Public Health](#), can be used to inform prioritisation of groundwater quality testing and environmental public health tracking programs. Their model confirms the known high probability of finding hazardous high arsenic well waters in northern India in the river basins of the Ganges and Brahmaputra.

India generated over 18,000 tonnes COVID-19 waste since June. India generated 18,006 tonnes of

COVID-19 biomedical waste in the last four months, with Maharashtra contributing the maximum to it, according to a Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) data. Around 5500 tonnes of COVID-19 waste was generated across the country in September - the maximum for a month so far. COVID-19 biomedical waste could include PPE kits, masks, shoe covers, gloves, human tissues, items contaminated with blood, body fluids like dressings, plaster casts, cotton swabs, beddings contaminated with blood or body fluid, blood bags, needles, syringes etc.

Generation of COVID-19 waste in four months (since June)	
Maharashtra	3587 tonnes
Tamil Nadu	1737 tonnes
Gujarat	1638 tonnes
Kerala	1516 tonnes
Uttar Pradesh	1432 tonnes
Delhi	1400 tonnes
Karnataka	1380 tonnes
West Bengal	1000 tonnes

Haryana launches mobile testing lab to ensure potable water. The state has launched a state-of-the-art "Mobile Water Testing Laboratory Van" equipped with multi-parameter system having an ensemble of high-definition analysers, sensors and probes and instruments. The salience of the laboratory includes its deployment onsite for effective management and quick access to water test reports in the exigency of outbreak of water-borne disease. Besides, they can also be used for counter checking of quality of testing from all laboratories. The laboratory van is GPS enabled for location tracking and the analysed sample data can be transmitted to a centralised PHED server via GPRS or 3G connectivity with power backup

[The Economic Times](#), October 12, 2020 | [Deccan Herald](#), October 15, 2020 | [The Tribune](#), October 18, 2020