

Clean Air Action Plan for Asansol

The NCAP status

This policy tracker aims to record air pollution trends and utilize the data in India to paint a picture of the hazards related to air pollution.



What is NCAP?

The central government formulated and launched the **National Clean Air Programme** on **10 January 2019** to reduce particulate matter concentration in cities that do not match the National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) set by the World Health Organization (WHO). This tracker aims to control air pollution across the country through a collaborative approach involving ministers, state governments, local bodies, and stakeholders for the agenda (NCAP, WBPCB).



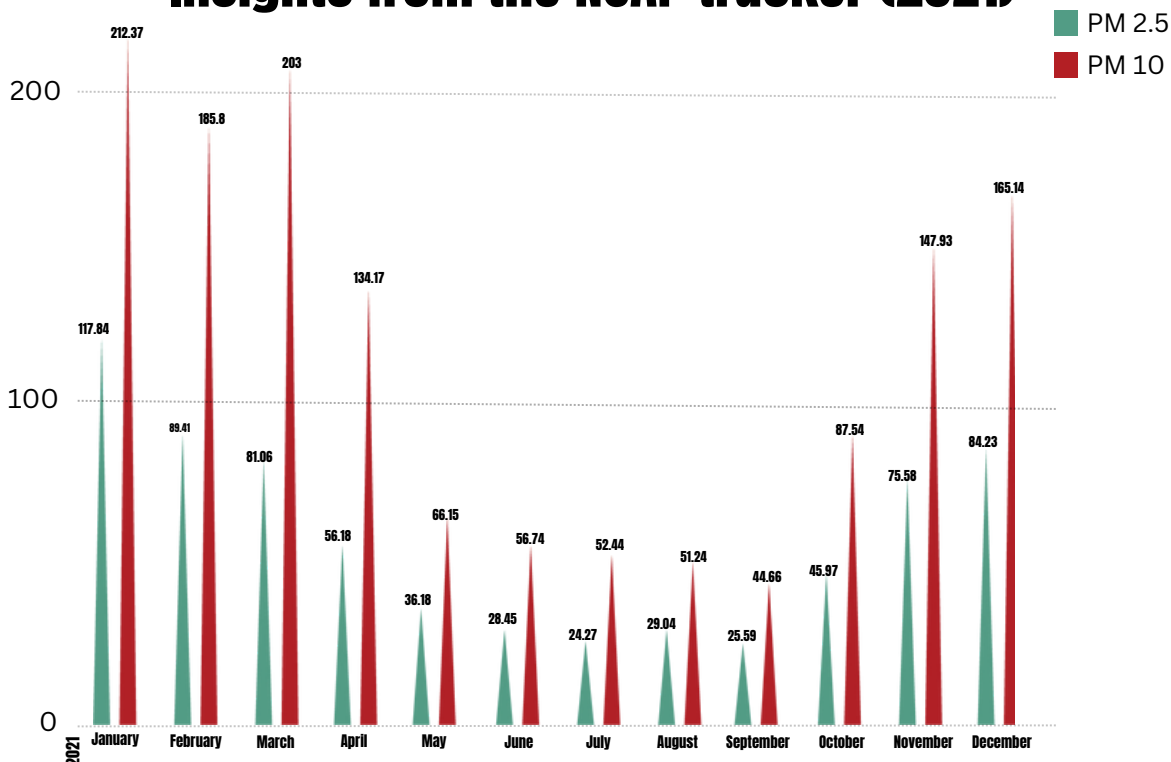


Why is Asansol under NCAP?

Clean Air Action Plan- Asansol, WBPCB, 2020

- Asansol is the second most polluted city in West Bengal.
- Industrial emissions, road dust, vehicular emissions, emissions from the construction sector, and transboundary pollution are major contributors to air pollution in Asansol.
- Long-term annual average PM_{2.5} data is scarcely available due to manual air quality monitoring.
- Typical weather conditions such as temperature inversions trap pollutants in the lower atmosphere at breathing altitudes, and the problem of poor air quality is exacerbated in winter.
- Asansol's economy is largely dependent on coal mining, cement manufacturing units, steel, and related industries, all of which depend on coal.

Insights from the NCAP tracker (2021)



