

# Dank Delhi Weathers Another Bad-Air Day, Finds A Silver Lining In Evening

## Thunder & Lightning Result In Diversion Of 16 Flights, But May Give Some Relief From Pollution

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**New Delhi:** Delhiites witnessed a gloomy Monday with overcast skies and toxic air quality.

The Air Quality Index (AQI), at 395, was a shade less than 'severe'. Low visibility marked the eighth such day this November when readings were in the range of 390-400. However, a spell of light rain accompanied by strong winds later in the evening is likely to improve the air quality on Tuesday.

Many parts of Delhi witnessed thunder and lightning on Monday evening, while New Delhi recorded very loud thunder that was followed by a lightning bolt around 6.30 pm.

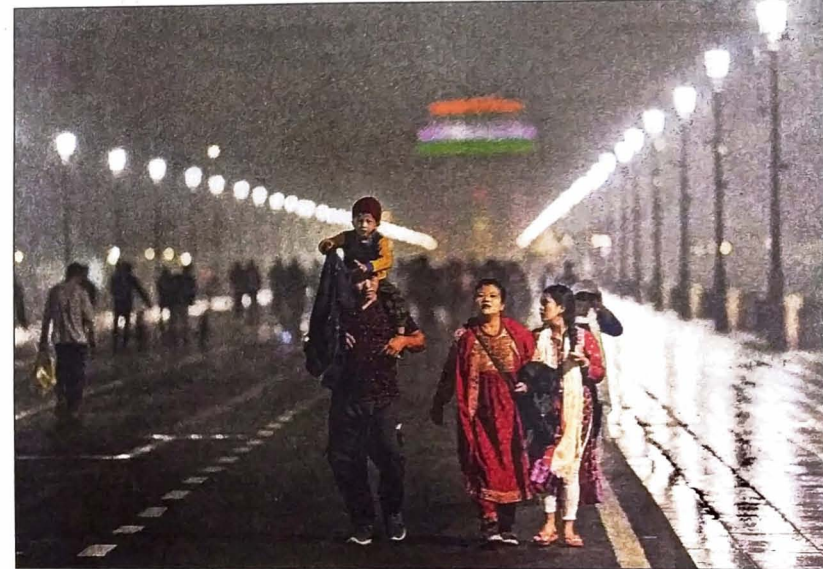
The bad weather in Delhi resulted in 16 flights being diverted to other cities. Ten were diverted to Jaipur, three to Lucknow, one to Ahmedabad and two to Amritsar between 6 pm and 8 pm.

The visibility was 600 metres around 7.30 am at Safdarjung, which is the city's base station, which improved to around 1,300 metres by noon.

Areas such as Hauz Khas, Vasant Kunj, parts of east Delhi and Lodhi Road got a drizzle in the afternoon.

Palam and Ayanagar observatories recorded 1.8 mm and 0.6 mm of rainfall, respectively, between 8.30 am and 5.30 pm. Lodhi Road reported trace rainfall.

However, Safdarjung logged 7.2 mm rainfall between 5.30 pm and 8.30 pm while Palam recorded 2.3 mm rainfall in the same time window. "Under the influence of a western disturbance, thunder clouds formed in the evening.... These cumulus clouds with a vertical extension height of 8-

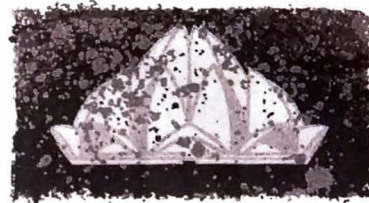


On a day when the smog forced much of Delhi's installations to 'disappear', the evening showers brought much-needed respite, but also pulled the mercury down further

10 kilometres caused rain, thunder and lightning," said Kuldeep Srivastava, scientist and head of the Regional Weather Forecasting Centre of the India Meteorological Department.

The minimum temperature was recorded at 13.4 degrees Celsius, three degrees below normal. The maximum temperature was 24.2 degrees Celsius, which was two degrees below normal. The light rain during the evening caused the temperature to dip to 16.8 degrees Celsius at 8.30 pm.

According to Met officials, Safdarjung saw south-easterly winds with a speed of 12 kmph on Monday night. Wind speed picked up to 20 kmph at Palam. The air quality may see an improvement on Tuesday as rain could settle the pollutants down



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while strong winds are predicted to help in the dispersion of pollutants.

However, rain is unlikely on Tuesday as the influence of a western disturbance will be over. The city may see cloudiness till Tuesday noon.

The contribution of stubble burning is now insignificant in Delhi's PM2.5 levels. Local and regional emissions continue to be high. Anumita Ro-

ychowdhury, executive director of research and advocacy at the Centre for Science and Environment (CSE), said: "It is a matter of great concern that even after the stubble burning season is nearly over and its contribution down to 2-5%, the air quality in Delhi and NCR is still very poor. This shows the impact of high local pollution. Massive scaling up of action is needed round the year to clean up emissions from vehicles, industry, waste and solid fuel burning in this region."

The Decision Support System, which is the forecasting body under the Union ministry of earth sciences, estimated that transport was the biggest contributor of PM2.5 at 15.09% on Monday. Other prominent sources included emissions from Ghaziabad (12.55%),

### CSE SCIENTIST SAYS

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GB Nagar (6.82%), Baghpat (5.96%), industries in Delhi and around it (4.51%) and Meerut (4.04%), according to DSS.

CPCB's data shows that November has witnessed nine 'severe' AQI days. It has also recorded eight 'near severe' days when AQI was in the range of 390 and 400. [nwda.gov.in](http://nwda.gov.in)