Monthly ambient air quality snapshot for India

January 2026

Good   Satisfactory   Moderate   Poor   Very Poor

Key highlights

- Compliance: In January 2026, **nearly half** (**123 out of 248) of cities** with more than 80% of the days with continuous ambient air quality monitoring stations (CAAQMS) data available **recorded PM$_{2.5}$ concentrations above India's National Ambient Air Quality Standards** (NAAQS) of 60 µg/m³. None of the cities complied with the World Health Organization's (WHO) daily safe guideline concentration of 15 µg/m³.
    - NCAP cities: The monthly average PM$_{2.5}$ levels in 47 National Clean Air Programme (NCAP) cities (out of 97 cities with more than 80% of days with data) surpassed India's daily NAAQS for PM$_{2.5}$, while all 97 cities exceeded the WHO's daily guideline.
    - Non-NCAP cities: Among the 151 non-NCAP cities with over 80% of days with CAAQMS data, all 151 cities reported monthly average PM$_{2.5}$ levels above the WHO daily guideline. 77 cities exceeded the daily NAAQS.
- PM$_{2.5}$ AQI category: Air quality conditions showed a gradual shift between December 2025 and January 2026. Cities in the 'Good' (0-30 µg/m³) category increased from 11 to 21, and those in the 'Satisfactory' (31-60 µg/m³) category gradually increased from 99 to 103. Meanwhile, the number of cities with 'Moderate' (61-90 µg/m³) air quality rose from 76 to 92. Also, cities in the 'Poor' (91-120 µg/m³) category reduced from 32 to 21, and those in the 'Very Poor' (121-250 µg/m³) category decreased sharply in count from 20 to 11.
- Most polluted city: **Ghaziabad ranked as the most polluted city in India in January 2026**, recording a monthly average PM$_{2.5}$ concentration of 184 µg/m³, surpassing the daily NAAQS limit of 60 µg/m³ 100% of the days in the month.
    - Ghaziabad recorded 24 days in the 'Very Poor' category, four days in the 'Severe' (>250 µg/m³) category, two days in the 'Poor' category, and one day on 'Moderate' category.
    - **Delhi was the second most polluted city in India during January 2026, with a monthly average PM$_{2.5}$ of 169 µg/m³.**

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- Throughout January, Delhi recorded 24 days in the 'Very Poor' category, three days in the 'Severe' category, two days in the 'Poor' category, and two days in 'Moderate' category.

- Noida, Gurgaon, Greater Noida, Dharuhera, Gangtok, Singrauli, Bhiwadi, and Narnaul were in the top 10 cities, with Noida and Narnaul in third and tenth place, respectively.

- **Uttar Pradesh and Haryana each accounted for three of the ten most polluted cities in January 2026, followed by one city each in Delhi, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, and Sikkim.**

- Several other cities, including Faridabad, Howrah, Pithampur, and Byrnihat also recorded daily $PM_{2.5}$ levels exceeding the NAAQS every single day of the month.

- <u>State with most polluted cities</u>: Among all Indian states, Rajasthan had the highest number of cities exceeding NAAQS, with 23 out of 34 recording $PM_{2.5}$ higher than NAAQS. Of these, 10 were in the 'Satisfactory' category, 19 cities were in the 'Moderate' category, four in the 'Poor' category, and one in the 'Very Poor' category. Haryana also had a high proportion of polluted cities, with 19 out of 25 exceeding NAAQS, followed by Bihar (15 out of 24 cities), Odisha (13 out of 15 cities), and Uttar Pradesh (13 out of 20 cities) breaching NAAQS limits.

- <u>Cleanest city</u>: **Damoh, in the state of Madhya Pradesh, was the cleanest city in India during January**, with a monthly average $PM_{2.5}$ of 17 µg/m³. The top 10 cleanest cities comprise five cities from Karnataka, and one each from Jammu and Kashmir, Madhya Pradesh, Bihar, Nagaland, and Punjab.

- <u>Frequency in top 10 polluted cities</u>: **A total of 53 cities were featured in the daily top 10 most polluted cities list in January 2026**, topped by Ghaziabad (28 days), followed by Delhi (27 days), Gurgaon (25 days), Noida (24 days), Greater Noida (23 days), Dharuhera (20 days), and Singrauli (15 days).

- <u>Megacities</u>: Delhi (169 µg/m³) and Kolkata (92 µg/m³) exceeded the NAAQS in January 2026, while Chennai (49 µg/m³), Mumbai (48 µg/m³), and Bengaluru (44 µg/m³) recorded monthly average $PM_{2.5}$ levels below the standard.
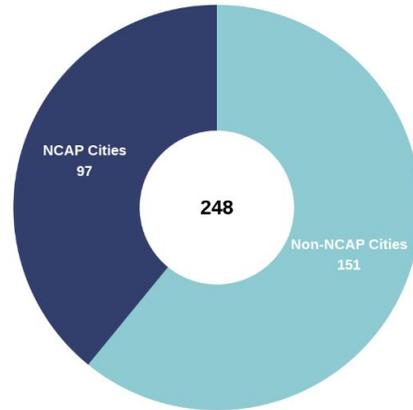
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Number of cities vs frequency of days
with PM$_{2.5}$ concentration above NAAQS and WHO guidelines – January 2026
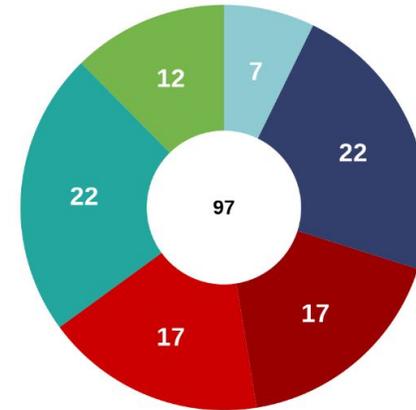
Categorisation of non-NCAP cities against compliance to NAAQS guidelines
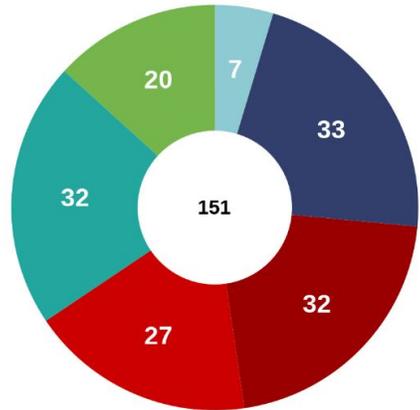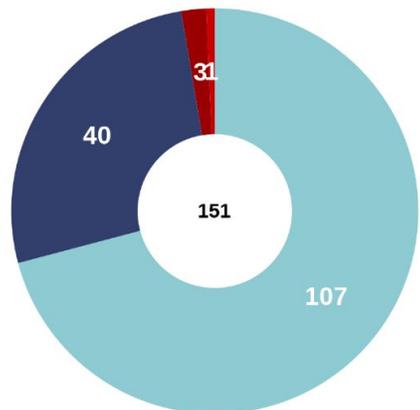
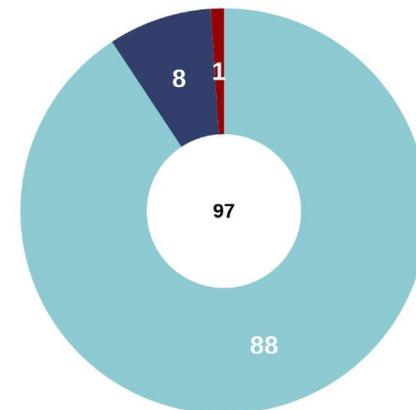**Total # of cities with >80% of the days with CAAQMS data**

