Environment & Ecology · GS - III

Air pollution in Indian cities is a recurring public-health and environmental challenge, particularly during the post-Diwali period. Examine its major causes and suggest measures for effective air-quality management.

EXAM YEAR	PAPER	SUBJECT
DAILY PRACTICE 09/11/2026	GS - III	Environment & Ecology

MARKS	WORD LIMIT
10	~150 words

Answer Hint

Vehicular emissions, firecrackers, industrial pollution, stubble burning, construction dust, PM2.5 and PM10, winter meteorology, public health, GRAP, clean transport, regional coordination.

Model Answer

Introduction

Severe air pollution in Indian cities results from multiple emission sources combined with unfavourable meteorological conditions. Its consequences extend beyond environmental degradation to public health and economic productivity.

Major Causes

1. **Vehicular emissions:** Fossil-fuel combustion releases particulate matter and nitrogen oxides.
2. **Industrial activities:** Factories and thermal power plants contribute pollutants.
3. **Firecrackers:** Festive emissions can temporarily increase particulate concentrations.
4. **Agricultural burning:** Stubble burning contributes to regional pollution episodes.
5. **Dust:** Construction activities and road dust add to particulate pollution.

6. **Weather conditions:** Weak winds and temperature inversions restrict pollutant dispersion.

Measures for Effective Management

- Strengthen public transport and promote electric mobility.
- Enforce emission standards and dust-control regulations.
- Provide farmers with affordable alternatives to stubble burning.
- Improve continuous air-quality monitoring and public-health advisories.
- Implement emergency measures under the Graded Response Action Plan (GRAP).
- Encourage coordination among neighbouring states to address regional pollution.

Conclusion

Sustainable air-quality improvement requires year-round emission reduction, scientific monitoring and coordinated governance rather than temporary emergency restrictions alone.

BECOME IAS
AI POWERED UPSC PREP