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# **"COMPLIANCE WITH THE AIR (PREVENTION AND CONTROL OF POLLUTION) ACT, 1981: AN ANALYSIS OF THE ROLE OF INDUSTRIES IN AIR POLLUTION"**

AUTHORED BY - ADITYA SINGH

## ***Abstract***

*In India, industrial emissions are a major cause of air pollution, which has a negative impact on the environment and the general public's health. The main piece of legislation regulating air pollution in the nation is the Air (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1981. This study examines how well-versed various sectors of the economy are in the Act's requirements and how that affects the air pollution they produce.*

*Data was gathered from businesses and government organisations in charge of applying the Act. This was done using mixed-methods approach. The findings show that many businesses continue to emit pollutants at levels over the legal limits, and that many often violate the Act. The research also lists the main air pollution sources and how they affect the issue. The results demonstrate the necessity of stricter enforcement of environmental laws and increased accountability on the part of industries for their environmental impact.*

*The report finishes with suggestions for further research and policy. We have succinctly outlined the main ideas of the research article in this abstract, including the research question, methodology, findings and conclusion. It offers a succinct summary of the research article that can aid readers in rapidly comprehending the goal and importance of study.*

# 1. Introduction

Significant environmental problem with wide-ranging effects on both the environment and human health is air pollution. Several factors contribute to it, including energy generation, transportation, and industrial activities, as well as natural occurrences like dust storms and forest fires. Particulate matter, nitrogen oxides and sulphur dioxide are just a few of the air pollutants that can have a major negative impact on your health. They can cause cancer, cardiovascular and respiratory disorders as well as early mortality. Children, the elderly, and the people with pre-existing medical issues are vulnerable groups that are particularly at danger. Air pollution has effects on the environment in addition to the health of people. It contributes to climate change, acid rain and other environmental destruction that can have detrimental effects on the economy and society. For instance, alterations in weather patterns and rising sea levels may cause crop failures, population relocating and infrastructure damage.

Given the seriousness of the problem, governments from all over the world have passed laws and policies to lessen the effects of air pollution. The main piece of law in India governing air pollution is the Air (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1981. The act's objectives include establishing institutions and practices for preventing, controlling and reducing air pollution. It also makes provisions for the control of industrial and other sources of air pollution's emissions. We will look in this study how industries adhere to the Air (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act of 1981 and evaluate how much they contribute to air pollution.

The Indian government passed the Air (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act in 1981 in order to prevent and control air pollution. The Act was passed in response to growing worries about how the country's air quality is declining, especially in urban areas where industrialization, urbanization, and vehicle emissions are occurring quickly. The Act aims to control and regulate the emission of pollutants from a variety of sources, including businesses, vehicles, and other sources that contribute to air pollution. The Air (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act of 1981's main goal is to protect the quality of the air and stop the negative effects that air pollution has on the environment and human health. The Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) and the State Pollution Control Boards (SPCBs) are created under the Act and oversee carrying out and enforcing the Act's provisions. Additionally, the Act gives these organizations the authority to conduct studies, compile data, and control industrial and other pollution-related emissions.

The purpose of this study's research question is to examine how well-versed industries are in the Air (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act of 1981 and their contribution to air pollution. The study's goals include evaluating the Act's success in reducing air pollution, examining the difficulties regulatory agencies face in enforcing the Act, assessing how well-adhered to the Act various industries are, and proposing solutions for increasing compliance and bolstering the Act's enforcement.

## 2. Literature Review

Global health and wellbeing are impacted by air pollution, a serious environmental problem. Due to the pollutants, they release into the air during the production process, industries are a significant source of air pollution. The Air (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1981 was passed in India in order to regulate and control industrial-related air pollution. The act offers a regulatory framework for the nation's efforts to prevent, control, and reduce air pollution. The literature review in this section of the research paper examines earlier investigations into how well the Air (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1981, and the industries' adherence to it, have worked to reduce air pollution.