Categorisation of NCAP cities against compliance to NAAQS guidelines
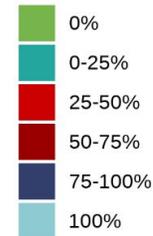

Categorisation of non-NCAP cities against compliance to WHO guidelines

% of days above standard
- 0%
- 0-25%
- 25-50%
- 50-75%
- 75-100%
- 100%

Categorisation of NCAP cities against compliance to WHO guidelines

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Top 10 most polluted cities in India by PM$_{2.5}$ concentration – January 2026

Days in respective AQI categories based on PM$_{2.5}$ (µg/m^3) – January 2026

City	Good (0-30)	Satisfactory (31-60)	Moderate (61-90)	Poor (91-120)	Very poor (121-250)	Severe (>250)
Ghaziabad	0	0	1	2	24	4
Delhi	0	0	2	2	24	3
Noida	0	0	3	4	21	3
Gurgaon	0	0	2	4	22	3
Greater_Noida	0	0	3	4	23	1
Dharuhera	0	1	1	5	23	1
Gangtok	16	5	0	0	1	6
Singrauli	0	0	3	8	20	0
Bhiwadi	0	0	3	13	15	0
Narnaul	0	0	7	9	15	0

Top 10 most polluted cities in India by PM2.5 concentration - January 2026
* indicates NCAP cities
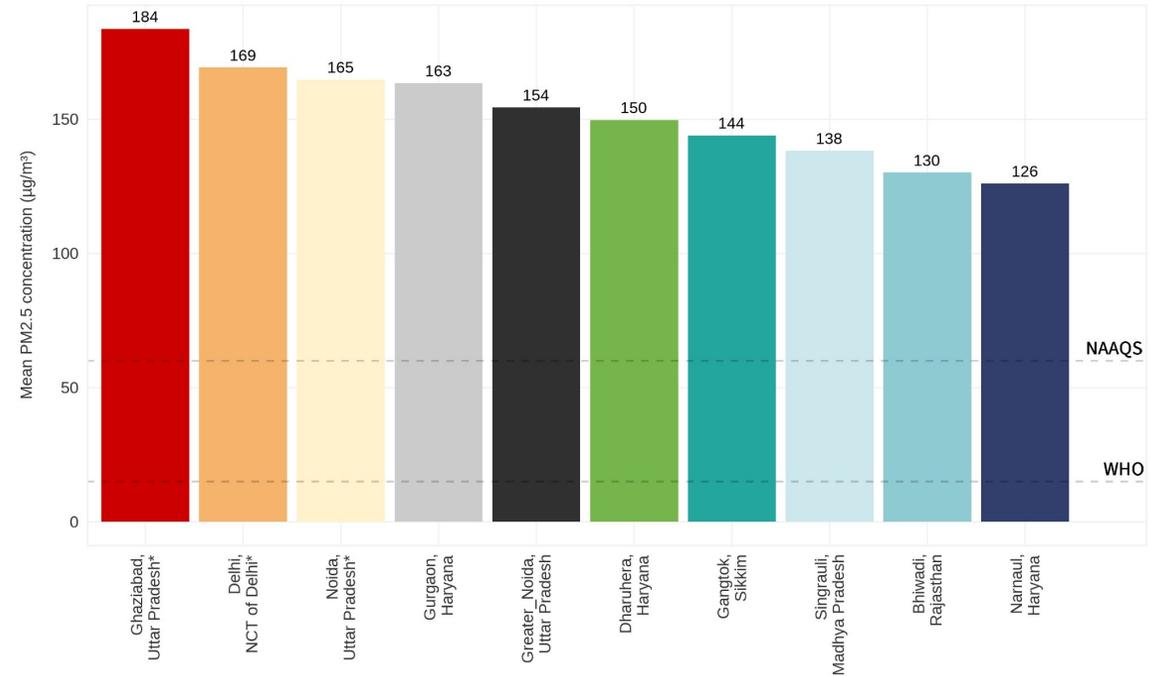
Status of PM$_{2.5}$ concentration in January 2025 for top 10 most polluted cities in January 2026 across India

Days in respective AQI categories based on PM$_{2.5}$ (µg/m^3) – January 2025

City	Good (0-30)	Satisfactory (31-60)	Moderate (61-90)	Poor (91-120)	Very poor (121-250)	Severe (>250)
Bhiwadi	0	6	15	7	3	0
Delhi	0	0	2	4	22	3
Ghaziabad	0	2	10	12	7	0
Greater_Noida	0	4	16	8	3	0
Gurgaon	0	1	14	9	7	0
Noida	0	3	11	8	9	0
Singrauli	0	1	13	6	11	0

Year-on-year change of top 10 most polluted cities in India by PM2.5 concentration - January 2026

