

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE

**LOK SABHA**  
**UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 2287**  
TO BE ANSWERED ON 09.12.2024

**Special Cell for Pollution**

2287. SHRI: RAJIV PRATAP RUDY:

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

- (a) whether the Government is aware of the Supreme Court ruling directing the establishment of a special cell to curb pollution in Delhi and surrounding areas and if so, the actions taken so far to comply with this directive
- (b) whether the Government has conducted or commissioned any studies to determine the proportion of air pollution in Delhi attributed to stubble burning compared to other local sources, such as vehicular emissions, industrial pollutants and construction dust, and if so, the findings of such studies; and
- (c) whether the Government has also introduced or is considering to implement additional funding or support for alternative technologies and practices to reduce stubble burning in neighbouring States?

**ANSWER**

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE  
(SHRI KIRTI VARDHAN SINGH)

**(a) :**

The Hon'ble Supreme Court of India in Writ Petition (Civil) 13029/1985: M.C. Mehta v/s Union of India & Ors., vide order dated 11.11.2024 directed the Commissioner of the Delhi Police to set up a special cell for implementation of the order of ban on the manufacture, storage and bursting of all categories of firecrackers.

**(b) :**

Air pollution in Delhi - 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, Municipal Solid Waste burning, Fires in Landfills, air pollution from dispersed sources, etc. During post-monsoon and winter months, lower temperature, lower mixing heights, inversion conditions and stagnant winds lead to trapping of the pollutants resulting in high pollution in the region. This is further aggravated due to the emissions from episodic events like stubble burning, firecrackers, etc.

As per TERI-ARAI Source Apportionment study (2018), the contribution of major sources of PM2.5 & PM10 for Delhi is given below:

Sectors	PM <sub>2.5</sub>		PM <sub>10</sub>	
	Winters	Summers	Winters	Summers
Residential	10%	8%	9%	8%
Agricultural Burning*	4%	7%	4%	7%
Industry	30%	22%	27%	22%
Dust (soil, road, and const.)	17%	38%	25%	42%
Transport	28%	17%	24%	15%
Others	11%	8%	10%	7%

*\* It is to be noted that the contribution of agricultural burning is not fully accounted for in this study as the monitoring and modelling periods did not include the month of October, when the burning activities are generally at their maximum. Moreover, the sectoral contributions are averaged for the whole modelling/monitoring period, and hence, do not highlight the contribution of agricultural burning, which happens during a certain number of days and cause episodically high pollutant concentrations.*

**(c) :**

The Government has taken several initiatives to address the issue of paddy straw burning in Northern India and these are as follows:

1. CPCB has framed guidelines for grant of one-time financial support under Environment Protection Charge funds for establishment of pelletisation and Torrefaction plants to promote utilisation of paddy straw. In case of setting up of pelletisation plant, Rs. 28 lakhs per tonne per hour (TPH), or 40% of the capital cost considered for plant and machinery of a 01 TPH plant, whichever is lower, is provided as one-time financial assistance with a maximum total financial support of Rs. 1.4 crore per proposal. In case of setting up of torrefaction plants, Rs. 56 lakhs per TPH, or 40% of the capital cost considered for plant and machinery of a 01 TPH plant, whichever is lower, is provided as one-time financial assistance with a maximum total financial support of Rs. 2.8 crore per proposal. A total of 17 applications for establishment of pelletization and Torrefaction plants under the above mentioned CPCB Guidelines have been sanctioned so far, out of which 02 plants are not coming up. Pellet production capacity of 15 sanctioned plants is 2.07 lakh tonne/annum. These plants are expected to utilize 2.70 lakh tonne of paddy straw per annum.
2. CPCB had deployed 26 teams (in 16 districts of Punjab and 10 districts of Haryana) for the period 01<sup>st</sup> October - 30<sup>th</sup> November, 2024 to intensify monitoring and enforcement actions regarding stubble burning. These teams coordinated with concerned authorities/ officers deployed at the district level by the State Govt. and reported to the Commission for Air Quality Management in National Capital Region and Adjoining Areas (CAQM).
3. CAQM has issued directives & advisories to various stakeholders including the 11 Thermal Power Plants (TPPs) located within 300 km of Delhi, State Governments of Punjab, Haryana and Uttar Pradesh on “Ex-Situ Stubble Management” and to establish an ecosystem and robust supply chain mechanism to boost ex-situ utilisation of straw for tackling the problem of stubble burning.

4. CAQM has also directed coal based TPPs including cogenerating Captive TPPs situated in NCR to initiate immediate steps to co-fire biomass-based pellets (with focus on paddy straw utilization) with coal through a continuous and uninterrupted supply chain targeting at least 5% co-firing of biomass pellets.
5. CAQM has provided a Framework to the states concerned for control / elimination of crop residue burning and directed these to draw up detailed state-specific action plans based on the major contours of the framework. Based on the framework, action plans for prevention and control of paddy stubble burning were prepared and directions were issued by CAQM to state governments of Haryana, Punjab, UP, Rajasthan and NCT of Delhi for strict implementation of the framework and revised action plan
6. An Inter-Ministerial Committee has been constituted under the chairmanship of Special secretary, MoAFW for convergence of scheme for convergence of Schemes/Initiative supporting Ex-situ management of paddy straw. The said Committee has made specific recommendations for improving stubble management through in-situ and ex-situ measures.
7. As per revised model contract for use of biomass in TPPs, issued by Ministry of Power, power plants within 300 kms of NCR shall use minimum 50% of raw material as stubble/ straw/crop residue of rice paddy sourced from Punjab, Haryana or NCR.
8. Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas (MoPNG) has launched a scheme to provide financial assistance to Compressed Bio-gas producers for procurement of biomass aggregation equipment for ex-situ management of paddy straw.
9. Ministry of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare (MoA&FW) in 2018 launched scheme for providing subsidy for purchase of crop residue management machinery and establishment of custom hiring centres (CHCs) in NCT of Delhi and the States of Punjab, Haryana and Uttar Pradesh for insitu management of paddy straw. MoA&FW in 2023 revised guidelines under the scheme to support establishment of crop residue/paddy straw supply chain, by providing financial assistance on the capital cost of machinery and equipment.
10. Ministry of New and Renewable Energy (MNRE) is supporting setting up of Biomass Briquette/Pellet manufacturing plants and to support Biomass (non-bagasse) based cogeneration projects in Industries in the country, by providing Central Financial Assistance (CFA).
11. MNRE is also providing CFA for setting up of Waste to Energy plants for generation of Biogas, Bio-CNG/enriched Biogas/Compressed Biogas, Power/ generation of producer or syngas, from urban, industrial, agricultural wastes and municipal solid waste.
12. Under the Pradhan Mantri JI-VAN Yojana, a 2G Ethanol Project has been set up by Indian Oil Corporation Limited at Panipat, Haryana, which is expected to utilize 2 lakh metric tonnes of paddy straw per annum. Another 2G Ethanol Project is being set up by HPCL at Bathinda (Punjab).

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