



Coverage Reoprt:

**Illness to Wellness
Impact of Air Pollution on Health & Preventive
measures**



Publication:	The Economic Times
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THE ECONOMIC TIMES

Air pollution is making India sicker all year: Doctors link toxic air to heart disease, strokes and brain disorders; Are policies enough to save lives?

18th December 2025

ET Online



In India, air pollution looms large as a year-round menace, compromising the well-being of millions. Health experts indicate a concerning upswing in strokes, cardiovascular ailments, and neurological disorders. This under-the-radar emergency places immense pressure on healthcare systems and shortens life expectancy. It is imperative that current regulations are enforced more robustly and that ongoing efforts are made.

Air pollution is no longer just about smoggy skies or breathing discomfort.

Health experts now warn that long-term exposure to polluted air is silently driving a sharp rise in strokes, heart disease, lung disorders, neurological conditions like Alzheimer's, and even mental health problems, placing increasing pressure on India's healthcare system.

These concerns were raised at the Illness to Wellness (ITW) Conference, where doctors and policymakers shared data showing how toxic air has become a year-round public health emergency, not limited to winter months alone.

Why is air pollution no longer a seasonal problem?

Medical experts pointed out that during summer months, air quality levels often remain in the 200-250 AQI range, a level classified as 'poor' under Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) standards. This means millions are exposed to unhealthy air even when pollution is not visibly severe.

the crisis. As per CPCB classification, an AQI below 50 is considered 'good', while readings above 200 signal growing health risks. Many Indian cities now regularly fall into the 'poor' or 'very poor' categories, highlighting the scale of

Doctors at the conference stressed that air pollution acts as a silent accelerator of disease, impacting multiple organs at once. Former Health Secretary and ITW Foundation chairperson Rajesh Bhushan explained that while people may live longer in polluted cities, they often do so with chronic illnesses that reduce productivity, quality of life, and economic contribution.

Specialists also highlighted worrying links between polluted air and brain health. Neurological disorders, cognitive decline, and mental health conditions are rising, with pollution emerging as a key but often ignored trigger.

The growing link between pollution and strokes

According to medical experts, nearly 17 per cent of strokes worldwide are now linked to polluted air. Hospitals report clear seasonal spikes in stroke cases, especially during periods of sustained poor air quality.

Air pollution has also been described as a man-made public health emergency that has already cut down average life expectancy in India by several years, a warning that underscores the urgency of action.

Are current policies enough?

While acknowledging steps such as the National Clean Air Programme and stricter Bharat Stage emission norms, speakers at the conference said implementation remains uneven. Experts stressed that policies must be followed through with coordination across departments and long-term commitment.

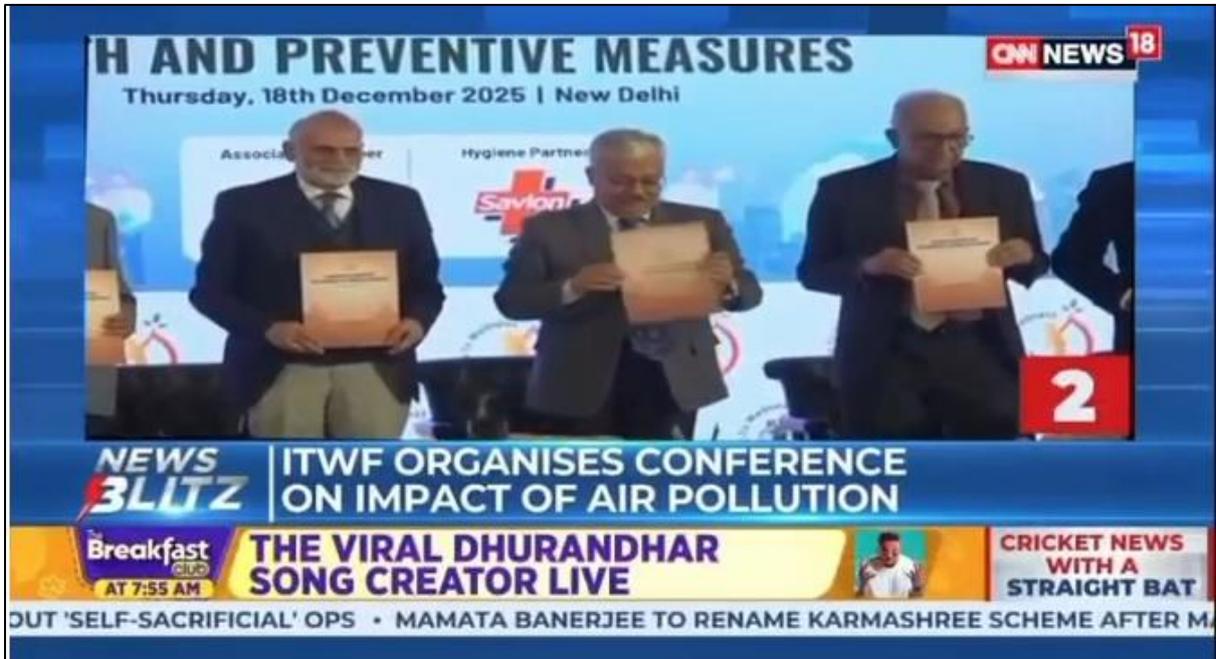
There was also strong agreement that no technological shortcut alone can solve the problem. As one expert put it, solutions are already known, the real gap lies in urgency, accountability, and sustained action.

What needs to change next?

A new report on tackling Delhi-NCR air pollution, released at the conference, called for data-driven policies inspired by global examples such as London and Beijing. The focus, experts said, must shift towards prevention, early health intervention, and protecting vulnerable groups like children, outdoor workers, and low-income communities.

Participants agreed on one point: air pollution may be invisible, but its damage is not. Without stronger action, it will continue to quietly strain hospitals, shorten lives, and slow the country's growth.

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Publication:	News 24
Date:	18 th December 2025



Publication:	Times Of India
Date:	19 th December 2025

THE TIMES OF INDIA

Pollution is driving people out of Delhi, shutting schools and draining the economy: Report

19th December 2025

Anuja Jaiswal



NEW DELHI: Delhi's air pollution is no longer something people are willing to live with. A survey of 17,000 residents has found that four in 10 would prefer to move out of the city to escape polluted air and its health effects, a new report released on Thursday shows, highlighting how toxic air is disrupting daily life, education, business and the Capital's future.

The findings are detailed in 'Countering Delhi NCR Air Pollution & Aligning Solutions: Clean Air as a Right to Life (Article 21)', released by the Illness to Wellness Foundation with support from the CII-ITC Centre of Excellence for Sustainable Development. Drawing on a CII study on air pollution and its impact on businesses (2021), the report says Delhi's pollution is structural and year-round, not limited to winter smog.