* indicates NCAP cities
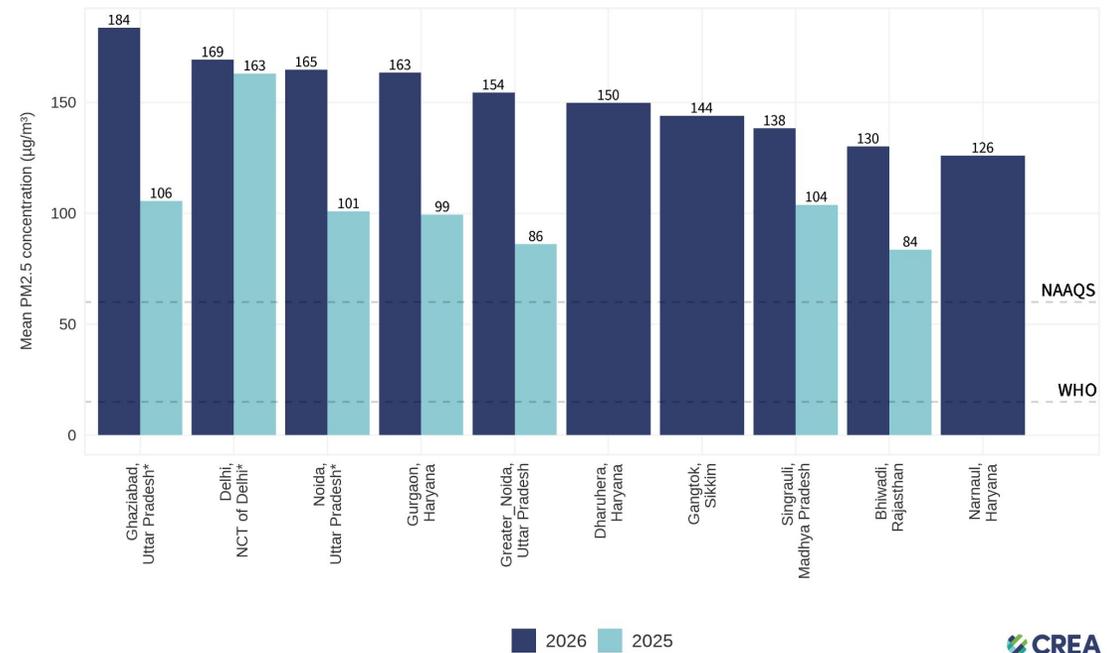
Distribution of cities by PM$_{2.5}$ air quality index (AQI) based on monthly average PM$_{2.5}$ concentrations – January 2026
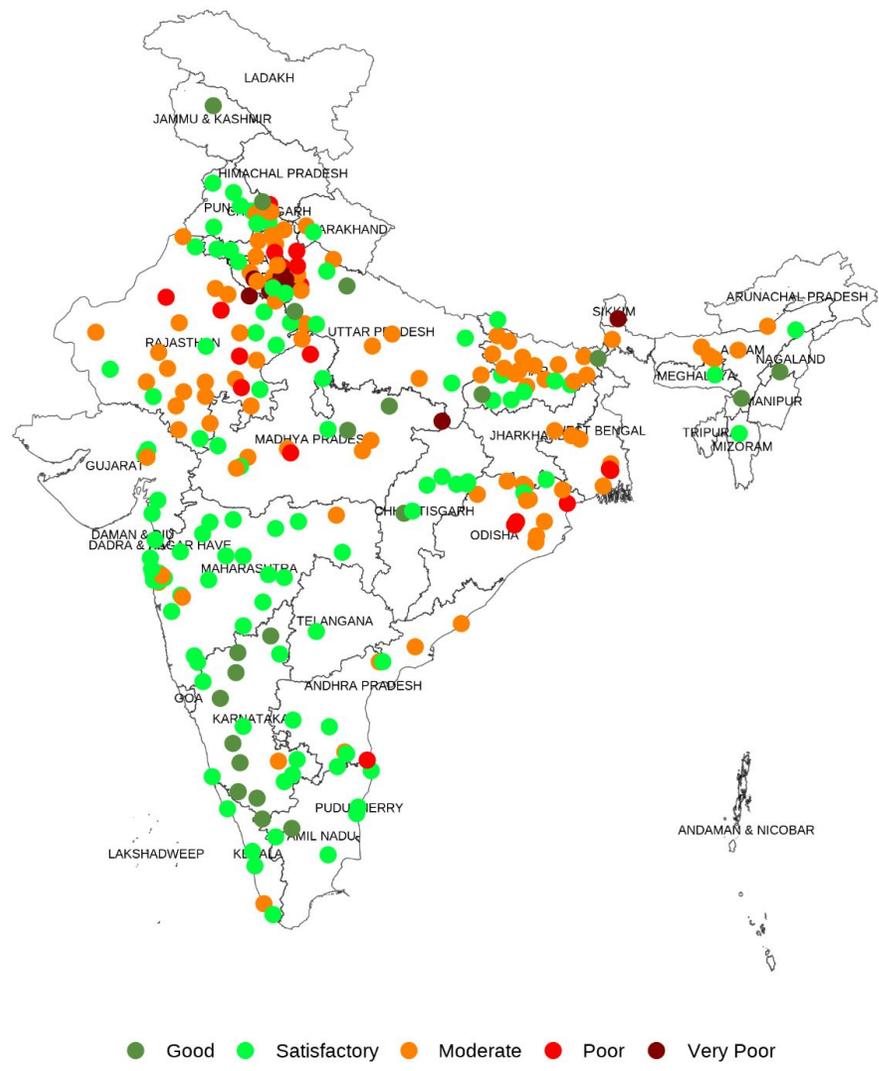
State/UT	Number of cities in AQI category (PM$_{2.5}$ µg/m³)				
	Good (0-30)	Satisfactory (31-60)	Moderate (61-90)	Poor (91-120)	Very Poor (121-250)
Andhra Pradesh	0	5	4	0	0
Arunachal Pradesh	0	0	1	0	0
Assam	1	1	4	0	0
Bihar	2	7	15	0	0
Chandigarh	0	0	1	0	0
Chhattisgarh	1	6	0	0	0
Gujarat	0	5	1	0	0
Haryana	0	6	11	4	4
Himachal Pradesh	0	0	0	1	0
Jammu and Kashmir	1	0	0	0	0
Jharkhand	0	0	1	0	0
Karnataka	9	7	1	0	0
Kerala	0	4	1	0	0
Madhya Pradesh	2	3	5	2	1
Maharashtra	0	27	4	0	0
Meghalaya	0	1	0	0	0
Mizoram	0	1	0	0	0
NCT of Delhi	0	0	0	0	1
Nagaland	1	0	0	0	0
Odisha	0	2	10	3	0
Puducherry	0	1	0	0	0
Punjab	1	6	1	0	0
Rajasthan	0	10	19	4	1
Sikkim	0	0	0	0	1
Tamil Nadu	1	4	0	1	0
Telangana	0	1	0	0	0
Uttar Pradesh	2	5	6	4	3
Uttarakhand	0	1	2	0	0
West Bengal	0	0	5	2	0

Top 10 cleanest cities in India by PM$_{2.5}$ concentration – January 2026

City	Good (0-30)	Satisfactory (31-60)	Moderate (61-90)	Poor (91-120)	Very poor (121-250)	Severe (>250)
Days in respective AQI categories based on PM$_{2.5}$ (µg/m3) – January 2026						
Damoh	22	3	1	0	0	0
Vijayapura	29	0	0	0	0	0
Rupnagar	28	1	0	0	0	0
Srinagar	29	2	0	0	0	0
Chamarajanagar	31	0	0	0	0	0
Chikkamagaluru	27	4	0	0	0	0
Shivamogga	31	0	0	0	0	0
Bagalkot	31	0	0	0	0	0
Kohima	29	2	0	0	0	0
Sasaram	29	1	0	0	0	0

