

## Investigation of PM<sub>10</sub>, PM<sub>2.5</sub> and PM<sub>1</sub> during Pollution Episodes: Fog and Diwali Festival

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**Abstract:** The present study focuses on the high loading of PM<sub>10</sub>, PM<sub>2.5</sub> and PM<sub>1</sub> mass during the episodic events i.e. Diwali and fog at the campus site of Dayalbagh Educational Institute, Agra. During Diwali the mass concentration for PM<sub>10</sub>, PM<sub>2.5</sub> and PM<sub>1</sub> were 2.8, 4.7 and 6.8 times higher than the mass observed during normal days due to burning of firecrackers. In addition, trace gas (O<sub>3</sub>, NO<sub>2</sub> and CO) levels were also high during Diwali. During the fog event also high mass concentration of PM<sub>10</sub>, PM<sub>2.5</sub> and PM<sub>1</sub> was observed probably due to less dispersion of pollutants as a consequence of low mixing height, low temperature and high relative humidity. On the basis of correlation analysis and HYSPLIT backward trajectories high mass concentration during the two pollution episodes may be mainly attributed to firecrackers during Diwali and anthropogenic activities and local meteorological condition during fog.

**Keywords:** Pollution episodes; PM<sub>10</sub>; PM<sub>2.5</sub>; PM<sub>1</sub>; O<sub>3</sub>; Fog; Diwali

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### I. Introduction

Particulate matter (PM) exerts a serious effect on visibility, climate and human health (Li et al., 2015). PM emissions originate from industries, vehicles, re-suspended soil dust etc. (Nishanth et al., 2012). Various primary and secondary sources affect the levels of aerosols and other pollutants at a particular site, however, sudden increase in emission sources and/or favorable meteorological conditions may lead to episodic levels of pollutants resulting in poor air quality.

Fog is composed of tiny water droplets of micrometers size (Herckes et al., 2007) having high concentration of fine particles such as PM<sub>2.5</sub> and PM<sub>1</sub>. They act as condensation nuclei to enhance the condensation of water vapor and increase the growth of the fine particles (Liu et al., 2016). Studies conducted in Indo Gangetic Plain (IGP) and other regions report high concentrations of particulate matter and their chemical constituents (water soluble ions, Polycyclic Aromatic Hydrocarbons (PAHs), Organic Carbon (OC) and Black Carbon (BC) and metals) during fog (Singh and Gupta, 2016; Agarwal et al., 2017).

Diwali is celebrated in India by burning fire crackers for 5 days. This deteriorates the ambient air quality resulting in serious health effects (Pervez et al., 2016) and reduction in visibility. Several studies report high emissions from fireworks during festivals like New Year celebrations (Zhang et al., 2010), Lantern festival in China (Tsai et al., 2012) and Diwali festival in India (Chatterjee et al., 2013). Firecrackers are composed of a mixture of many metals and release thick layers of smoke during combustion. Higher concentrations of trace metals in ambient PM<sub>10</sub> and PM<sub>2.5</sub> have been reported by many researchers (Sarkar et al., 2010; Tsai et al., 2012). In Lucknow, elevated levels of PM<sub>10</sub> were observed during Diwali days in comparison to normal days (Barman et al., 2008). Burning of crackers releases pollutants like SO<sub>2</sub>, O<sub>3</sub>, NO<sub>2</sub>, CO<sub>2</sub>, CO, etc. that causes serious health hazards (Attriet al., 2001; Pachauriet al., 2013).

The present study investigates emissions of PM<sub>10</sub>, PM<sub>2.5</sub>, PM<sub>1</sub> and trace gases during these major episodes.