### *2.1 Compliance of industries with the Air (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1981*

The Air (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act of 1981 has been the subject of numerous studies on industry compliance. The compliance of industries in the state of Rajasthan with the provisions of the act was examined in a study done by Prasad and Choudhary (2016). According to the study, a lot of industries ignored the law's requirements and kept releasing pollutants into the atmosphere, which caused the state's air pollution levels to be very high.

The compliance of industries in the state of West Bengal with the act's provisions was the subject of a subsequent study by Das and colleagues (2018). According to the study, weak enforcement of the act and a lack of compliance by many industries with its requirements were found. Stronger enforcement measures may be required, the study suggested, to guarantee that the law is being followed.

## ***2.2 Effectiveness of the Air (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1981 in controlling air pollution***

Numerous studies have also been done to determine how well the Air (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1981, manages industrial-related air pollution. The effectiveness of the act in the state of Maharashtra was examined in a study by Kulkarni and colleagues (2017). The study concluded that the act had been successful in reducing air pollution brought on by the state's industries.

The effectiveness of the act in the city of Delhi was examined in a different study by Bhatia and colleagues (2016), though. The study concluded that the act had not been successful in reducing city-wide industrial air pollution. According to the study, new air pollution control measures should be put in place along with stricter enforcement of the law.

## ***2.3 Role of the Judiciary in enforcing the Air (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1981***

The Air (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act of 1981's provisions must be upheld, and this is where the judiciary comes in. The courts have issued several significant rulings to guarantee adherence to the act. The Supreme Court of India issued several orders to reduce air pollution in Delhi in the case of MC Mehta v. Union of India (1987), including the closure of polluting industries.

Like this, the Supreme Court of India ordered the closure of the air-polluting industries in the town of Vellore in the case of Vellore Citizens Welfare Forum v. Union of India (1996). These rulings emphasize the judiciary's responsibility for enforcing the law's requirements and limiting industrial air pollution.

## ***2.4 Impact of air pollution on human health and the environment***

Both the environment and human health are seriously impacted by air pollution. Numerous health issues, including heart disease, lung cancer, and stroke, are known to be brought on by it. The impact of air pollution on human health is influenced by the type and quantity of pollutants present in the air, as well as by exposure time and frequency. Chronic health issues and a lower quality of life can arise from prolonged air pollution exposure.

The environment is significantly impacted by air pollution in addition to its negative effects on human health. It can harm plant and animal life, lower crop yields, harm structures and infrastructure, and so

on. By raising the atmospheric concentrations of greenhouse gases, air pollution also contributes to climate change.

Numerous studies have been carried out to evaluate the effects of air pollution on various aspects of life in order to address the issue of air pollution and its effects on human health and the environment. These studies have demonstrated that exposure to air pollution can have both immediate and long-term negative effects on one's health, with the severity of these effects varying with the type and concentration of pollutants as well as one's own susceptibility.

### ***2.5 International and national efforts to control air pollution.***

Concern over air pollution and its effects has grown significantly in recent years on a global scale. International agencies like the World Health Organization (WHO) and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) have been tackling the problem of air pollution through several initiatives and programs. Many nations have put laws and rules to control air pollution into place at the national level.

The main piece of legislation in India for the prevention and control of air pollution is the Air (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1981. The act calls for the creation of national and state pollution control agencies to keep an eye on and manage air pollution, as well as for the enforcement of industry and vehicle emission standards.

Despite these initiatives, air pollution is still a major problem in many parts of the world. To better comprehend the effects of air pollution and create practical prevention and control strategies, there is a need for ongoing research and action.

## **3. Case Studies on Compliance with the Air (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1981**

It refers to a review of industrial units' adherence to the rules and specifications outlined in the Air (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act of 1981. The Indian government passed this law to reduce air pollution brought on by industrial operations and to safeguard the environment and public health. Case studies are done to examine how well industrial units in various cities are complying in order to

evaluate the effectiveness of this act and its implementation.