Top 10 cleanest cities in India by PM2.5 concentration - January 2026
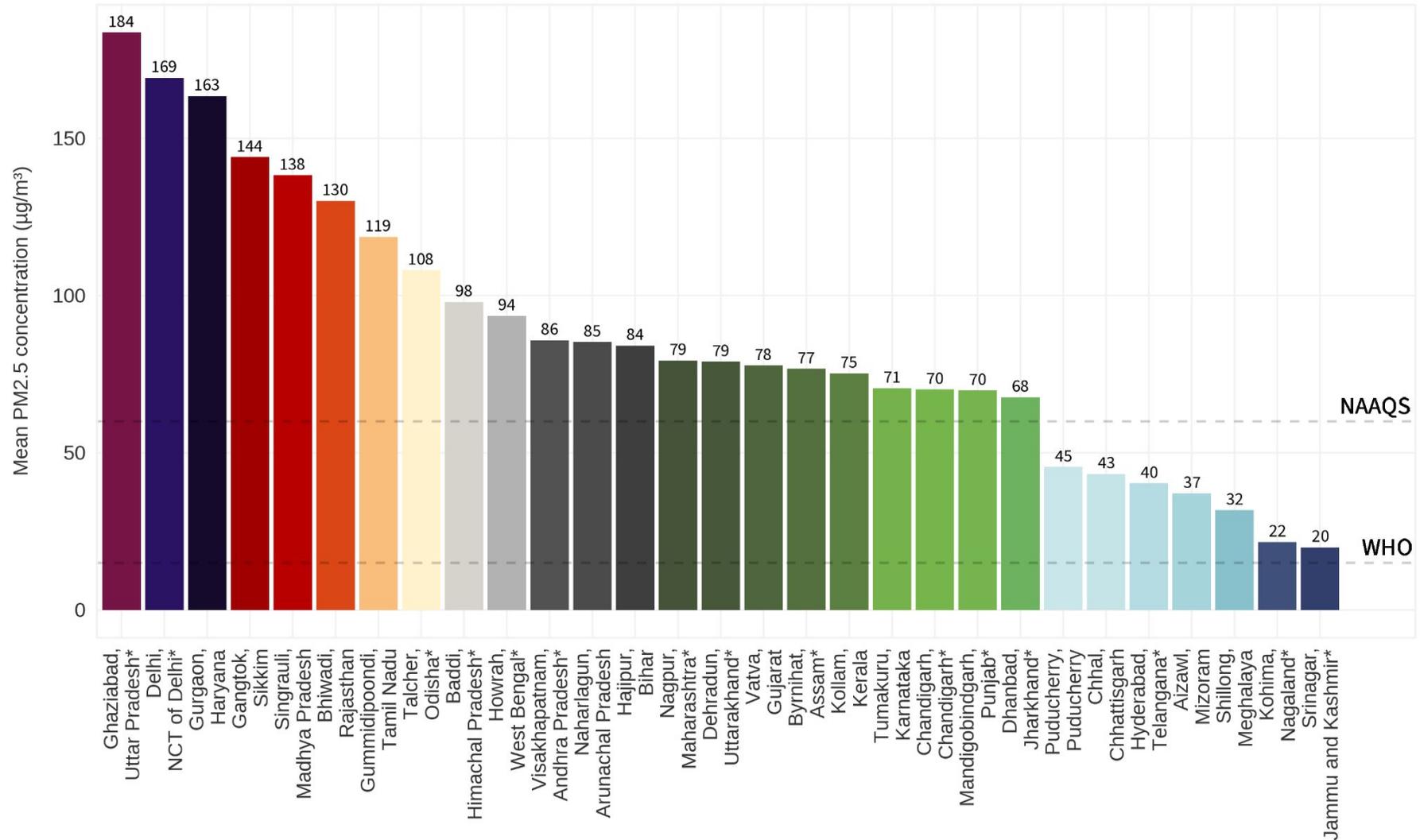* indicates NCAP cities
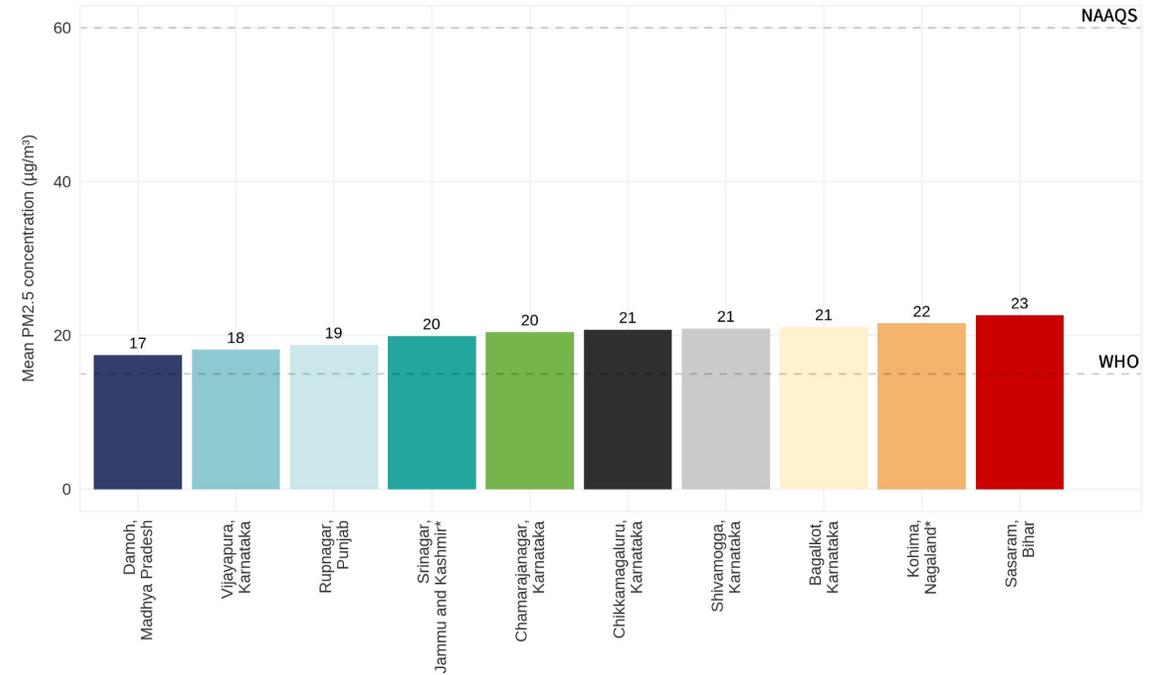
Frequency of appearance of respective cities in top 10 