### II. Methodology

**Sampling site:** Agra (27.16°N, 78.08°E) lies in Uttar Pradesh in North-central part of India. Climate of Agra is semi-arid type and two-thirds of its boundary is surrounded by Thar Desert of Rajasthan. Sampling was done on the roof of Science Faculty building of the Institute (Fig. 1). It is situated in a sub-urban location of Dayalbagh. The road connecting the institute to the rest of the city has a vehicular density of about 10<sup>4</sup> vehicles per day. Agra is hot and dry during the summer with temperature and RH in the range of 25°C to 47°C and 14 to 50% respectively. However, during winter the weather is cold with low temperature (as low as 3°C) and high RH (23 to 90%). The detailed description of the site has been discussed elsewhere (Verma et al., 2017a).

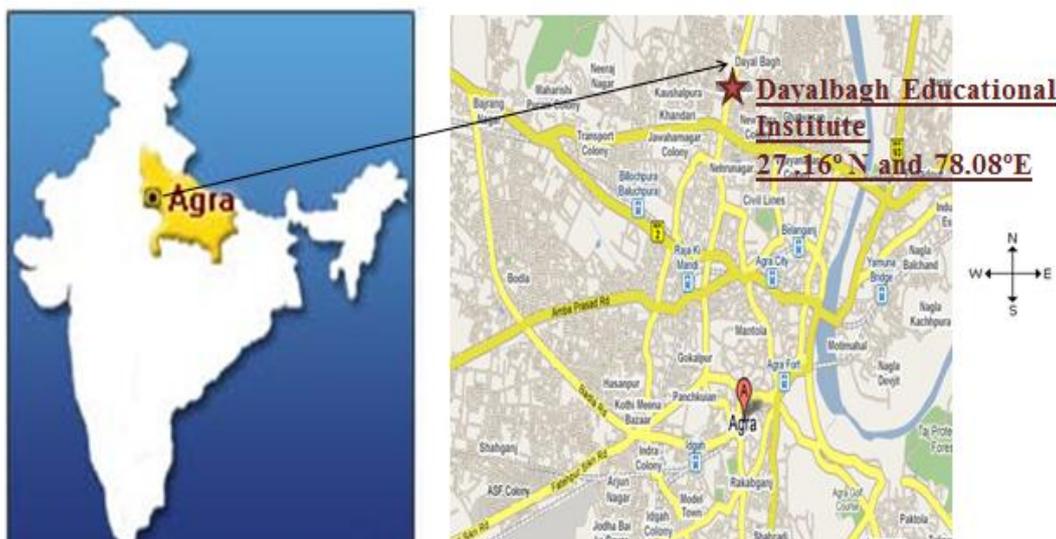


Figure 1: Map of sampling site (shown by star) at Dayalbagh Educational Institute, Agra, India

**Sampling:** Sampling for different pollution events was done during October (Diwali) and December 2016 to January 2017. 18 samples were collected for different episodes which were divided as: 5 during Diwali (including pre and post- Diwali days) and 8 for foggy and 5 for non-foggy days. Foggy and non-foggy days were classified on the basis of relative humidity ( $> 80\%$ ) (Agarwal et al., 2017).

$PM_{10}$  and  $PM_{2.5}$  samples were collected using Fine Particulate Sampler (Envirotech APM 550) operating at a constant flow of 16.6 liter per minute on pre-weighed 47 mm quartz fiber filters (Pallflex, Tissuquartz) and  $PM_1$  samples were collected by using  $PM_1$  particulate sampler Envirotech (APM 577) operating at a flow rate of 10 liter per minute on a pre-weighed 47 mm quartz fiber filter (QM-A). Filters were pretreated in a muffle furnace at  $800^\circ\text{C}$  for 4 hour and for removal of organic impurities filters were desiccated for 24 hour. Before weighing, the filters were equilibrated in a desiccator for 24 hour to avoid the effects of humidity on gravimetric mass and then weighed on an electronic microbalance (Mettler, Toledo). The mass concentration of PM was obtained from the difference of weights of the filters.