Beyond driving people away, poor air quality is reshaping everyday life. The report notes a drop in footfall across retail, tourism and hospitality, while severe smog suppresses travel and discretionary spending. Schools are forced to shut for 10–15 days annually, disrupting learning and adding pressure on families.

Delhi continues to top global pollution rankings. The report says the Capital remained the world's most polluted capital in 2023, with Air Quality Index (AQI) levels routinely above 200 through the year and rising to 300–400 in winter. Long-term exposure to fine particulate matter has cut life expectancy in Delhi by an estimated 8.2 years, while increasing risks of heart disease, chronic lung illness and stroke.

Doctors warn that the neurological toll is rising. Dr Daljit Singh, vice chairman and head of neurosurgery and neuro-intervention at Max Smart Super Speciality Hospital, said air pollution has

become a major risk factor for stroke, with nearly 17% of cases globally linked to polluted air. He said hospitals are seeing clear spikes in stroke admissions during high-pollution months, and warned of growing links to dementia, Alzheimer's and Parkinson's disease.

Launching the report, Rajesh Bhushan, former Union health secretary and chairperson of the Illness to Wellness Foundation, said air pollution must be treated as a core public health issue, noting that prolonged exposure not only shortens life but adds years of chronic illness, reducing productivity and quality of life. He stressed the need for coordinated action across healthcare, urban planning and public awareness, with a stronger focus on prevention.

The report underlines that Delhi's pollution is urban and structural. Source apportionment shows vehicles account for 32% of particulate emissions, followed by construction and road dust (28%), industry (17%), crop residue burning (9%), thermal power plants (8%) and household sources (6%) — emissions that accumulate year-round and overwhelm short-term emergency measures like GRAP.

Pulmonologists say much of the damage remains invisible. Dr G C Khilnani, chairman of pulmonary, critical care and sleep medicine at PSRI Hospital, described air pollution as a man-made public health emergency, warning that ultra-fine particles silently damage multiple organs. Real change, he said, will come only when society recognises its role in the crisis.

The economic toll is heavy. Air pollution costs India USD 36.8 billion annually, rising to USD 95 billion — about 3% of GDP — when productivity losses and premature deaths are included. For Delhi alone, a CREA analysis cited in the report estimates losses of Rs 64,250 crore in a single year, or 5.8% of the city's GDP. Hospitals also face pressure during smog episodes, with respiratory and cardiac OPD visits rising by about 25%.

Drawing lessons from London, Beijing, Paris, Singapore and Dubai, the report says lasting clean-air gains are possible through continuous enforcement, clean mobility and long-term urban planning.

The message is clear: short-term emergency steps are not enough. Delhi's recovery depends on year-round structural reform and public participation. Clean air, the report stresses, is a basic right — and action cannot wait.

Publication:	Money Control
Date:	19 th December 2025



How Delhi's toxic air is hurting schools, businesses and fuelling desire to leave capital

19th December 2025

Moneycontrol City Desk



A survey of 17,000 residents, included in the report, found that 40% would prefer to move out of Delhi to escape the polluted air and its damaging health effects.

A profound public health and economic crisis, driven by relentlessly toxic air, is now reshaping life in the national capital, with a significant portion of its residents considering leaving entirely, a major new report has concluded.

The study, 'Countering Delhi NCR Air Pollution & Aligning Solutions: Clean Air as a Right to Life (Article 21)', released by the Illness to Wellness Foundation (ITWF) with support from the CII-ITC Centre of Excellence for Sustainable Development, paints a stark picture of a structural, year-round problem. It moves far beyond the familiar winter smog, detailing how pollution is corroding health, destabilising education and business, and prompting a citizen exodus.

A survey of 17,000 residents, included in the report, found that 40% would prefer to move out of Delhi to escape the polluted air and its damaging health effects. This desire to leave underscores how the crisis is disrupting the city's fundamental liveability.

The health impacts are severe and widening. Prolonged exposure is estimated to reduce life expectancy in Delhi by 8.2 years, while increasing risks of stroke, heart disease and chronic lung illness. Medical experts at the report's launch emphasised that the neurological toll is particularly alarming.

Dr Daljit Singh, vice chairman and head of neurosurgery at Max Smart Super Speciality Hospital, stated that air pollution has become a major risk factor for stroke, with nearly 17% of global cases linked to polluted air. He confirmed hospitals see clear spikes in stroke admissions during high-pollution months and warned of growing associations with dementia, Alzheimer's and Parkinson's disease.

"The damage remains invisible," said Dr G C Khilnani, chairman of pulmonary medicine at PSRI Hospital, who described the situation as a "man-made public health emergency." He warned that ultra-fine particles silently damage multiple organs, and real change will only come when society recognises its role in the crisis.

The economic consequences are staggering. Nationally, air pollution costs India USD 36.8 billion annually, a figure that balloons to USD 95 billion — roughly 3% of GDP — when productivity losses and premature deaths are accounted for. For Delhi alone, an analysis by CREA cited in the report estimates annual losses of Rs 64,250 crore, wiping out 5.8% of the city's GDP.

This economic strain manifests daily. The Illness to Wellness Foundation report notes suppressed travel and discretionary spending during severe smog, reduced footfall in retail, tourism and hospitality, and forced school closures of 10-15 days annually, which disrupts learning and burdens families. Healthcare systems buckle under pressure, with respiratory and cardiac outpatient visits rising by approximately 25% during peak pollution episodes.

Former Union health secretary Rajesh Bhushan, now chairperson of the ITWF, stressed that air pollution must be treated as a core public health issue. He noted that prolonged exposure not only shortens lives but adds years of chronic illness, reducing productivity and quality of life and called for coordinated action across healthcare, urban planning and public awareness.

The report identifies the perennial sources of Delhi's pollution: vehicles (32%), construction and road dust (28%), industry (17%), crop residue burning (9%), thermal power plants (8%), and household sources (6%). This persistent emission mix overwhelms short-term emergency measures like the Graded Response Action Plan (GRAP).

Despite the grim assessment, the report points a way forward, drawing lessons from cities like London, Beijing, and Paris. It argues that lasting clean-air gains are achievable through continuous enforcement, a transition to clean mobility, and long-term urban planning reforms.

The conclusion is unequivocal: stop-gap solutions have failed. Securing Delhi's future — and the right of its citizens to breathe clean air — demands unwavering, year-round structural reform and collective public action.