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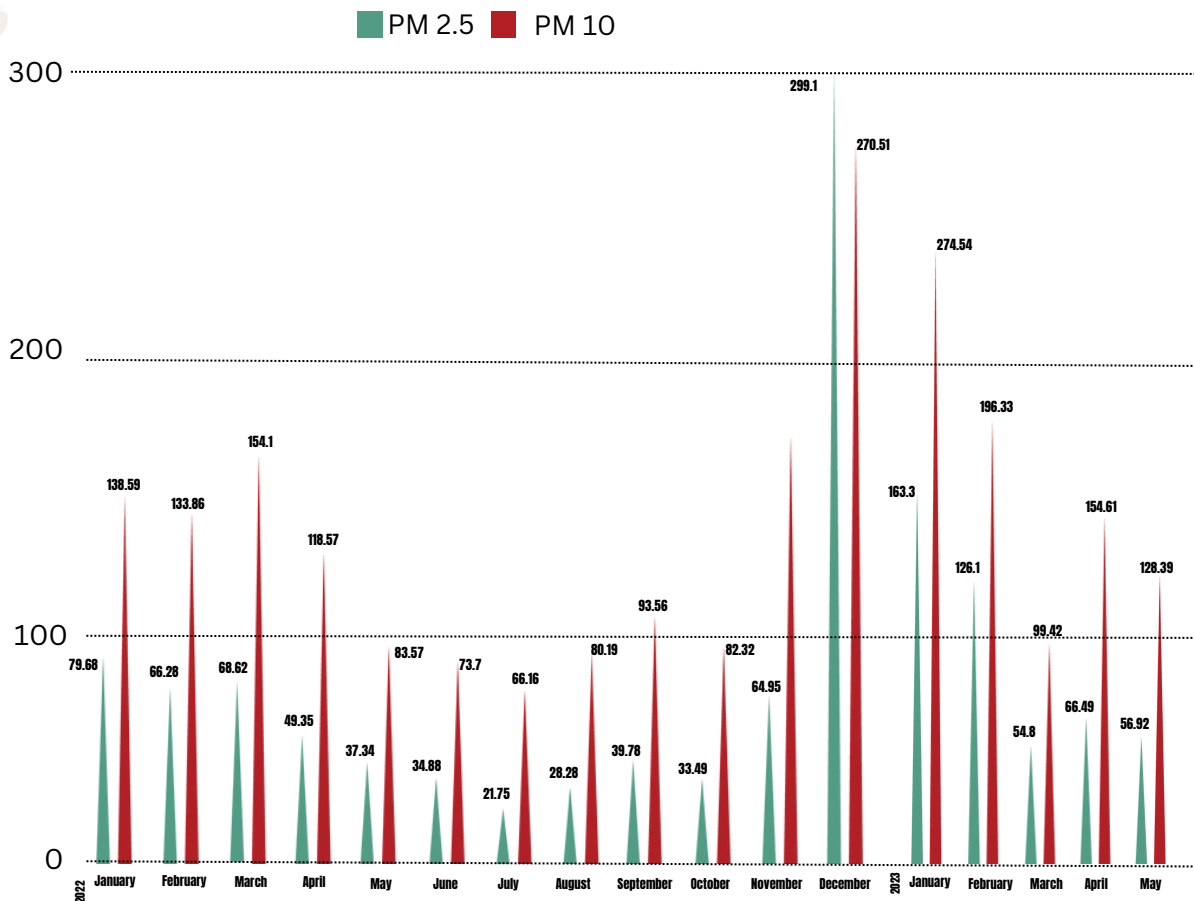
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Insights from the NCAP tracker (2022-2023)



Source of data: NCAP tracker- CAAQMS dashboard, Air quality trends,
<https://ncaptracker.in/caaqms-dashboard/>

West Bengal Pollution Control Board, Air Quality Information System, AQI bulletin,
<http://emis.wbpcb.gov.in/airquality/aqiBulletin.jsp>

The NCAP tracker records higher trends of pollutants (PM_{2.5} and PM₁₀) in winter months (November to February) as compared to summer and monsoon months.

Monetary aid by the government under the wings of NCAP

The Central government has released a total of ₹597.6 crores for the development of NCAP in West Bengal during 2021-2022, where ₹34 crores are solely reserved for Asansol (PRANA, CPCB, 2022).

₹19 crores have been used by the state government in aid until June 2022 (Press Information Bureau, 2022).

Recommendations

- NCAP needs to be promoted on a larger scale to generate awareness about the boons of the programme.
- Modification of policies and setting up new CAAQMS monitoring stations are necessary.
- Non-government bodies and stakeholders need to be motivated to join hands with NCAP.
- Government-funded research programmes are needed to grasp a clear picture of the levels of pollution in Asansol. Most data available are obsolete.

Way forward

- Acknowledgement of the worsening ambient air quality by the state government and stringent application of laws.
- Complying with the policies set by NCAP will help Asansol to come out of the impending doom of air pollution.
- Increasing awareness of the hazards of air pollution amongst the common public to aid the success of NCAP.

Recommendations

- Clean Air Action Plan For Asansol, 2020, Report of the Joint Committee, Department of Environment, Government of West Bengal.
<https://www.wbpcb.gov.in/files/Mo-02-2020-02-44-48CAP%20for%20Asansol.pdf>
- PRANA, Central Pollution Control Board, Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change Government of India.
<https://prana.cpcb.gov.in/#/clean-air-city/dashboard/>
- Press Information Bureau, Funds Allocated and Utilised Under National Clean Air Programme, Press release, (2022), Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change.
<https://pib.gov.in/PressReleaselframePage.aspx?PRID=1846952>
- National Clean Air Programme, West Bengal Pollution Control Board, Government of West Bengal.
<https://www.wbpcb.gov.in/national-clean-air-programme>
- NCAP tracker- CAAQMS dashboard, Air quality trends
<https://www.wbpcb.gov.in/national-clean-air-programme>

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