In-situ measurements of  $O_3$ ,  $NO_2$  and CO were also recorded using continuously operating analyzers. The detailed description of the measurements has been discussed elsewhere (Verma et al., 2017b). Meteorological data (Temperature (T), Relative Humidity (RH), Wind Speed (WS) and Wind Direction (WD)) was recorded at the present site using Automatic Weather Station WM271 Data Logger at every 1 hour interval. Air-mass back-trajectories were simulated using the Hybrid Single Particle Lagrangian Integrated Trajectory (HYSPPLIT) model (Draxler and Hess, 2004).

### III. Results and Discussions

**$PM_{10}$ ,  $PM_{2.5}$ ,  $PM_1$ , CO,  $NO_2$  and  $O_3$  during Diwali:** Fig. 2 shows the variation in concentrations of  $PM_{10}$ ,  $PM_{2.5}$ ,  $PM_1$ ,  $O_3$ ,  $NO_2$  and CO during Diwali (31.10.16), pre- Diwali (28.10.13) and post-Diwali (3.11.16). High levels of  $PM_{10}$ ,  $PM_{2.5}$ ,  $PM_1$  and trace gases were observed during Diwali. The mass concentration for  $PM_{10}$ ,  $PM_{2.5}$  and  $PM_1$  was  $280\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ ,  $260\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$  and  $240\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ , respectively during Diwali days, however, 3 days before Diwali the mass concentration for  $PM_{10}$ ,  $PM_{2.5}$  and  $PM_1$  was  $100\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ ,  $55\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$  and  $35\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ , respectively while after 3 days it was  $80\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ ,  $60\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$  and  $50\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$  respectively (Fig. 2a). As a result of huge amount of firecracker burnt on Diwali day,  $PM_{10}$ ,  $PM_{2.5}$  and  $PM_1$  were 2.8, 4.7 and 6.8 times higher than the mass concentration on normal day. Similar results were reported by Rao et al. (2012) at Nagpur in which they observed 2-3 times increase in mass concentration of  $PM_{10}$  and  $PM_{2.5}$  during Diwali,  $PM_{2.5}/PM_{10}$  ratio shows a gradual increase (varied from 0.5 to 0.9) from pre-Diwali to day after Diwali signifying dominance of fine particulate loading. Similar variation in  $PM_{2.5}/PM_{10}$  ratio during Diwali has been reported earlier by Kumar et al. (2016) at Pune, Mumbai and Varanasi. Mass concentration of fine particles increase as the burning of crackers and sparkles during late evening and night causes increased emissions of metal oxides, metal salts and other inorganic species from firecrackers. In addition gas to particle conversion also causes loading of  $PM_{2.5}$  particulates. To determine the sources of different particle size, correlation analysis was done between  $PM_{10}$ ,  $PM_{2.5}$  and  $PM_1$  and the correlation coefficient was more than 0.9 indicating that the sources were similar. High PM levels can be attributed to fire cracker emissions favored by stable meteorology, as the average wind speed was  $0.43\text{ m/s}$  and the average relative humidity was 60% during Diwali.