Publication:	BW WellBeing
Date:	19 th December 2025



Air Pollution Is A Public Health Crisis Threatening India’s Growth: Warn Experts

19th December 2025

BW Online Bureau



Leading doctors and policymakers deliberate on air pollution’s growing impact on physical, mental, and child health at the Illness to Wellness Conference

Air pollution is no longer just an environmental concern; it is steadily eroding India’s economic growth while triggering a sharp rise in serious health conditions such as stroke, cardiovascular disease, respiratory illness, and neurological disorders. These concerns took centre stage at the Illness to Wellness Conference on “Impact of Air Pollution on Health and Preventive Measures”, organised by the Illness to Wellness Foundation (ITWF) in New Delhi.

Experts warned that prolonged exposure to polluted air is reducing productive life years, increasing disability, and placing a growing strain on healthcare systems—ultimately weakening India’s long-term development potential.

Delivering the keynote address, Rajesh Bhushan, Former Secretary, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Government of India and Chairperson, Governing Council, Illness to Wellness Foundation, stressed that air pollution must be addressed as a core public health issue.

“The issue of air pollution must be understood from two perspectives—the technical causes that create polluted air, and the public health consequences of breathing it every day. Prolonged exposure does not just shorten life expectancy; it increases the number of years lived with disability. In highly polluted cities, people may survive longer but with chronic illnesses that reduce productivity, quality of life, and economic contribution. Addressing air pollution, therefore, requires coordinated action across healthcare systems, urban planning, and public awareness, with a much stronger focus on preventive and primary healthcare,” he said.

Highlighting the neurological impact, Dr Daljit Singh, Vice Chairman, HOD – Neurosurgery and Unit Head – Neuro Intervention, Max Smart Super Speciality Hospital, Saket, drew attention to the growing link between air pollution and stroke.

“Stroke is increasingly being linked to air pollution, with nearly 17 per cent of strokes globally attributable to polluted air. Pollution affects brain blood circulation and significantly increases the risk of both ischemic and hemorrhagic strokes. We are now observing clear seasonal spikes in stroke admissions during high-pollution months, indicating that pollution is emerging as an independent risk factor. Beyond stroke, air pollution is also associated with neurological conditions such as Alzheimer’s disease, dementia, and Parkinson’s disease, making this a growing neurological challenge that society, scientists, and policymakers must urgently address,” said Dr. Daljit Singh.

Addressing the gathering, Mr. Anil Rajput, Chairperson, Advisory Council, Illness to Wellness Foundation, highlighted the enormous economic cost of air pollution and its direct implications for national growth.

“India has taken important and structured steps to address air pollution through initiatives such as the National Clean Air Programme (NCAP), launched in 2019. By covering 131 cities across 24 states, NCAP reflects a strategic, long-term approach to improving air quality. This is being complemented by measures such as the rollout of Bharat Stage emission norms, promotion of electric mobility, expansion of public transport, efforts to curb crop-residue burning, improved waste management, and increased urban green cover. These initiatives signal strong intent and direction. At the same time, the scale of the challenge calls for sustained implementation, coordination, and continued commitment across stakeholders,” said Anil Rajput, Chairperson, Advisory Council, Illness to Wellness Foundation.

Describing air pollution as a man-made public health emergency, Dr G. C. Khilnani, Member, Advisory Council, Illness to Wellness Foundation and Chairman, Institute of Pulmonary, Critical Care and Sleep Medicine, PSRI Hospital, highlighted its widespread impact on respiratory and cardiovascular health.

“Air pollution is a man-made public health emergency that has already reduced the average life expectancy of Indians by several years. Its most dangerous effects are often invisible—ultra-fine particles penetrate deep into the lungs, enter the bloodstream, and damage multiple organs without early warning signs. While governments are taking steps, real change will come only when society recognises its own role in this crisis,” he said.

Reinforcing the broader implications, Dr Harsh Mahajan, Mentor – FICCI Health Sector and Founder & Chairman, Mahajan Imaging Labs, noted that air pollution has become a silent risk factor aggravating nearly every disease category.

“Air pollution is not seasonal, and it is not merely an environmental concern—it is a public health emergency that silently worsens almost every disease. It disproportionately affects the poor, children, and outdoor workers, even though they contribute the least to the problem. The dangerous myth is that technology alone will solve this crisis. We already know what works; what we lack is urgency and accountability,” said Dr Mahajan.

Evidence-Based Insights: Report Release

Following the expert deliberations, the Illness to Wellness Foundation released a comprehensive report titled ‘Countering Delhi NCR Air Pollution & Aligning Solutions: Clean Air as a Right to Life (Article 21)’, supported by the CII–ITC Centre of Excellence for Sustainable Development.

The report presents a data-driven assessment of Delhi NCR’s air pollution crisis, highlighting that poor air quality is a structural, year-round challenge rather than a seasonal phenomenon. It links deteriorating air quality to rising disease burden, loss of productive life years, and sustained economic losses, while also documenting the strain placed on healthcare systems during peak pollution periods.

Drawing on global best practices from cities such as London, Beijing, and Paris, the report outlines actionable solutions across clean transportation, construction and dust management, industrial compliance, renewable energy adoption, and institutionalised health emergency responses—demonstrating that sustained improvement in urban air quality is achievable with coordinated, data-driven policy action.

Conference Sessions Highlight Multi-Dimensional Health Impact

The conference featured three focused thematic sessions examining the wide-ranging health impact of air pollution.

The first session, “Air Pollution’s Invisible Impact on Health,” examined how prolonged exposure to polluted air contributes to metabolic disorders, cardiovascular and respiratory illnesses, maternal and child health complications, as well as eye and skin conditions. The session was moderated by Dr Rajesh Kesari, Member, Advisory Council, Illness to Wellness Foundation and Member, National Executive Committee – Elect, RSSDI.

The panel included (Padma Shri) Dr Malvika Sabharwal, Chief Obstetrics & Gynaecology and Endoscopy Surgery, Jeewan Mala Hospital; Dr Manu Madan, Senior Consultant – Respiratory & Sleep Medicine, Medanta, Noida; Dr Amitabh Yaduvanshi, Head of Cardiology, Holy Family Hospital; and Dr Manju Keshari, Senior Consultant – Dermatology, Max Super Speciality Hospital, Patparganj. The discussion highlighted how air pollution acts as a silent accelerator of multiple non-communicable diseases, often manifesting across organ systems.

The second session, “Polluted Air, Troubled Minds: Mental Wellness Challenges and Neuro Risks,” focused on the growing evidence linking air pollution to mental health disorders, cognitive impairment, and neurodegenerative risks. Moderated by Dr Karan Thakur, Group Vice President – Corporate Affairs & Sustainability, Apollo Hospitals Enterprise Limited, the session examined how

pollution affects anxiety, depression, learning ability, attention, and memory, particularly among children, the elderly, and other vulnerable populations.

