



Delhi pollution 'like smoking 50 cigarettes a day'

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Air quality has dropped to its worst recorded level this year in New Delhi and nearby cities, with a thick haze hanging over the Indian capital.

1-1. Blanketed in a thick haze, a public health emergency was declared in Delhi, as air quality dropped to its lowest recorded level this year on Sunday (November 3).

2. In most areas of the city and surrounding areas, the air quality index breached the 999 mark-- which, according to experts, is akin to smoking 40 to 50 cigarettes a day.

3. Anything above 400 poses a risk for people with respiratory illnesses and can also affect those with healthy lungs.

(SOUNDBITE) (Hindi) UNIDENTIFIED DELHI RESIDENT, SAYING:

"Apart from breathing issues, pollution is also pressurizing us psychologically even that what is happening. It's not winters, so it's definitely not fog. We are walking around with masks."

4. The haze also causing havoc for flights - with as many as 32 planes diverted from Indira Gandhi International Airport on Sunday due to low visibility.

5. The government's environment monitoring agency warned that no relief is expected for the next one to two days, as humidity resulting from light overnight rains had exacerbated the pollution.