most polluted cities in India by PM$_{2.5}$ concentration – January 2026
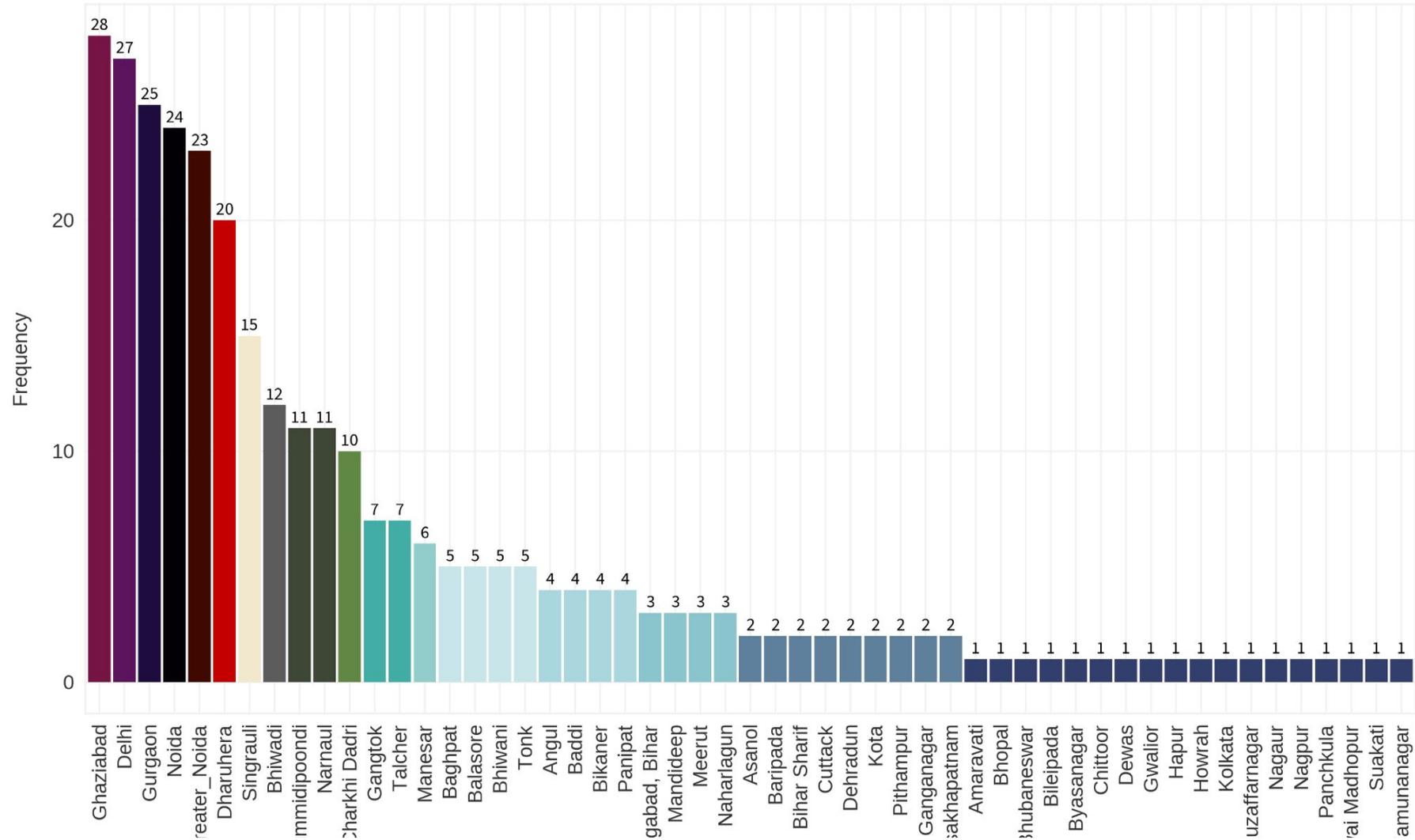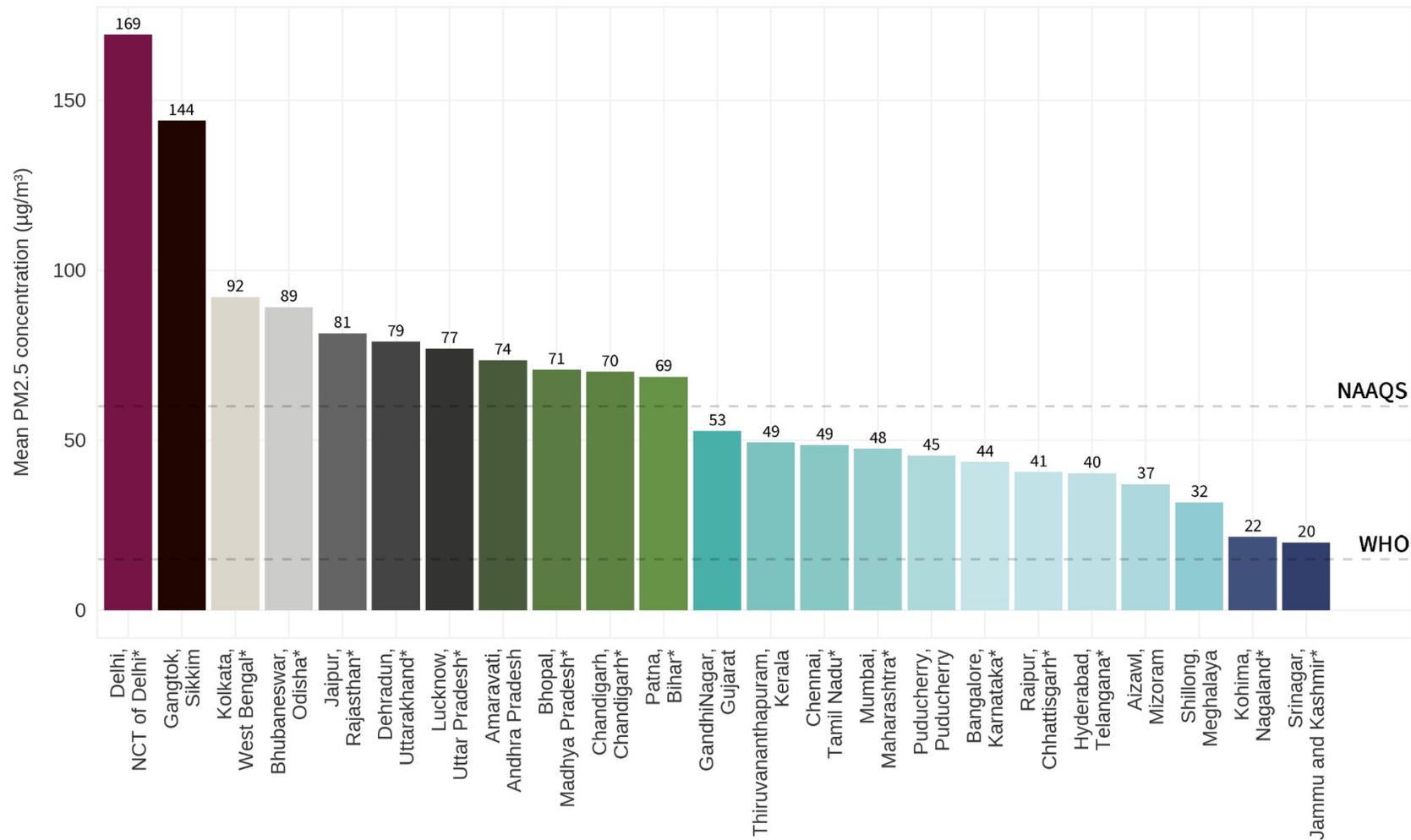
State-wise most polluted cities (PM$_{2.5}$, µg/m³) in India - January 2026