Panellists included Dr. Aakash Shrivastava, Additional Director and Head, Centre for Climate Change and Health, National Centre for Disease Control, Ministry of Health & Family Welfare, Government of India; Dr. Shamsheer Dwivedee, Director, Department of Neurosciences, Max Dehradun; Dr. Rahul Gupta, Senior Director & HOD – Neurosurgery, Fortis Hospital, Noida; Dr. Sumit Singh, Chief Neurology, Artemis Hospitals, Gurugram; and Dr. AtamPreet Singh, Senior Director & HOD – Neuroscience, Sharda Health City. The panel discussed biological mechanisms such as inflammation and reduced cerebral blood flow, along with preventive and mitigation strategies.

The third session, “Air Pollution’s Impact on Child Health and Education,” examined how polluted environments affect children’s respiratory health, immunity, cognitive development, school attendance, and academic performance—raising concerns about long-term human capital loss. The session was moderated by Dr Sudhir Kumar Kalhan, Member, Advisory Council, Illness to Wellness Foundation and Chairperson, Minimal Access & Bariatric Surgery Centre, Sir Ganga Ram Hospital.

The panellists included Alka Singh, Principal, Air Force Golden Jubilee Institute, New Delhi; Dr Sai Kiran Chaudhuri, Senior Consultant and Former HOD – Pulmonology, Critical Care and Sleep Medicine, Delhi Heart and Lung Institute; Dr D. K. Gupta, Chairman and Managing Director, Felix Hospital, Noida; and Sanjay Yadav, Principal, Ahlcon International School. The discussion underscored the need for safer school environments, greater awareness among educators and parents, and long-term policy interventions to protect children from pollution-related harm.

The conference concluded with a collective call to action, urging policymakers, healthcare professionals, industry, educators, and citizens to recognise air pollution as a public health and development priority. Speakers emphasised that protecting clean air requires long-term commitment, strong enforcement, informed public participation, and cross-sector collaboration to ensure healthier lives and a more resilient economy.

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Date:	19 th December 2025



Air pollution in Delhi shortening life expectancy, reducing productivity and quality of life: Health experts

19th December 2025

IANAS



The experts noted that prolonged exposure to air pollution is eroding India's economic growth while triggering a sharp rise in serious health conditions such as stroke, cardiovascular disease, respiratory illness, and neurological disorders.

Air pollution is no longer just an environmental concern; it is steadily shortening life expectancy, reducing productivity and quality of life, said health experts here on Thursday, even as the national capital has been witnessing deteriorating air quality for over a month.

Visuals from different parts of Delhi and the NCR showed sharply reduced visibility as dense smog engulfed roads, residential areas, and public spaces, affecting daily movement and raising health concerns among residents. Delhi recorded an Air Quality Index (AQI) of 356, as per data from the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB).

The experts noted that prolonged exposure to air pollution is eroding India's economic growth while triggering a sharp rise in serious health conditions such as stroke, cardiovascular disease, respiratory illness, and neurological disorders.

This is placing a growing strain on healthcare systems -- ultimately weakening India's long-term development potential.

“Prolonged exposure does not just shorten life expectancy; it increases the number of years lived with disability. In highly polluted cities, people may survive longer but with chronic illness that reduces productivity, quality of life, and economic contribution,” said Rajesh Bhushan, Former Secretary, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare.

“Addressing air pollution, therefore, requires coordinated action across healthcare systems, urban planning, and public awareness, with a much stronger focus on preventive and primary healthcare,” he added at an event organised by the Illness to Wellness Foundation.

Delhi-based pulmonologist Dr. G. C. Khilnani described air pollution as a "man-made public health emergency" that is likely to have a widespread impact on respiratory and cardiovascular health.

“The most dangerous effects of air pollution are often invisible -- ultra-fine particles penetrate deep into the lungs, enter the bloodstream, and damage multiple organs without early warning signs,” he said.

Neurologist Dr. Daljit Singh noted that pollution affects brain blood circulation and significantly increases the risk of both ischemic and haemorrhagic strokes.

“We are now observing clear seasonal spikes in stroke admissions during high-pollution months, indicating that pollution is emerging as an independent risk factor. Beyond stroke, air pollution is also associated with neurological conditions such as Alzheimer’s disease, dementia, and Parkinson’s disease, making this a growing neurological challenge that must be urgently addressed,” Singh added.

Dr. Harsh Mahajan, Mentor – FICCI Health Sector, stated that air pollution has become a silent risk factor aggravating nearly every disease category.

“It disproportionately affects the poor, children, and outdoor workers, even though they contribute the least to the problem. The dangerous myth is that technology alone will solve this crisis. What we lack is urgency and accountability,” said Mahajan.

The experts emphasised the need for long-term commitment, strong enforcement, and informed public participation to ensure healthier lives and a more resilient economy.

Publication:	Millennium Post
Date:	18 th December 2025



Air pollution poses growing threat to India's health, economy: Experts

18th December 2025

MPost

New Delhi: Air pollution is emerging as a major threat to India's health and economic growth, experts warned at the Illness to Wellness Conference organised by the Illness to Wellness Foundation (ITWF) on Wednesday. Prolonged exposure to polluted air is increasing the burden of stroke, cardiovascular, respiratory and neurological diseases, while reducing productive life years and straining healthcare systems.

Speakers stressed that air pollution must be treated as a core public health issue rather than only an environmental challenge.

Highlighting its economic implications, Anil Rajput, Chairperson, Advisory Council, ITWF, said: "India has taken important and structured steps through initiatives like the National Clean Air Programme, Bharat Stage emission norms, electric mobility and public transport expansion. These signal strong intent, but the scale of the challenge demands sustained implementation and coordination across stakeholders." The conference called for stronger preventive healthcare, policy enforcement and public awareness to safeguard health and long-term development.

Publication:	Telangana Today
Date:	18 th December 2025

Telangana Today

FOR LOCAL TO GLOBAL NEWS

Air pollution cutting life expectancy, productivity and quality of life in Delhi: Experts

18th December 2025

IANAS



TELANGANA T O D A Y

NEWS

Prolonged exposure to severe air pollution in Delhi is shortening life expectancy, increasing chronic illness and reducing productivity, experts warned. With AQI in the ‘very poor’ category, the crisis is straining healthcare systems and threatening long-term economic growth

New Delhi: Air pollution is no longer just an environmental concern; it is steadily shortening life expectancy, reducing productivity and quality of life, said [health](#) experts here on Thursday, even as the national capital has been witnessing deteriorating air quality for over a month.