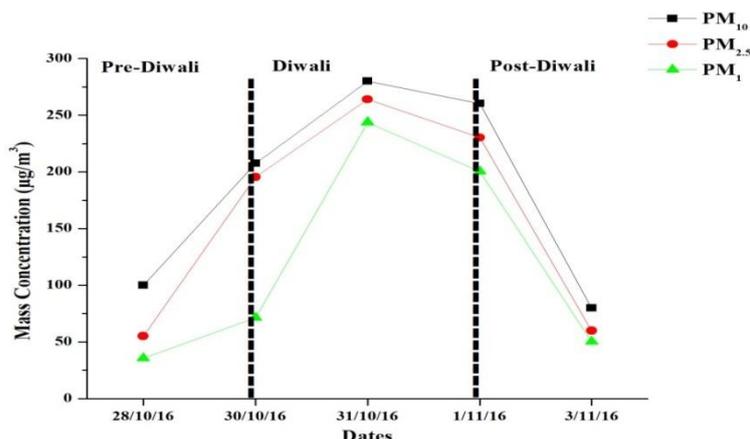


Figure 2 (a): Variation in PM mass concentration during Diwali

The enhancement in the PM mass concentrations during Diwali and their elevation times in the present study have been compared with the other locations in India and other fireworks festivals outside India (Table 1).  $PM_{10}$  concentration in the present study ( $280 \mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ ) was found comparable ( $249 \mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ ) with Tianjin, China (Tianet al., 2014) during New Year celebration and was slightly higher ( $223 \mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ ) than those obtained at Hissar (Ravindra et al., 2003) during Diwali.  $PM_{2.5}$  mass concentration at the present site ( $264 \mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ ) was similar to the concentration ( $271 \mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ ) at Nagpur (Rao et al., 2012) during Diwali and higher than the concentration at China during New Year ( $165 \mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ ; Tianet al., 2014) and Spring Festival ( $112 \mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ ; Feng et al., 2016) and at Taiwan during Lantern Festival ( $112 \mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ ; Tsai et al., 2012) respectively. However  $PM_{10}$  and  $PM_{2.5}$  concentration at the present site were lower than those observed at Raipur (Nirmalkar et al., 2013) and Delhi (Tiwari et al., 2012) during Diwali.  $PM_1$  concentration ( $243 \mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ ) was comparable to the concentration ( $210 \mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ ) at Raipur (Nirmalkar et al., 2013) during Diwali and concentration was lower than that observed at Delhi (Tiwari et al., 2012) during Diwali.

Table 1 Ambient PM concentrations ( $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ ) reported during fireworks and their elevation times relative to non-fireworks period and their comparison with present study

Type of Festival	Site	Concentration			Elevation times			References
		$PM_{10}$	$PM_{2.5}$	$PM_1$	$PM_{10}$	$PM_{2.5}$	$PM_1$	
Diwali	Sector 15, Hissar	223	NR	NR	1.4	NR	NR	Ravindra et al. 2003
Diwali	NEERI, Nagpur	930	271	NR	2.0	2.0	NR	Rao et al. 2012
Diwali	Delhi	723	588	536	NR	NR	NR	Tiwari et al. 2012
Diwali	Raipur	555	395	210	2.6	3.0	4.6	Nirmalkar et al. 2013
Lantern Festival	Taiwan	NR	112	NR	NR	2.1	NR	Tsai et al. 2012
New Year	Tianjin, China	249	165	NR	1.9	1.8	NR	Tian et al. 2014
Spring Festival	Xinxiang, China	NR	112	NR	NR	NR	NR	Feng et al. 2016
Diwali	DEI, Agra	280	264	243	2.8	4.8	6.9	Present study

$O_3$  is a secondary pollutant which is photo-chemically formed from its precursors in the presence of sunlight. Fig. 2b and c shows diurnal variation of  $O_3$ ,  $NO_2$  and CO on normal day (3 days before and after Diwali) and Diwali day. During Diwali the concentration of  $NO_2$  and CO were high during day as well as night than normal day. These high levels of CO may be attributed to burning of firecrackers which are composed of chemicals like potassium nitrate and carbon compounds (Holmes, 1983), therefore, when these firecrackers are burnt carbon monoxide and nitrogen oxide are released.  $O_3$  follows a characteristic pattern; its concentration is high during sunlight hours and low during night. During Diwali, it followed the similar pattern characterized by high levels during day hours from 12:00 h to 18:00 h and was found maximum at 17:00 h (100 ppb). On this day,  $O_3$  concentration was 1.3 times higher during day time than normal and 2-3 times higher during night. The high levels of  $O_3$  during Diwali may be due to photochemical generation of  $O_3$  from high levels of CO and  $NO_2$  during pre-Diwali days due to metals present in firecrackers which emit UV radiation and these high energy UV radiations are absorbed by  $O_2$  which generates atomic oxygen which on combination with  $O_2$  and forms  $O_3$  (Attriet al., 2001). Yadav et al. (2016) also reported an increase in  $O_3$  and its precursors during Diwali.