* indicates NCAP cities

Chart: Mean PM2.5 concentration (µg/m³) by state-wise most polluted city.

City, State	PM2.5
Ghaziabad, Uttar Pradesh*	184
Delhi, NCT of Delhi*	169
Gurgaon, Haryana	163
Gangtok, Sikkim	144
Singrauli, Madhya Pradesh	138
Bhiwadi, Rajasthan	130
Gummidipoondi, Tamil Nadu	119
Talcher, Odisha*	108
Baddi, Himachal Pradesh*	98
Howrah, West Bengal*	94
Visakhapatnam, Andhra Pradesh*	86
Naharlagun, Arunachal Pradesh	85
Hajipur, Bihar	84
Nagpur, Maharashtra*	79
Dehradun, Uttarakhand*	79
Vatva, Gujarat	78
Byrnihat, Assam*	77
Kollam, Kerala	75
Tumakuru, Karnataka	71
Chandigarh, Chandigarh*	70
Mandigobindgarh, Punjab*	70
Dhanbad, Jharkhand*	68
Puducherry, Puducherry	45
Chhal, Chhattisgarh	43
Hyderabad, Telangana*	40
Aizawl, Mizoram	37
Shillong, Meghalaya	32
Kohima, Nagaland*	22
Srinagar, Jammu and Kashmir*	20

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PM$_{2.5}$ concentrations across state capital cities in India - January 2026

* indicates NCAP cities

Mean PM2.5 concentration (µg/m³)

City	Value
Delhi, NCT of Delhi*	169
Gangtok, Sikkim	144
Kolkata, West Bengal*	92
Bhubaneswar, Odisha*	89
Jaipur, Rajasthan*	81
Dehradun, Uttarakhand*	79
Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh*	77
Amaravati, Andhra Pradesh	74
Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh*	71
Chandigarh, Chandigarh*	70
Patna, Bihar*	69
GandhiNagar, Gujarat	53
Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala	49
Chennai, Tamil Nadu*	49
Mumbai, Maharashtra*	48
Puducherry, Puducherry	45
Bangalore, Karnataka*	44
Raipur, Chhattisgarh*	41
Hyderabad, Telangana*	40
Aizawl, Mizoram	37
Shillong, Meghalaya	32
Kohima, Nagaland*	22
Srinagar, Jammu and Kashmir*	20

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Itanagar (Arunachal Pradesh); Dispur (Assam); Panaji (Goa); Shimla (Himachal Pradesh); Ranchi (Jharkhand); Port Blair (Andaman and Nicobar Islands); Daman (Dadra and Nagar Haveli and Daman & Diu); Leh (Ladakh); and Kavaratti (Lakshadweep) don't have an operational CAAQMS.
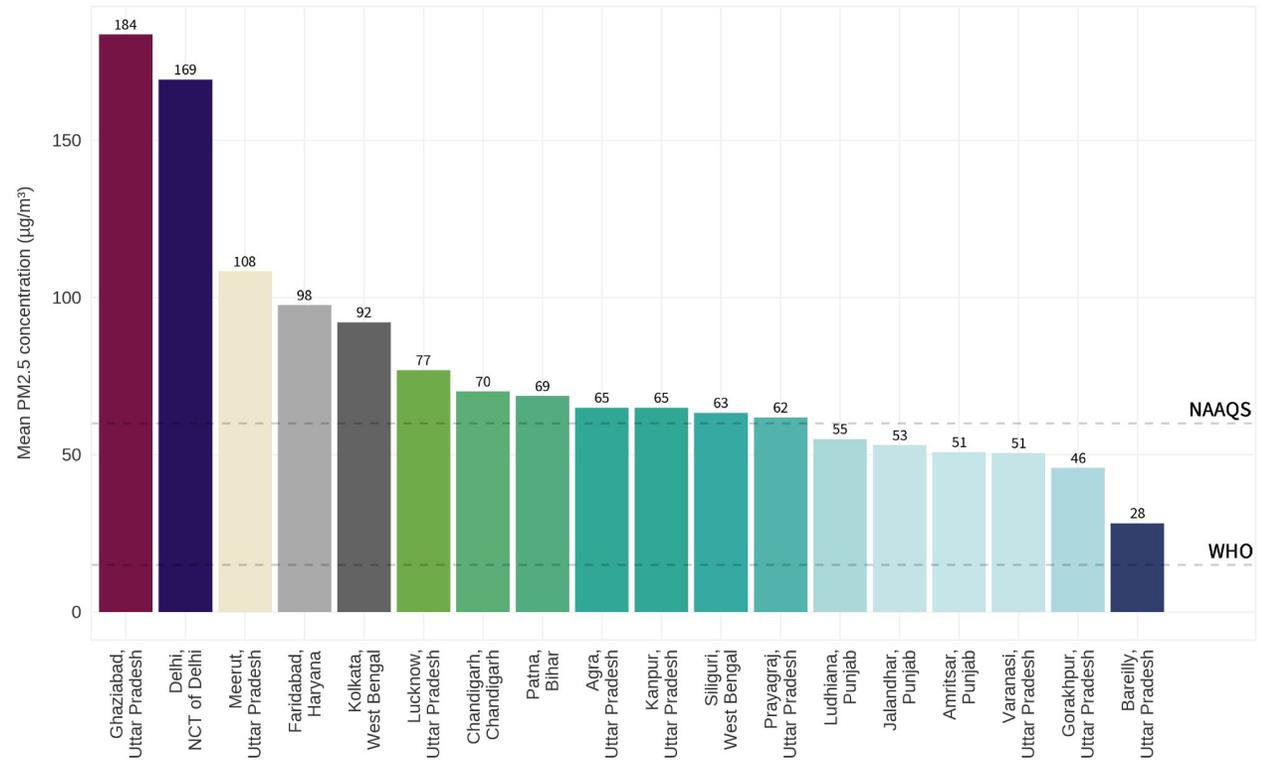
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PM₂.₅ concentrations across million plus cities with CAAQMS in Indo-Gangetic Plain in India – January 2026
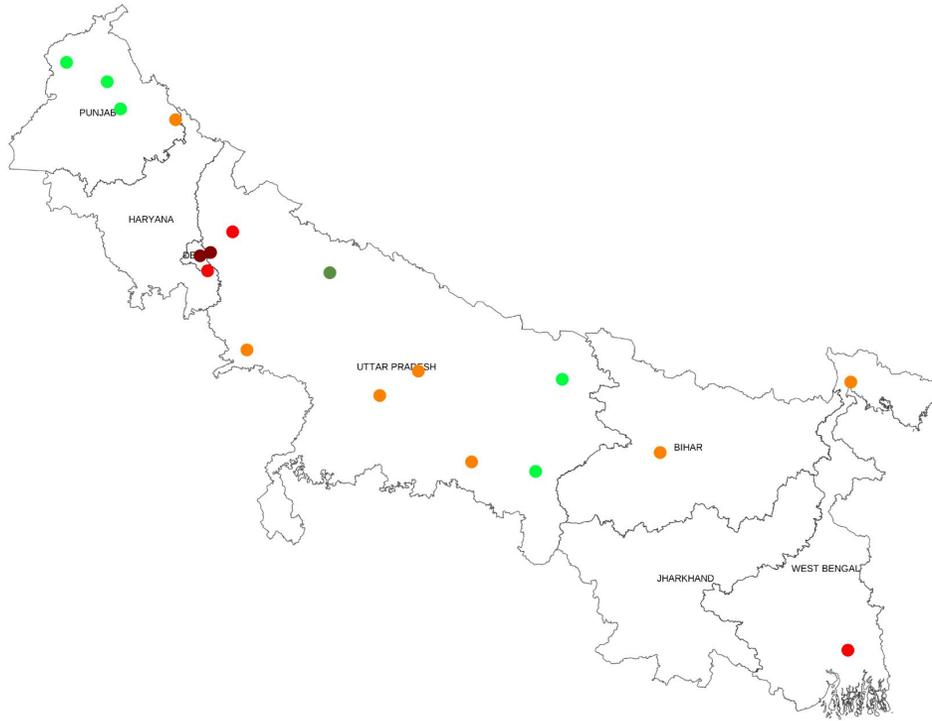
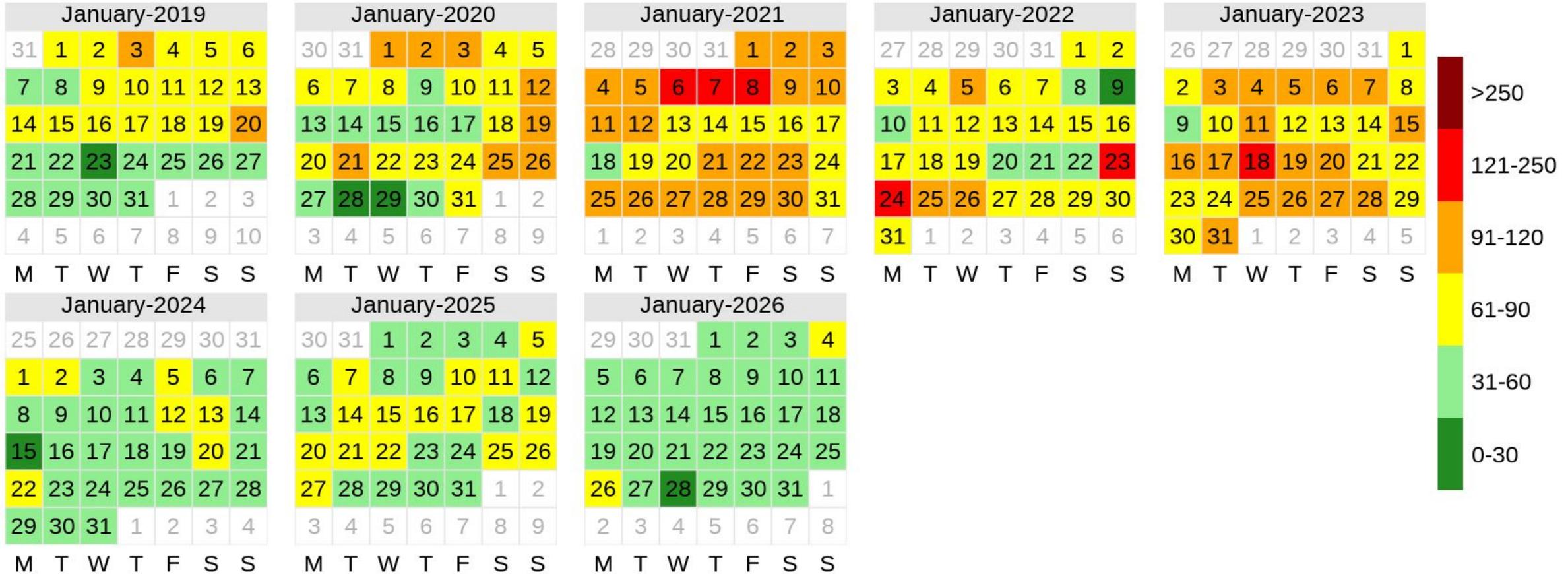