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The experts noted that prolonged exposure to air pollution is eroding [India’s](#) economic growth while triggering a sharp rise in serious health conditions such as stroke, cardiovascular disease, respiratory illness, and neurological disorders.

This is placing a growing strain on healthcare systems — ultimately weakening India’s long-term development potential. “Prolonged exposure does not just shorten life expectancy; it increases the number of years lived with disability. In highly polluted cities, people may survive longer but with

chronic illness that reduces productivity, quality of life, and economic contribution,” said Rajesh Bhushan, Former Secretary, Ministry of [Health](#) and Family Welfare.

“Addressing air pollution, therefore, requires coordinated action across healthcare systems, urban planning, and public awareness, with a much stronger focus on preventive and primary healthcare,” he added at an event organised by the Illness to Wellness Foundation.

Delhi-based pulmonologist Dr G C Khilnani described air pollution as a “man-made public health emergency” that is likely to have a widespread impact on respiratory and cardiovascular health.

“The most dangerous effects of air pollution are often invisible — ultra-fine particles penetrate deep into the lungs, enter the bloodstream, and damage multiple organs without early warning signs,” he said.

Neurologist Dr Daljit Singh noted that pollution affects brain blood circulation and significantly increases the risk of both ischemic and haemorrhagic strokes.

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Dr Harsh Mahajan, Mentor – FICCI Health Sector, stated that air pollution has become a silent risk factor aggravating nearly every disease category. “It disproportionately affects the poor, children, and outdoor workers, even though they contribute the least to the problem. The dangerous myth is that technology alone will solve this crisis. What we lack is urgency and accountability,” said Mahajan.

Health

The experts emphasised the need for long-term commitment, strong enforcement, and informed public participation to ensure healthier lives and a more resilient economy.

Publication:	The Assam Tribune
Date:	18 th December 2025

The Assam Tribune

87 years of service to the nation

Delhi air pollution reduces life expectancy, productivity and quality of life

18th December 2025

The Assam Tribune



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Publication:	The Statesman
Date:	18 th December 2025

The Statesman

**Air pollution no longer seasonal; threatens public health and India's growth:
Experts**

18th December 2025

Statesman News Service



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Air pollution is no longer just an environmental concern; it is steadily eroding India's economic growth while triggering a sharp rise in serious health conditions such as stroke, cardiovascular disease, respiratory illness, and neurological disorders, experts opined.

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Experts warned that prolonged exposure to polluted air is reducing productive life years, increasing disability, and placing a growing strain on healthcare systems—ultimately weakening India's long-term development potential.

Delivering the keynote address, Rajesh Bhushan, Former Secretary, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Government of India and Chairperson, Governing Council, the Illness to Wellness Foundation, stressed that air pollution must be addressed as a core public health issue.

“The issue of air pollution must be understood from two perspectives—the technical causes that create polluted air and the public health consequences of breathing it every day. Prolonged exposure does not just shorten life expectancy; it increases the number of years lived with disability. In highly polluted cities, people may survive longer but with chronic illnesses that reduce productivity, quality of life, and economic contribution. Addressing air pollution, therefore, requires coordinated action across healthcare systems, urban planning, and public awareness, with a much stronger focus on preventive and primary healthcare,” he said.

Highlighting the neurological impact, Dr Daljit Singh, Vice Chairman, HOD – Neurosurgery and Unit Head – Neuro Intervention, Max Smart Super Speciality Hospital, Saket, drew attention to the growing link between air pollution and stroke.

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“These initiatives signal strong intent and direction. At the same time, the scale of the challenge calls for sustained implementation, coordination, and continued commitment across stakeholders,” said Rajput.

Publication:	Danik Bhaskar
Date:	18 th December 2025


**दैनिक
भास्कर**

वायु प्रदूषण अब सीजनल समस्या नहीं, यह सार्वजनिक स्वास्थ्य से जुड़ी चुनौती

भास्कर समाचार सेवा

नई दिल्ली। वायु प्रदूषण अब सिर्फ पर्यावरण से जुड़ी चिंता नहीं है। यह भारत के आर्थिक विकास को नुकसान पहुंचा रहा है, साथ ही स्ट्रोक, कार्डियोवस्कुलर डिजीज, सांस से संबंधित बीमारियों और न्यूरोलॉजिकल डिसऑर्डर जैसी गंभीर स्वास्थ्य संबंधी परेशानियों का खतरा भी तेजी से बढ़ा है। इलनेस टु वेलनेस फाउंडेशन द्वारा स्वास्थ्य पर वायु प्रदूषण का दुष्प्रभाव एवं बचाव के कदम विषय पर आयोजित इलनेस टु वेलनेस कॉन्फ्रेंस में यह चिंता उभरकर सामने आई। भारत सरकार के स्वास्थ्य एवं परिवार कल्याण मंत्रालय के पूर्व सचिव और इलनेस टु वेलनेस फाउंडेशन की गवर्निंग काउंसिल के चेयरपर्सन



राजेश भूषण ने जोर देकर कहा कि वायु प्रदूषण को जन स्वास्थ्य से संबंधित समस्या मानकर हल निकालना चाहिए। मैक्स स्मार्ट सुपर स्पेशलिटी हॉस्पिटल, साकेत के वाइस चेयरमैन और न्यूरोसर्जरी के हेड ऑफ डिपार्टमेंट एवं न्यूरो इंटरवेंशन के यूनिट हेड डॉ. दलजीत सिंह ने वायु प्रदूषण एवं स्ट्रोक के बीच के संबंध की ओर ध्यान दिलाया। डॉ. दलजीत सिंह ने कहा स्ट्रोक का संबंध वायु प्रदूषण से जुड़ रहा है।