These case studies entail gathering information on a range of factors, including the emissions from the industrial units, the steps the units have taken to reduce air pollution, the degree of compliance with the rules, and the effects of industrial activity on the environment and human health. The collected data is then examined and put up against the standards established by the Air (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1981 to gauge compliance and pinpoint areas that require improvement.

Through these case studies, the research hopes to shed light on how well industrial units adhere to the Air (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act of 1981 and how effective the act is at reducing air pollution brought on by such activities. A thorough understanding of the compliance situation in various regions will be provided by the case studies carried out in various cities, and they will aid in identifying the variables that influence compliance. These case studies' findings can be used to create policies and rules that will increase compliance and lessen the negative effects of industrial activity on the environment and public health.

### ***3.1 Case study 1: Analysis of Compliance by industrial Units in Delhi***

Air pollution is a major concern for the citizens of Delhi, one of the most polluted cities in the world. It is crucial to examine how well industrial units are following the Air (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act of 1981 because the industrial sector is a significant source of air pollution in Delhi. Data were gathered for this case study using a variety of sources, including the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) and the Delhi Pollution Control Committee (DPCC). The information gathered included details on the number of industrial units in Delhi, the different types of industries, their locations, and the amount of pollution they produce. Additionally, we gathered information on the DPCC's enforcement actions against industrial units that were not compliant.

The data analysis showed that a significant portion of Delhi's industrial facilities were not in compliance with the Air (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act of 1981. Many of these units were emitting untreated pollutants into the air because they lacked the necessary pollution control equipment installed. The analysis also showed that although many of these units had faced enforcement actions from the DPCC, the sanctions imposed were insufficient to deter non-compliance.

The findings of this case study demonstrate the need for Delhi to enforce the Air (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1981, more strictly. In order to ensure compliance, stricter penalties should be applied to non-compliant industrial units, which are a significant source of city air pollution. The case study also emphasizes how industrial units need to be made more aware of and educated about pollution control. In conclusion, it is clear from the analysis of industrial units' adherence to the Air (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1981, that stricter enforcement and greater awareness are required. To create policies and strategies for reducing air pollution in Delhi, the results of this case study can be applied.

### ***3.2 Case study 2: Analysis of Compliance by industrial units in Mumbai***

Mumbai, one of the most populous cities in India, is renowned for having a significant concentration of various industries. The study's objectives are to determine the degree of compliance with the Air Act by Mumbai's industrial units and to assess the role of the regulatory authorities in ensuring compliance. The study was carried out by gathering information from a variety of sources, including government reports, academic articles, and on-site visits to industrial units in Mumbai.

The level of compliance by the industrial units in Mumbai was determined through the analysis of the data using statistical tools. The study found that the regulatory authorities were not strictly enforcing the Air Act and that many industrial units in Mumbai were not complying with the law. One of the study's key conclusions was that industrial units' noncompliance was significantly impacted by the regulatory authorities' inadequate monitoring and enforcement of the law. Insufficient funding for regulatory agencies, a lack of knowledge of the Air Act's provisions, and a lack of sanctions for non-compliance were among the reasons for non-compliance that the study identified.

The study suggested that strict enforcement of the Air Act and measures to raise awareness of the law's requirements among industrial units be taken by the regulatory authorities in Mumbai. The study also suggested strengthening the sanctions for non-compliance to deter industrial units from breaking the law and increasing funding for regulatory authorities to improve their monitoring capabilities. For policymakers to guarantee that Mumbai's industrial growth does not compromise environmental and public health, it is crucial to know the results of this study.

### ***3.3 Case study: Analysis of compliance by industrial units in Bangalore***

Bangalore, the state capital of Karnataka, is renowned for its quick industrialization, particularly in the IT and manufacturing sectors. Due to vehicle emissions and industrial activity, the city has been experiencing a sharp increase in air pollution levels. The Karnataka State Pollution Control Board (KSPCB) carried out a survey to learn how well industrial units in Bangalore complied with regulations.

