



# CAQM Report on Causes of Air Pollution in Delhi-NCR

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**In News:** The Commission for Air Quality Management (CAQM) released an expert report (Jan 2026) on causes of air pollution in **Delhi-NCR**, prepared pursuant to **Supreme Court directions in M.C. Mehta vs Union of India**.

## Key Findings

### 1. Secondary Particulate Matter (Largest Contributor)

- Contributes **27%** of winter PM pollution.
- Formed in the atmosphere via chemical reactions of **SO<sub>2</sub>, NO<sub>x</sub>, NH<sub>3</sub>, VOCs**.
- Examples: **Ammonium nitrate** and **ammonium sulphate aerosols**.

### 2. Other Major Winter Sources

- **Transport:** 23% (largest primary source)
- **Biomass burning:** 20%
- **Dust:** 15% (road dust, soil, construction & demolition)
- **Industry (incl. TPPs):** 9%

### 3. PM Trends

- **PM2.5 and PM10:** Gradual decline and stable trend since **2016**.
- Still far above **National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS)**.

### 4. Transboundary Pollution: Nearly two-thirds of Delhi's PM2.5 originates **outside Delhi** (regional sources).

### 5. Seasonality

- Winter peaks due to **meteorological factors**:
- Low wind speed
- Shallow **planetary boundary layer**
- Atmospheric stagnation
- Not due to sudden emission spikes alone.