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Date:	18 th December 2025

पंजाब केसरी

वायु प्रदूषण बना पब्लिक हेल्थ संकट, आर्थिक प्रगति में बड़ी बाधा

नई दिल्ली, (पंजाब केसरी): वायु प्रदूषण अब सिर्फ पर्यावरण की चिंता नहीं है। यह भारत की आर्थिक प्रगति को लगातार कम कर रहा है, साथ ही स्ट्रोक, दिल की बीमारी, सांस की बीमारी और न्यूरोलॉजिकल बीमारियों जैसी गंभीर हेल्थ प्रॉब्लम में तेजी से बढ़ोतरी कर रहा है। ये चिंताएं राजधानी में आयोजित इलनेस टू वेल्नेस (आईटीडब्ल्यूएफ) द्वारा आयोजित एयर पॉल्यूशन का हेल्थ और बचाव के उपायों पर असर पर कॉन्फ्रेंस में चर्चा के केंद्र रहे। वायु प्रदूषण मौसमी नहीं है और यह सिर्फ पर्यावरण की चिंता नहीं है। यह एक पब्लिक हेल्थ इमरजेंसी है जो चुपचाप लगभग हर बीमारी को और खराब कर देती है। विशेषज्ञों ने चेतावनी दी कि प्रदूषित हवा में लंबे समय तक रहने से सक्रिय लाइफ ईयर कम हो रहे हैं, डिसेबिलिटी बढ़ रही है, और हेल्थकेयर सिस्टम पर दबाव बढ़ रहा है। गर्वर्निंग काउंसिल के चेयरपर्सन राजेश भूषण ने कहा कि एयर पॉल्यूशन को एक मुख्य पब्लिक हेल्थ मुद्दे के तौर पर देखा जाना चाहिए। इसलिए वायु प्रदूषण से निपटने के लिए हेल्थकेयर सिस्टम, शहरी प्लानिंग और पब्लिक अवेयरनेस में मिलकर काम करने की जरूरत है।

वायु प्रदूषण है इंसानों की खुद की बनाई पब्लिक हेल्थ इमरजेंसी

पल्मोनरी, क्रिटिकल केयर एंड स्लीप मेडिसिन के चेयरमैन, डॉ. जी. सी. खिलनानी ने कहा कि वायु प्रदूषण को इंसानों की बनाई पब्लिक हेल्थ इमरजेंसी बताते हुए रेस्पिरटरी और कार्डियोवैस्कुलर हेल्थ पर इसके बड़े असर बताते हुए उन्होंने कहा कि सबसे खतरनाक असर अक्सर दिखाई नहीं देते हैं। बहुत बारीक कण फेफड़ों में गहराई तक घुस जाते हैं, खून में मिल जाते हैं, और बिना किसी शुरुआती चेतावनी के कई अंगों को नुकसान पहुंचाते हैं। हालांकि सरकारें कदम उठा रही हैं, लेकिन असली बदलाव तभी आएगा जब समाज इस संकट में अपनी भूमिका को पहचानेगा।

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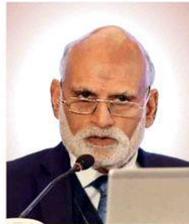
LIVING WITH POLLUTED AIR



MR RAJESH BHUSHAN
Former Secretary, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Government of India and Chairperson, Governing Council, Illness to Wellness Foundation



DR GC KHILNANI
Chairman, Institute of Pulmonary Critical Care and Sleep Medicine, PSRI Hospital



MR ANIL RAJPUT
Chairperson, Advisory Council, Illness to Wellness Foundation



DR DALJIT SINGH
Vice Chairman, HOD – Neurosurgery and Unit Head – Neuro Intervention, Max Smart Super Speciality Hospital, Saket



DR HARSH MAHAJAN
Mentor – FICCI Health Sector and Founder & Chairman, Mahajan Imaging Labs

“Addressing air pollution requires coordinated action across healthcare systems, urban planning and public awareness”

“Air pollution is a man-made health emergency shortening Indian lives; real change needs societal and responsibility”

“India’s clean air initiatives show strong intent, but sustained implementation and coordination remain essential”

“Air pollution is emerging as an independent stroke risk, also linked to dementia and other neurological disorders”

“Air pollution is a persistent public health emergency that demands urgency, accountability and decisive action”

From strokes and neurological disorders to lost productivity and economic strain, experts at the Illness to Wellness Conference warn that air pollution is a year-round national emergency

Air pollution is no longer just an environmental concern; it is steadily eroding India's economic growth while triggering a sharp rise in serious health conditions such as stroke, cardiovascular disease, respiratory illness, and neurological disorders. These concerns took centre stage at the Illness to Wellness Conference on "Impact of Air Pollution on Health and Preventive Measures", organised by the Illness to Wellness Foundation (ITWF) in New Delhi. Experts warned that prolonged exposure to polluted air is reducing productive life years, increasing disability, and placing a growing strain on healthcare systems—ultimately weakening India's long-term development potential.

Delivering the keynote address, Mr. Rajesh Bhushan, Former Secretary, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Government of India and Chairperson, Governing Council, Illness to Wellness Foundation, said, "The issue of air pollution must be understood from two perspectives—the technical causes that create polluted air, and the public health consequences of breathing it every day. Prolonged exposure does not just shorten life expectancy; it increases the number of years lived with disability. In highly polluted cities, people may survive longer but with chronic illnesses that reduce productivity, quality of life, and economic contribution. Addressing air pollution, therefore, requires coordinated action across healthcare systems, urban planning, and public awareness, with a much stronger focus on preventive and primary healthcare."

Highlighting the neurological impact, Dr. Daljit Singh, Vice Chairman, HOD – Neurosurgery and Unit Head – Neuro Intervention, Max Smart Super Speciality Hospital, Saket, said, "Stroke is increasingly being linked to air pollution, with nearly 17 percent of strokes globally attributable to polluted air. Pollution affects brain blood circulation and significantly increases the risk of both ischemic and hemorrhagic strokes. We are now observing clear seasonal spikes in stroke admissions during high-pollution months, indicating that pollution is emerging as an independent risk factor. Beyond stroke, air pollution is also associated with neurological conditions such as Alzheimer's disease, dementia, and Parkinson's disease, making this a growing neurological challenge that society, scientists, and policymakers must urgently address."

Mr. Anil Rajput, Chairperson, Advisory Council, Illness to Wellness Foundation, said, "India has taken important and structured steps to address air pollution through initiatives such as the



same time, the scale of the challenge calls for sustained implementation, coordination, and continued commitment across stakeholders."

Dr. GC Khilnani, Chairman, Institute of Pulmonary, Critical Care and Sleep Medicine, PSRI Hospital, said, "Air pollution is a man-made public health emergency that has already reduced the average life expectancy of Indians by several years. Its most dangerous effects are often invisible—ultra-fine particles penetrate deep into the lungs, enter the bloodstream, and damage multiple organs without early warning signs. While governments are taking steps, real change will come only when society recognises its own role in this crisis."

Dr. Harsh Mahajan, Mentor – FICCI Health Sector and Founder & Chairman, Mahajan Imaging Labs, said, "Air pollution is not seasonal, and it is not merely an environmental concern—it is a public health emergency that silently worsens almost every disease. It disproportionately affects the poor, children, and outdoor workers, even though they contribute the least to the problem. The dangerous myth is that technology alone will solve this crisis. We already know what works; what we lack is urgency and accountability."