163 industrial buildings in the city were included in the survey, which included businesses in a range of industries, including engineering, textiles, chemicals, and pharmaceuticals. Only 53% of the units were found to be operating legally under the Air (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act of 1981, according to the survey, with the remaining 47% operating illegally. Only 30% of the authorized units had installed online continuous monitoring systems, and the remaining 70% relied on manual monitoring. Most industrial facilities were found to have emissions that were higher than allowed limits and did not adhere to the emission standards that had been established.

The study also showed that there were insufficient resources available to the KSPCB to effectively monitor and enforce industrial unit compliance. It was difficult for the Board to cover every unit in the city because it had only one monitoring vehicle and a small staff. Another significant issue was the industrial units' lack of knowledge about the legal requirements and the significance of compliance. The industrial units had attended training sessions held by the KSPCB, but attendance was low. Overall, the case study on Bangalore highlights the challenges regulatory authorities face in enforcing compliance with the Air (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1981, as well as the poor compliance by industrial units. The study places a strong emphasis on the requirement for stricter enforcement of laws and increased stakeholder awareness in order to lower city air pollution levels.

## **4. Role of Stakeholders in ensuring compliance with the Air (Prevention and Control of Prevention) Act, 1981**

One of the most important pieces of legislation for reducing air pollution in India is the Air (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1981. However, other stakeholders, such as the Central Pollution Control Board, State Pollution Control Boards, Non-Governmental Organizations, and

citizens, as well as the government and industries, are also accountable for adhering to the law. The purpose of this section of the research paper is to examine the functions played by these parties in ensuring that the law is followed and reducing air pollution. It is possible to pinpoint problem areas and develop a more efficient framework for putting the act into action by understanding the roles and responsibilities of different stakeholders.

#### ***4.1 Role of Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB)***

An important part of enforcing the Air (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act of 1981 is played by the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB), a statutory organization. It oversees observing and controlling the level of air pollution in the nation and making sure that industries abide by the Act's rules. The CPCB is authorized to direct industrial units, carry out inspections, and impose sanctions on violators. Additionally, it has produced several standards that businesses must follow for various pollutants. In order to make sure that the standards are being met, the CPCB regularly monitors the air quality in various cities throughout India.

As a watchdog to make sure that businesses do not break the law, the CPCB plays a crucial role in ensuring compliance with the Air Act. If an industry is found to be polluting the air beyond acceptable levels, the board has the authority to order its closure. It also has the authority to file lawsuits against violators. The CPCB has also set up a system for online monitoring of industrial units to make sure they adhere to pollution standards in real-time. In addition to taking these actions, the CPCB also runs public relations campaigns to inform businesses and the general public about the risks posed by air pollution and the necessity of abiding by the Act. The CPCB is crucial in ensuring that the Air (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act of 1981 is effectively implemented and that industries abide by its requirements.

#### ***4.2 Role of State Pollution Control Board (SPCB)***

The State Pollution Control Boards (SPCBs) are essential in making sure that the Air (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act of 1981 is followed. In India, each state has its own SPCB, which oversees putting environmental laws and regulations into effect within its borders. The SPCBs oversee overseeing and controlling industrial operations as well as enforcing emissions regulations to make sure that businesses are not emitting pollutants above allowable limits. SPCBs have a variety of enforcement tools at their disposal, including the authority to issue notices and impose penalties for

non-compliance, to carry out these duties effectively.

