Pollution around Golden Temple

What is the issue?

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- Golden Temple, the holiest shrine for Sikhs in Amritsar, attracts approximately seven million tourists in a month.
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- It is gold-plated and almost 430 years old.
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- The increasing numbers of tourists, the widening tourism industry and poor waste management have become a serious threat to the temple.
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- Amritsar has now been ranked among the 30 most polluted cities in the world in terms of fine particulate matter (PM 2.5) levels in the air, as per WHO reports.
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What are the problems?

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- About 1.4 million Indians were killed by illnesses related to air pollution in 2013.
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- The Management Committee Golden Temple (SGPC) has taken appropriate action to control the pollution generated from the kitchen.
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- It has switched from burning wood or coal to cooking with gas and electric machines.
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- But the government has done little to control the pollution caused by open construction or the burning of garbage on the narrow streets.
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- The mixed waste from across the city is transported every day in garbage-lifting trolleys to Bhagtanwala, which is just a kilometer away from the Golden Temple.
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- Around 600 metric tonnes of garbage is generated every day.
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- It affects around 60,000 people in its neighborhood.
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- The dumping site should be shifted and a waste treatment plant should be built.
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- But it has been caught up among various political issues for more than five years now.
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Source: The Diplomat

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