

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE

RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION No. 202
TO BE ANSWERED ON: 08.12.2022

Air quality in Delhi

202. SHRI KARTIKEYA SHARMA:

Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE be pleased to state:

- (a) the details of quality of air and the graph of Air Quality Index in NCR and especially in Delhi since the last six months, month-wise;
- (b) whether Government has ascertained the reasons for the air pollution and its impacts;
- (c) if so, the details thereof;
- (d) whether the stubble burning in the neighbouring State of Punjab causes the severe air pollution; and
- (e) if so, the steps taken to curb such type of activities?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE
(SHRI ASHWINI KUMAR CHOUBEY)

(a) The analysis of Air Quality Index data of last six months (June 2022 – November 2022) of major NCR cities (Delhi, Ghaziabad, Noida, Gurgaon and Faridabad) reveals that most of the days fall in Good, Satisfactory, Moderate category in during June to September in 2022. Delhi had better air quality during the June-September period as compared to October - November this year 2022. Air Quality Index Status (Number of days) of major cities in Delhi-NCR during June to November 2022 is given as **Annexure-I**.

(b) & (c)

Air pollution in Delhi and NCR is a collective result of multiple factors including high level of anthropogenic activities in the high-density populated areas in NCR, arising from various sectors viz. Vehicular Pollution, Industrial Pollution, Dust from Construction and Demolition Project activities, Road and Open Areas Dust, Biomass Burning, Agricultural Stubble Burning, Municipal Solid Waste burning, Fires in Sanitary Landfills and air pollution from dispersed sources, bursting of fire crackers etc.

(d) & (e)

Incidences of paddy stubble burning in the northern states of Punjab, Haryana, NCR districts of UP and other areas in NCR is a matter of concern and severely impacts the air quality in the NCR, particularly in the period between October and November when the climatic and meteorological conditions are also generally unfavourable towards dispersion of air pollutants.

The steps taken to control stubble burning activities *inter alia* include:

- (1) Ministry held various meetings with concerned Ministries, State Governments, Commission for Air Quality Management in National Capital Region and Adjoining Areas (CAQM), CPCB, various departments at Central and State level for environmentally sound management of crop residue/ parali including its use as supplementary fuel, aimed at additional source of income to farmers, better air quality, reduced GHG emissions and employment opportunities.
- (2) The Commission developed a framework and action plan for effective prevention and control of Stubble Burning. The framework / action plan includes:
 - (i) In-situ Crop Residue Management- Supported by CRM Scheme of Ministry of Agriculture for the activities – CRM machines procurement, setting up of Custom Hiring Centers, high yield and short duration paddy varieties, staggering of harvesting schedule, extensive use of bio-decomposer by IARI
 - (ii) Ex-situ Crop Residue Management- Alternative usage of paddy straw viz. Biomass Power Projects, Co-firing in Thermal Power Plants, Feed stock for 2G Ethanol plants, Feed stock in Compressed Biogas plant, fuel in industrial boilers, WTE plants, packaging materials etc.
 - (iii) Prohibition of stubble / crop residue burning
 - (iv) Effective monitoring / enforcement
 - (v) Schemes to reduce the generation of paddy straw
 - (vi) IEC activities for the plan of action
 - (vii) Standard protocol for recording and monitoring of fire counts.

Air quality index graph of Delhi-NCR during June to November 2022