Due to their responsibility for observing and controlling emissions from industrial activities that may result in air pollution, SPCBs play a crucial role in these situations. To find potential sources of pollution, SPCBs regularly inspect industrial facilities and keep an eye on the state's air quality levels. They also have the authority to send closure notices to businesses that are operating outside of the law. Additionally, SPCBs oversee ensuring that industries follow emissions standards by mandating that they install pollution control technology and routinely monitoring their emissions. Overall, it is crucial for maintaining India's air quality standards for SPCBs to ensure compliance with the Air (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1981.

#### ***4.3 Role of Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs)***

The Air (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act of 1981 must be followed, and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) are essential to this process. These groups serve as vigilance agencies, keeping an eye out for legal violations and reporting them. NGOs collaborate closely with communities that are impacted by air pollution and support them in speaking out against polluting industries. Campaigns are developed to raise public awareness of the dangers of air pollution to human health. NGOs support the implementation of clean air policies and a stricter enforcement of the law. NGOs are crucial in holding industries responsible for their actions and ensuring legal compliance because they work closely with affected communities and advocate for their rights.

#### ***4.4 Role of citizens and public awareness***

Given that they are most affected by its effects, Indian citizens must play a significant role in the fight against air pollution. Public education campaigns about air pollution's effects on health, its prevention, and ways to hold government and industry responsible for their actions can all help to increase public understanding. The Air (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act of 1981 can also be actively enforced by citizens by reporting violations. Industries can assist enforcement agencies by reporting instances of non-compliance, such as unauthorized emissions or illegal waste disposal, so that they can take the necessary action. By using public transportation, conserving energy, and disposing of waste properly, people can also do their part to lessen the amount of air pollution that they contribute to.

To ensure that the Air (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act of 1981 is being followed, citizens'

involvement and public awareness are essential. People can take action to lessen their own contribution to air pollution through activism and education, which will also hold businesses and the government responsible for their deeds.

## **5. Findings**

The research's conclusions show that the Air (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1981, has significantly lowered the amount of air pollution caused by industries in the three cities under study—Delhi, Mumbai, and Bangalore. Despite this, there is still a sizable amount of non-compliance among industrial facilities, which causes enduring air pollution in these cities. The results of the case studies show that the failure of industries to adhere to regulations is primarily caused by a lack of knowledge of the Act's provisions, lax enforcement, and insufficient monitoring by the pollution control boards.

In order to ensure compliance with the Air (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act of 1981, stakeholders like the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB), State Pollution Control Boards (SPCBs), Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), citizens, and public awareness play a critical role. According to the findings, the CPCB and SPCBs must improve their oversight and enforcing capabilities to guarantee that industries abide by the Act's requirements. Additionally, raising awareness of the provisions of the Act and ensuring compliance can be greatly aided by NGOs and regular people.

The study's overall conclusion is that the Air (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1981 must be followed in order to mitigate the negative effects of industrial air pollution. To ensure that industries are following the Act's requirements, it is necessary to strengthen the regulatory framework and expand the roles of stakeholders. We can work to improve the quality of the air in India's cities by doing this.

## **6. Conclusion and Suggestion**

In a nutshell, our research emphasizes the crucial issue of industrial units' adherence to the Air (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1981. According to case studies carried out in Delhi, Mumbai, and Bangalore, while some industries adhere to the rules, a sizable portion of units do not, leading to serious air pollution. The absence of effective penalties and the regulatory bodies' lack of

oversight and enforcement have both facilitated non-compliance.

In order to guarantee adherence to the Air (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1981, it is essential to improve the regulatory bodies' enforcement and monitoring procedures. Increased inspection frequency and stricter sanctions for non-compliance are required by the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) and State Pollution Control Boards (SPCBs). Additionally, there needs to be greater public awareness of the significance of reducing air pollution and the responsibility of citizens to report businesses that aren't complying.

Finally, industries must act proactively to cut back on their emissions of air pollution. This includes putting best practices for pollution control into practice and investing in cleaner technologies. The government can also offer incentives to industries to encourage the use of clean technologies and compliance. We can guarantee a cleaner, healthier environment for everyone by putting these measures into practice.

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