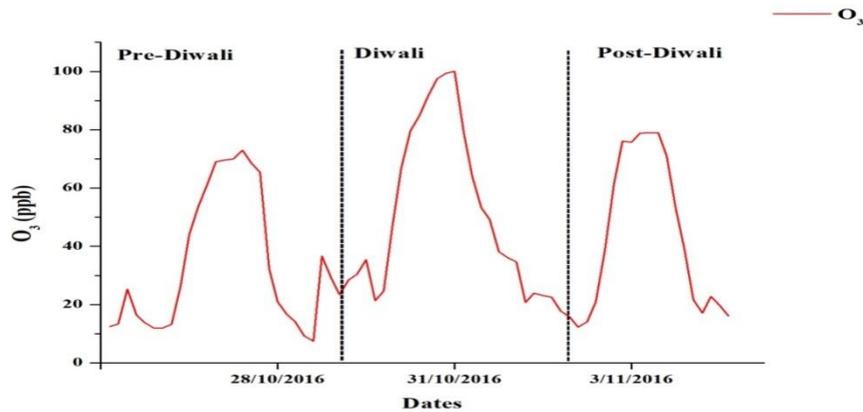


Figure 2 (b): Variation in  $O_3$  concentration on pre- Diwali, Diwali and post- Diwali day

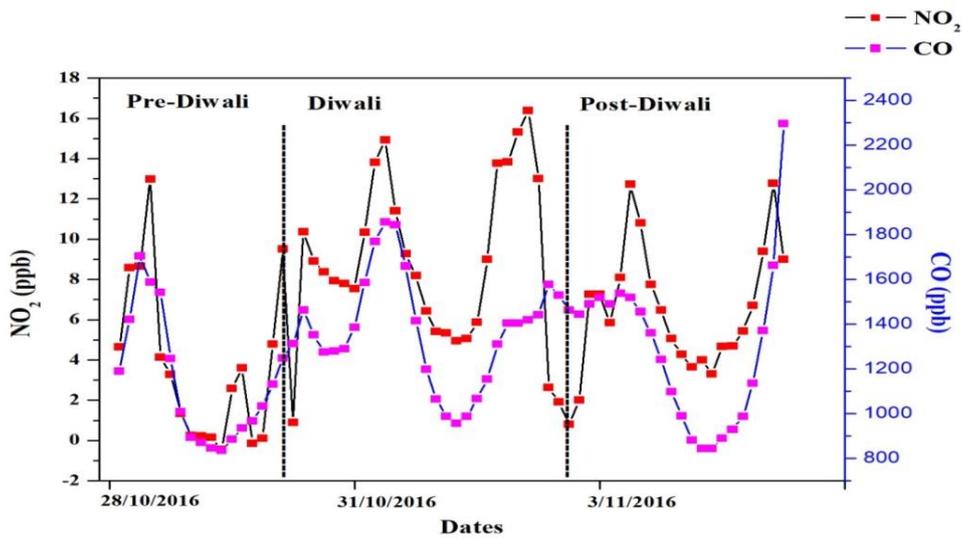


Figure 2 (c): Variation in  $NO_2$  and CO concentration on pre- Diwali, Diwali and post- Diwali day

Air mass backward trajectory was determined using HYSPLIT to identify the path of transport of air mass (Fig. 3). The backward trajectory was plotted for day before Diwali and Diwali day. These trajectories were short and follow the same path during both days which suggests that high levels were not due to long range transport and were due to emissions from firecrackers.