Following the expert deliberations, the Illness to Wellness Foundation released a comprehensive report titled "Countering Delhi NCR Air Pollution & Aligning Solutions: Clean Air as Right to Life Article 21", supported by the CII-ITC Centre of Excellence for Sustainable Development.

The report presents a data-driven assessment of Delhi NCR's air pollution crisis, highlighting that poor air quality is a structural, year-round challenge rather than a

seasonal phenomenon. It links deteriorating air quality to rising disease burden, loss of productive life years, and sustained economic losses, while also documenting the strain placed on healthcare systems during peak pollution periods.

Drawing on global best practices from cities such as London, Beijing, and Paris, the report outlines actionable solutions across clean transportation, construction and dust management, industrial compliance, renewable energy adoption, and institutionalised health emergency responses—demonstrating that sustained improvement in urban air quality is achievable with coordinated, data-

driven policy action.

The conference featured three focused thematic sessions examining the wide-ranging health impact of air pollution.

The first session, "Air Pollution's Invisible Impact on Health", was moderated by Dr. Rajesh Kesari, Member, Advisory Council, Illness to Wellness Foundation and Member, National Executive Committee – Elect, RSSDI. The panel included (Padma Shri) Dr. Malyika Sabharwal, Chief Obstetrics & Gynaecology and Endoscopy Surgery, Jeevan Mala Hospital; Dr. Manu Madan, Senior Consultant – Respiratory & Sleep Medicine, Medanta, Noida; Dr. Amitabh Yadavabshi, Head of Cardiology, Holy Family Hospital; and Dr. Manju Keshar, Senior Consultant – Dermatology, Max Super Speciality Hospital, Patparganj.

The discussion highlighted how air pollution acts as a silent accelerator of multiple non-communicable diseases, often manifesting across organ systems.

The second session, "Polluted Air, Troubled Minds: Mental Wellness Challenges and Neuro Risks", included Dr. Karan Thakur, Group Vice President – Corporate Affairs & Sustainability, Apollo Hospitals Enterprise Limited; Dr. Aakash Shrivastava, Additional Director and Head, Centre for Climate Change and Health, National Centre for Disease Control, Ministry of Health & Family Welfare, Government of India; Dr. Shamsher Dweivede, Director, Department of Neurosciences, Max Dehradun; Dr. Rahul Gupta, Senior Director & HOD – Neurosurgery, Fortis Hospital, Noida; Dr. Sumit Singh, Chief Neurology, Artemis Hospitals, Gurugram; and Dr. Atampreet Singh, Senior Director & HOD – Neuroscience, Sharda Health City. The panel discussed biological mechanisms such as inflammation and reduced cerebral blood flow, along with preventive and mitigation strategies.

The third session, "Air Pollution's Impact on Child Health and Education", panelists included Dr. Sudhir Kumar Kalhan, Member, Advisory Council, Illness to Wellness Foundation and Chairperson, Minimal Access & Bariatric Surgery Centre, Sir Ganga Ram Hospital; Mrs. Alka Singh, Principal, Air Force Golden Jubilee Institute, New Delhi; Dr. Sai Kiran Chaudhary, Senior Consultant and Former HOD – Pulmonology, Critical Care and Sleep Medicine, Delhi Heart and Lung Institute; Dr. D.K. Gupta, Chairman and Managing Director, Felix Hospital, Noida; and Mr. Sanjay Yadav, Principal, Alkhon International School. The discussion underscored the need for safer school environments, greater awareness among educators and parents, and long-term policy interventions to protect children from pollution-related harm.



Publication:	InShorts
Date:	19 th December 2025



How does toxic air in Delhi-NCR affect India & the national capital's economies?

According to a Illness to Wellness Foundation report, air pollution across India costs the country \$36.8 billion (₹3.32 lakh crore) annually. The national economic loss rises to \$95 billion (₹8.56 lakh crore), or 3% of India's GDP, when accounting for productivity losses and premature deaths. A CREA analysis found Delhi loses ₹64,250 crore, or 5.8% of GDP, annually to pollution.

short by Ashley Paul / 19 Dec, 2025



Publication:	Rajasthan Patrika
Date:	19 th December 2025

राजस्थान पत्रिका

वायु प्रदूषण से भारत के विकास पर खतरा: आईटीडब्ल्यूएफ

नई दिल्ली @पत्रिका. वायु प्रदूषण अब सिर्फ पर्यावरण से जुड़ी चिंता नहीं है। यह भारत के आर्थिक विकास को नुकसान पहुंचा रहा है, साथ ही स्ट्रोक, कार्डियोवस्कुलर डिजीज, सांस से संबंधित बीमारियों और न्यूरोलॉजिकल डिसऑर्डर जैसी गंभीर स्वास्थ्य संबंधी परेशानियों का खतरा भी तेजी से बढ़ा है। नई दिल्ली में आज इलनेस टु वेलनेस फाउंडेशन (आईटीडब्ल्यूएफ) द्वारा 'स्वास्थ्य पर वायु

प्रदूषण का दुष्प्रभाव एवं बचाव के कदम' विषय पर आयोजित इलनेस टु वेलनेस कॉन्फ्रेंस में यह चिंता उभरकर सामने आई। इलनेस टु वेलनेस फाउंडेशन की एडवाइजरी काउंसिल के चेयरपर्सन अनिल राजपूत ने कहा, 'भारत ने 2019 में शुरू किए गए राष्ट्रीय स्वच्छ वायु कार्यक्रम (एनसीएपी) जैसी पहलों के माध्यम से वायु प्रदूषण से निपटने के लिए महत्वपूर्ण और व्यवस्थित कदम उठाए हैं।

Publication:	Danik Bhaskar
Date:	19 th December 2025



वायु प्रदूषण से भारत के विकास पर भी खतरा : आईटीडब्ल्यूएफ

नई दिल्ली | वायु प्रदूषण से आर्थिक विकास को नुकसान पहुंचा रहा है। स्ट्रोक, कार्डियोवस्कुलर डिजीज, सांस से संबंधित बीमारियों और न्यूरोलॉजिकल डिसऑर्डर जैसी गंभीर बीमारियों का खतरा भी बढ़ा है। इलनेस टू वेलनेस फाउंडेशन (आईटीडब्ल्यूएफ) द्वारा 'स्वास्थ्य पर वायु प्रदूषण का दुष्प्रभाव एवं बचाव के कदम' विषय पर इलनेस टू वेलनेस कॉन्फ्रेंस में यह जानकारी दी गई। इलनेस टू वेलनेस फाउंडेशन की गवर्निंग काउंसिल के चेयरपर्सन राजेश भूषण ने कहा कि वायु प्रदूषण को जन स्वास्थ्य से संबंधित समस्या मानकर हल निकालना चाहिए। वायु प्रदूषण को दो दृष्टिकोण से समझना चाहिए। पहला तकनीकी कारण जिसने वायु प्रदूषण होता