PM2.5 concentrations across million plus cities in Indo-Gangetic Plain in India (with CAAQMS) - January 2026
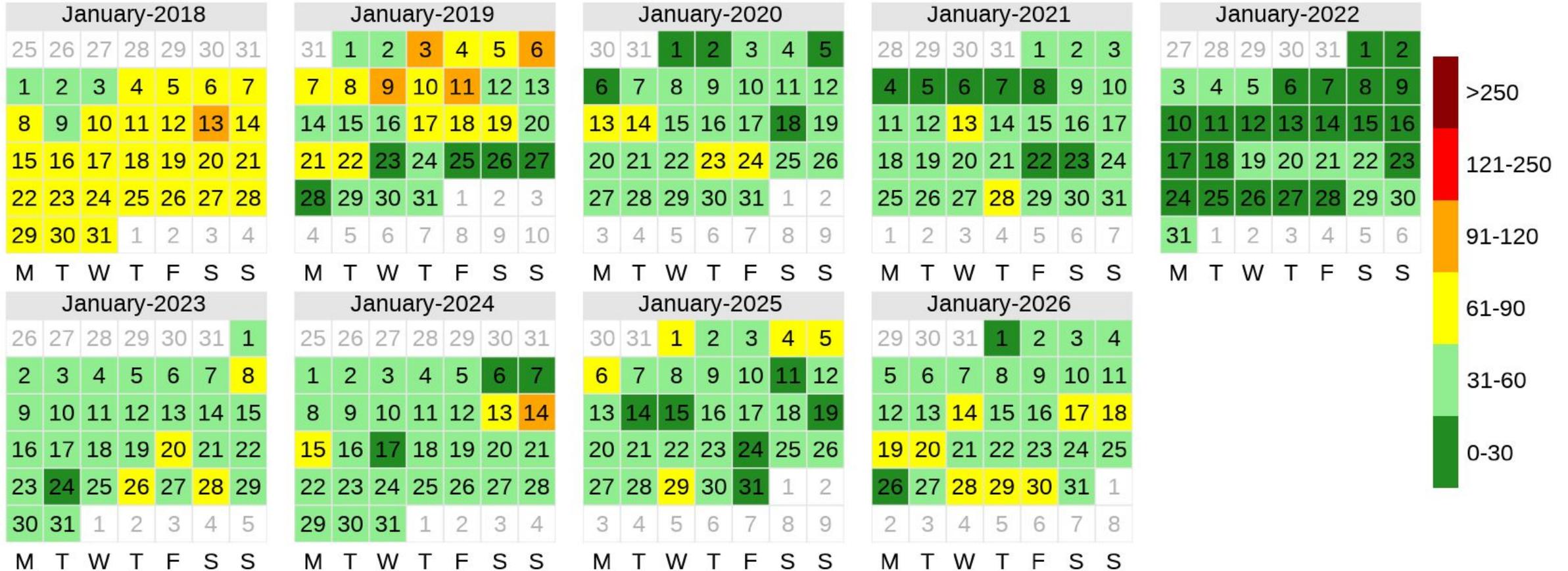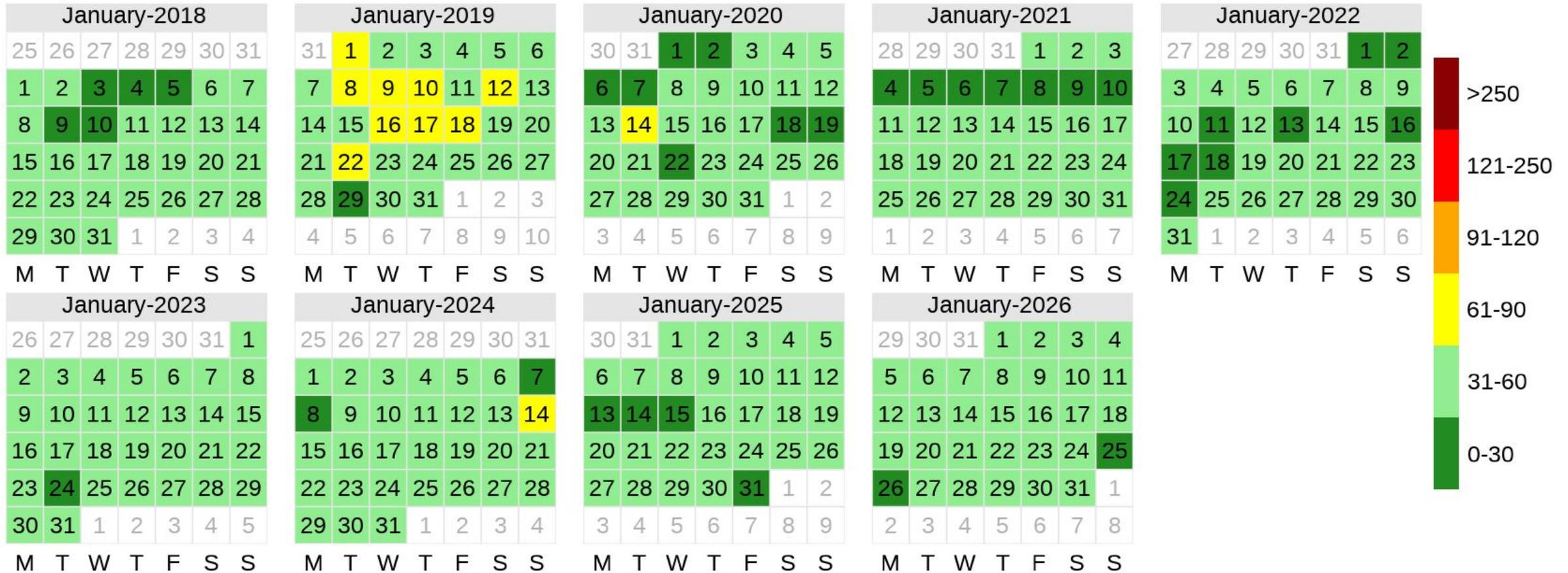
Ambient air quality status in Delhi – January 2026 (PM$_{2.5}$ concentration, µg/m³)