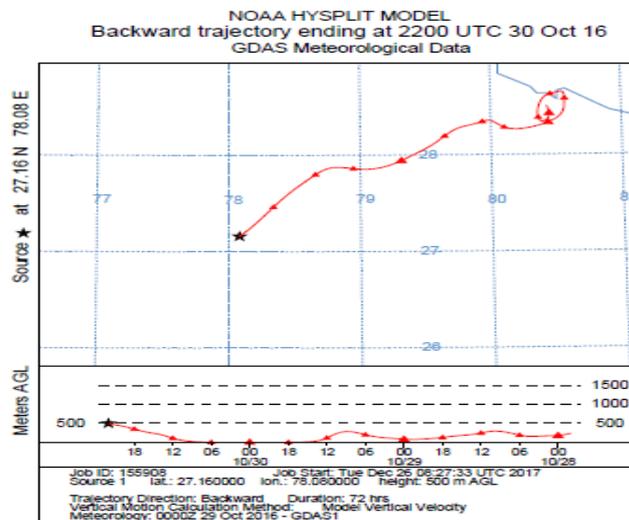


Figure 3 (a): Air mass back trajectory during day before Diwali

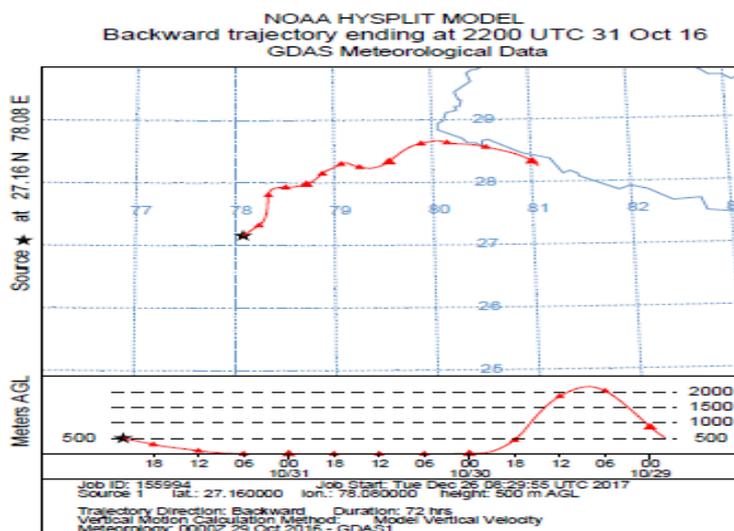


Figure 3 (a): Air mass back trajectory during Diwali day

**$PM_{10}$ ,  $PM_{2.5}$  and  $PM_1$  concentration during foggy events:** Fig. 4 shows variation in average mass concentration of  $PM_{10}$ ,  $PM_{2.5}$  and  $PM_1$  during foggy and non-foggy events. During foggy days the average concentration for  $PM_{10}$ ,  $PM_{2.5}$  and  $PM_1$  was  $290 \pm 62 \mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ ,  $208 \pm 59 \mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$  and  $158 \pm 40 \mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$  respectively and was 1.9, 2.0 and 2.3 times higher than non-foggy days. During non-foggy days the average concentration for  $PM_{10}$ ,  $PM_{2.5}$  and  $PM_1$  was  $149 \pm 12 \mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ ,  $100 \pm 25 \mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$  and  $67 \pm 15 \mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$  respectively.  $PM_{10}$  concentration was more than 2 times higher than the standard NAAQS value of  $100 \mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$  and  $PM_{2.5}$  was more than 3 times the standard NAAQS value of  $60 \mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$  (CPCB 2009). The high levels of particulate matter during foggy events may be attributed to low temperature, high humidity and accumulation due to low mixing layer height. During winter season, when temperature reached near dew point, the excess of water vapor in air condenses to form fog. The high relative humidity favors this process and forms an aqueous layer over aerosol particles which help the aerosol particles in scavenging water soluble gases. The low wind speed and low mixing layer height hinders dispersion of fog. Several studies (Li et al., 2015; Singh and Gupta, 2016; Agarwal et al., 2017) report that high mass concentration during fog period is associated with stagnant condition, low temperature, low wind velocity, high relative humidity and low solar heating of earth surface which results in slower dispersion of particulate matter and decrease in the boundary layer height (Agarwal et al., 2017). The average wind speed was  $0.8 \pm 0.6$  m/s and the average relative humidity was  $81 \pm 11\%$ . Fog formation takes place when the hygroscopic aerosols in the atmosphere act as cloud condensation nuclei on which water vapor condenses (Singh and Gupta, 2016). High PM mass concentration during foggy period may be attributed to an increase in accumulation mode particles as reported earlier by Gupta and Mandaria (2013). Low wind speed results in stagnant conditions which slow down the air convection and aggravate the pollutants (Huang et al., 2014).