है और दूसरा प्रदूषित वायु में सांस लेने से स्वास्थ्य पर पड़ने वाले दुष्प्रभाव। ज्यादा प्रदूषित शहरों में लोग ज्यादा समय तक जीवित तो रह सकते हैं, क्रोनिक इलनेस से उनकी उत्पादकता, जीवन की गुणवत्ता और अर्थव्यवस्था में उनकी सहभागिता कम हो जाती है। इसलिए वायु प्रदूषण से निपटने के लिए स्वास्थ्य व्यवस्था, शहरी योजना और जन जागरूकता में तालमेल बिठाकर कदम उठाने की जरूरत है। फाउंडेशन की एडवाइजरी काउंसिल के चेयरपर्सन अनिल राजपूत ने कहा कि भारत ने 2019 में शुरू किए गए राष्ट्रीय स्वच्छ वायु कार्यक्रम (एनसीएपी) जैसी पहलों के माध्यम से वायु प्रदूषण से निपटने के लिए व्यवस्थित कदम उठाए हैं।

Publication:	Amar Ujala
Date:	19 th December 2025

अमर उजाला

वायु प्रदूषण देश के विकास के लिए खतरा विशेषज्ञ बोले, उत्पादकता कम हो रही, जीवन प्रत्याशा घट रही

नई दिल्ली। वायु प्रदूषण अब मौसमी समस्या नहीं रह गया है, बल्कि यह एक गंभीर सार्वजनिक स्वास्थ्य संकट बन चुका है, जो देश की आर्थिक वृद्धि को कमजोर कर रहा है। विशेषज्ञों ने चेतावनी दी कि प्रदूषित हवा से स्ट्रोक, हृदय रोग, श्वसन बीमारियां तेजी से बढ़ रही हैं, जिससे उत्पादक जीवन के वर्ष कम हो रहे हैं और दिव्यांगता बढ़ रही है।

यह बातें बृहस्पतिवार को इलनेस टू वेलनेस फाउंडेशन की ओर से

आयोजित स्वास्थ्य पर वायु प्रदूषण का प्रभाव और निवारक उपाय सम्मेलन में प्रमुख डॉक्टरों और नीति निर्माताओं ने कही।

सम्मेलन में दिल्ली-एनसीआर वायु प्रदूषण का मुकाबला रिपोर्ट जारी की गई, जिसमें साल भर की चुनौती और वैश्विक समाधानों पर जोर दिया गया। तीन सत्रों में शारीरिक-मानसिक स्वास्थ्य, न्यूरो जॉखिम और बच्चों पर प्रभाव विषयों पर चर्चा हुई। विशेषज्ञों ने स्वच्छ हवा को अनुच्छेद 21 का

हिस्सा बताते हुए क्रॉस-सेक्टर सहयोग की मांग की। इस दौरान पूर्व स्वास्थ्य सचिव राजेश भूषण ने कहा कि प्रदूषण को तकनीकी और स्वास्थ्य दोनों दृष्टिकोण से समझना जरूरी है। इस अवसर पर न्यूरोसर्जरी विशेषज्ञ डॉ. दलजीत सिंह ने कहा कि दुनिया में 17 प्रतिशत स्ट्रोक प्रदूषण से जुड़े हैं। प्रदूषण दिमाग के ब्लड सर्कुलेशन को प्रभावित करता है, जिससे इस्केमिक और हेमरेजिक स्ट्रोक का खतरा बढ़ता है। ब्यूरो

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The Statesman

Air pollution no longer seasonal; threatens public health and India's growth: Experts

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
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Air pollution is no longer just an environmental concern; it is steadily eroding India's economic growth while triggering a sharp rise in serious health conditions such as stroke, cardiovascular disease, respiratory illness, and neurological disorders, experts opined. These concerns took centre stage at the Illness to Wellness Conference on "Impact of Air Pollution on Health and



Preventive Measures", organised by the Illness to Wellness Foundation (ITWF) here on Thursday. Experts warned that prolonged exposure to polluted air is reducing

productive life years, increasing disability, and placing a growing strain on healthcare systems—ultimately weakening India's long-term development potential. Delivering the keynote

address, Rajesh Bhushan, Former Secretary, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Government of India and Chairperson, Governing Council, the Illness to Wellness Foundation, stressed that air pollution must be addressed as a core public health issue.

"The issue of air pollution must be understood from two perspectives—the technical causes that create polluted air and the public health consequences of breathing it every day. Prolonged exposure

does not just shorten life expectancy; it increases the number of years lived with disability. In highly polluted cities, people may survive longer but with chronic illnesses that reduce productivity, quality of life, and economic contribution. Addressing air pollution, therefore, requires coordinated action across healthcare systems, urban planning, and public awareness, with a much stronger focus on preventive and primary healthcare," he said. Highlighting the neurological

impact, Dr Daljit Singh, Vice Chairman, HOD – Neurosurgery and Unit Head – Neuro Intervention, Max Smart Super Speciality Hospital, Saket, drew attention to the growing link between air pollution and stroke.

"Stroke is increasingly being linked to air pollution, with nearly 17 per cent of strokes globally attributable to polluted air. Pollution affects brain blood circulation and significantly increases the risk of both ischemic and hemorrhagic

strokes," Dr Singh said.

"We are now observing clear seasonal spikes in stroke admissions during high-pollution months, indicating that pollution is emerging as an independent risk factor. Beyond stroke, air pollution is also associated with neurological conditions such as Alzheimer's disease, dementia, and Parkinson's disease, making this a growing neurological challenge that society, scientists, and policymakers must urgently address," he added.

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Air pollution poses growing threat to India's health, economy: Experts

NEW DELHI: Air pollution is emerging as a major threat to India's health and economic growth, experts warned at the Illness to Wellness Conference organised by the Illness to Wellness Foundation (ITWF) on Wednesday. Prolonged exposure to polluted air is increasing the burden of stroke, cardiovascular, respiratory and neurological diseases, while reducing productive life years and straining healthcare systems.

Speakers stressed that air pollution must be treated as a core public health issue rather than only an environmental challenge.

Highlighting its economic implications, Anil Rajput,



Chairperson, Advisory Council, ITWF, said: "India has taken important and structured steps through initiatives like the National Clean Air Programme, Bharat Stage emission norms, electric mobility and public transport expansion. These signal strong intent,

but the scale of the challenge demands sustained implementation and coordination across stakeholders." The conference called for stronger preventive healthcare, policy enforcement and public awareness to safeguard health and long-term development.

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