**Press Release**

**Air pollution at an all-time high in Delhi**

*IMA strictly advises against exercising outdoors in the morning among other things*

**New Delhi, 04 November 2017:** As per a recent study, air pollution has led to five lakh premature deaths across India. The weather conditions in the national capital are rapidly deteriorating and there is only one advise for those going for an early morning walk or run --- stay indoors. The reason is that air pollution is at an all-time high and the morning air can have drastic repercussions on one’s health. As per the IMA, exposure to this toxic air can affect the lungs, blood, vascular system, brain, heart, and even the reproduction system.

Concentration of PM 2.5 can cause tiny, hazardous particles to enter the lungs. This in turn can cause problems such as chronic obstructive pulmonary disorder and also impact lung functioning. The IMA has also advised strongly against running a marathon in this condition, as doing so can deposit about two tablespoons of toxic ash in the lungs.

Speaking about this, **Padma Shri Awardee Dr K K Aggarwal, National President Indian Medical Association (IMA) and President Heart Care Foundation of India (HCFI) and Dr RN Tandon – Honorary Secretary General IMA in a joint statement**, said, “Delhi has been experiencing high air pollution levels these past days. The air quality is particularly poor early in the morning, when pollution is extremely high. While this can be fatal for those with existing health issues such as asthma or cardiovascular ailments, it can also be detrimental to healthy individuals. Elderly people and children also form the high-risk category. As per a recent study, those living in the NCR are losing out on almost 6 years of life because of the dangerous air pollution levels.[2] If WHO standards were met in NCR, people would live 9 years longer. The IMA will be writing to the Hon’ble Delhi Chief Minister, Chief Justice Delhi High Court and the Chairperson, National Green Tribunal regarding urgent cancellation/postponing of the half marathon scheduled this month until there is significant improvement in the air quality.”

The Air Quality Index (AQI) in Delhi has ranged from “very unhealthy” to “hazardous” in the last couple of days itself. In many parts of the city, the levels have even crossed the 300 ‘danger’ mark.

Adding further, **Dr Aggarwal**, said, “The current level of pollution in Delhi can affect even an unborn child in the womb. A normal adult breathes about 6 litres of air per minute at rest, which increases
to about 20 litres during physical activity. Given the alarming levels of pollution currently, this will only increase the amount of toxins in the lungs. Although one should ensure that exercise areas are at least 200 meters away from roads, construction sites, and smoke-emitting industry, even this cannot guarantee clean air.”

Here’s how different parts of the body are affected by air pollution.

- Toxic particles pass through blood vessel walls and affects blood flow. They can also lead to thrombosis.
- Toxins can lead to atherosclerosis reducing the diameter of blood vessels. This condition can also cause hypertension.
- Toxic air can lead to strokes and brain ischemia as also cognitive disorders and neurodegenerative illnesses.
- Toxins in the air can adversely impact heart function and increase heart rhythm problems.
- Inhaling toxic air can make women prone to miscarriage, cause fetal growth problems, premature birth, and also low birth weight.

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About IMA: Indian Medical Association is the only representative, national voluntary organization of Doctors of Modern Scientific System of Medicine, which looks after the interest of doctors as well as the well being of the community at large. It has its Headquarter in Delhi and State / Terr. Branches in 30 States and Union Territories. It has over 2, 60,000 doctors as its members through more than 1765 active local branches spread across the country.

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