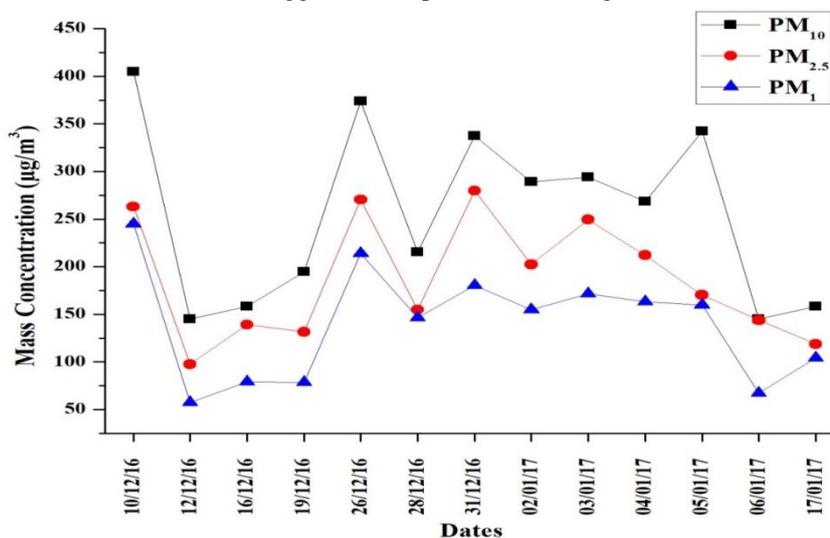


Figure 4: Variation in PM mass concentration during foggy and non-foggy event

Correlation coefficient between PM<sub>10</sub>, PM<sub>2.5</sub> and PM<sub>1</sub> was higher than 0.87. A good correlation between PM<sub>10</sub>, PM<sub>2.5</sub> and PM<sub>1</sub> indicates all the three particle sizes were associated with similar sources and meteorological conditions.

Air mass back trajectory was plotted for 05-Jan-17 (foggy day) at a height of 500 m AGL. Air masses were under the boundary layer and followed loop like pattern which suggested no contribution of long range transport.

