Haze Over Delhi

Why in news?

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- Haze loomed over Delhi and its adjoining areas for over a week.
- The air quality index reflected a "severe" degradation in air quality in Delhi.

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How has pollution been in Delhi?

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- Delhi witnessed high pollution levels in the recent winter.
- Stubble burning in the neighbourhood regions was cited as the main reason.
- Smoke from brick kilns and vehicular emissions added to the air pollution.
- The weather patterns in winter season contributed for the sustenance of the pollution.
- However, the current haze, in summer, cannot be attributed to these.

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What are the reasons?

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- Delhi now witnesses high levels of dust, causing haze, reducing visibility.
- It also resulted in particulate matter (PM) levels shooting to over 8 times the normal range.
- Dust storms originating from Rajasthan and wind direction are said to be the cause.

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- But besides this, local sources of pollution are also said to be the reasons.
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How to address this?

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- Emergency measures will have to be soon initiated and all construction activity stopped.
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- Delhi government has been directed to carry out water sprinkling to bring down the PM levels.
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- Modelling and measurements to evaluate the exact sources of the dust particles are essential to deal with it.
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- Cities like Delhi require a green belt around it to reduce pollution levels.
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- But greening open spaces or reforestation of land largely remain as concepts.
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- Delhi needs long term planning and systematic research on dealing with the perpetual problem of pollution.
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Source: BusinessLine

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