Ambient air quality status in Mumbai – January 2026 (PM$_{2.5}$ concentration, µg/m³)
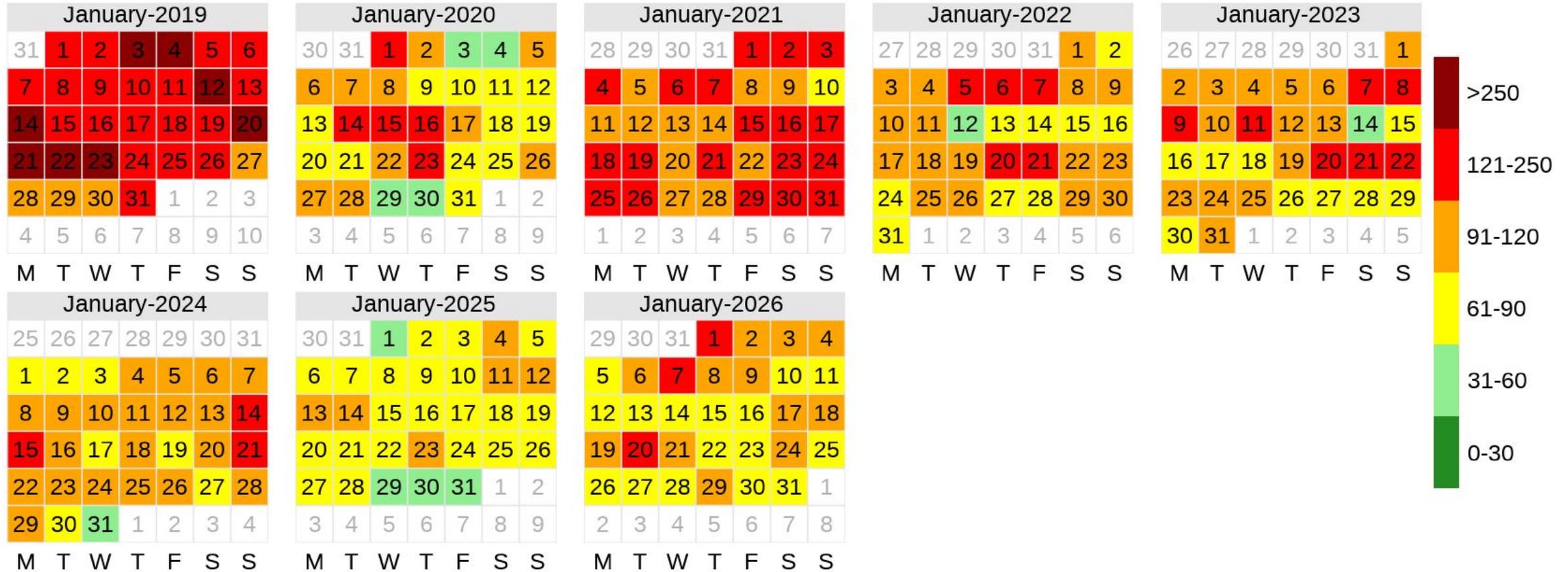
Ambient air quality status in Chennai – January 2026
(PM$_{2.5}$ concentration, µg/m³)

Ambient air quality status in Bangalore – January 2026 (PM$_{2.5}$ concentration, µg/m³)

Ambient air quality status in Kolkata – January 2026
($PM_{2.5}$ concentration, µg/m³)

Data sources

Ambient air quality data recorded by Continuous Ambient Air Quality Monitoring Stations (CAAQMS) is downloaded from the 'Central Control Room for Air Quality Management - All India' dashboard operated by the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB).

Resources

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