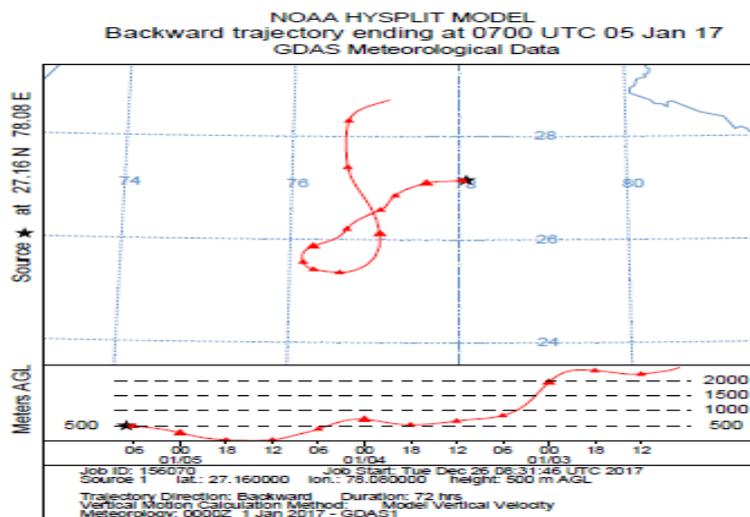


Figure 5: Air mass back trajectory during foggy event

PM mass concentrations observed at the present site were compared with other sites outside India and in India during fog-haze period (Table 2). It can be seen from the table that PM<sub>10</sub> concentration at the present site (290 µg/m<sup>3</sup>) was comparable to that observed at IIT Kanpur (273 µg/m<sup>3</sup>; Ram et al., 2016) and Beijing, China (265 µg/m<sup>3</sup>; Wang et al., 2015) during haze-fog. PM<sub>10</sub> mass concentration was found slightly higher than those observed at Harbin, China (243 µg/m<sup>3</sup>; Li et al., 2015) during haze-fog and 2.7 times higher than those observed at Taiwan (Chen et al., 2015) during episode. PM<sub>2.5</sub> concentration at the present site (208 µg/m<sup>3</sup>) was found similar with those obtained at Harbin, China (208 µg/m<sup>3</sup>; Li et al., 2015) during fog and found comparable to those observed at Beijing, China (188 µg/m<sup>3</sup>; Wang et al., 2015). PM<sub>2.5</sub> concentration was found 1.5 and 2.3 times higher than the concentration observed during winter at Xiamen, China (Zhang et al., 2013) and Korea (Park et al., 2013) during haze-fog respectively and PM<sub>1</sub> concentration at the present site (158 µg/m<sup>3</sup>) was found comparable with those observed at Harbin, China (Li et al., 2015) during fog. PM<sub>1</sub> concentration was found 1.6 times higher than Beijing, China (Wang et al., 2015) during haze-fog. PM<sub>1</sub> mass concentration was found 1.3 times lower than IIT Kanpur (Singh and Gupta, 2016) during fog.

Table 2 Ambient PM concentrations (µg/m<sup>3</sup>) reported during haze- fog episodes and their comparison with present study

Site	Concentration			References
	PM <sub>10</sub>	PM <sub>2.5</sub>	PM <sub>1</sub>	
Korea	NR	88	NR	Park et al., 2013
Xiamen, China	NR	135	NR	Zhang et al., 2013
Taiwan	107	65	NR	Chen et al., 2015
Beijing, China	265	188	99	Wang et al., 2015
Harbin, China	243	208	195	Li et al., 2015
IIT, Kanpur	273	NR	NR	Ram et al., 2016
IIT, Kanpur	NR	NR	208	Singh and Gupta, 2016
DEI, Agra	290	208	158	Present study

#### IV. Conclusion

Pollution episodes Diwali and fog were studied at the campus site of Dayalbagh Educational Institute, Agra. During Diwali PM<sub>10</sub>, PM<sub>2.5</sub> and PM<sub>1</sub> concentration was found 2.8, 4.7 and 6.8 times higher than normal days. PM<sub>2.5</sub>/PM<sub>10</sub> ratio showed a gradual increase from pre-Diwali to day after Diwali, signifying dominance of fine particulate loading. Increase in fine particle concentration was due to burning of crackers and sparkles during late evening and night and gas to particle conversion. Average O<sub>3</sub> concentration was 1.3 times higher in day time and 2-3 times higher during night than normal days.

During fog average mass concentration of PM<sub>10</sub>, PM<sub>2.5</sub> and PM<sub>1</sub> was 1.9, 2.0 and 2.3 times higher than non-foggy days. PM<sub>10</sub> concentration was more than 2 times higher than standard NAAQS value and PM<sub>2.5</sub> concentration was found more than 3 times than standard NAAQS value. This may be due to anthropogenic activities and stable meteorological conditions (low temperature, low wind velocity, high relative humidity, low solar heating of earth surface resulting in slower dispersion of particulate matter and decrease in the boundary layer height). Air mass back trajectory followed loop like pattern which suggested no contribution of long range transport.

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