

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE

LOK SABHA
STARRED QUESTION NO. 18
TO BE ANSWERED ON 01.12.2025

Impact of Stubble Burning

*18. SHRI CHARANJIT SINGH CHANNI:

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

- (a) whether the Government is aware that despite a 20 per cent reduction in stubble burning incidents in Punjab during 2025, the Air Quality Index in Delhi-NCR has still crossed 450 due to contribution of pollutants from the neighbouring States including Punjab and Haryana;
- (b) if so, the details of the number of farm fires reported in the State of Punjab between October and November 2025, district-wise including Jalandhar; and
- (c) the concrete steps being taken by the Government to enforce directives of the Commission for Air Quality Management and provide alternative machinery to the farmers in the said States to prevent recurrence of stubble burning?

ANSWER

MINISTER FOR ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE
(SHRI BHUPENDER YADAV)

(a) to (c) : A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.

STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PARAS (a) to (c) OF THE LOK SABHA STARRED QUESTION No. 18 DUE FOR REPLY ON 01.12.2025 REGARDING IMPACT OF STUBBLE BURNING BY SHRI CHARANJIT SINGH CHANNI, HON'BLE MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT.

(a) to (c): Air pollution in Delhi - National Capital Region (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 & Demolition Project activities, Road and Open Areas Dust, Biomass Burning, Municipal Solid Waste burning, Fires in Landfills, air pollution from dispersed sources, etc. as well as various meteorological factors. Stubble burning in the NCR region and Punjab during winter season has also been identified as an episodic event which aggravates the air quality index in Delhi and NCR region.

The States of Punjab and Haryana have collectively recorded about 90% reduction in fire incidences during paddy harvesting season in the year 2025 in comparison to the same period in the year 2022.

With coordinated efforts, number of good days (AQI<200) in Delhi have increased to 200 days in 2025 from 110 days in 2016. While there is an overall improvement in the AQI this year, very poor days (AQI: 301-400) and severe (AQI more than 401) days have reduced from 71 days in 2024 to 50 days in 2025. Delhi has observed lowest average AQI in the past 8 years i.e., from 2018 to 2025 (barring 2020 – COVID lockdown).

The district-wise details of the number of farm fires reported in the State of Punjab during October and November (up to 29.11.2025) 2025 are mentioned in Annexure I.

Some of the measures taken by the Government to mitigate air pollution caused due to stubble burning include the following:

- i. During the period from 2018-19 to 2025-26 (as on 17.11.2025), Rs. 3120.16 crores (Punjab - Rs. 1963.45 crores, Haryana- Rs. 1156.71 crores) have been released to the Governments of Punjab and Haryana for CRM machines. These States have distributed more than 2.6 lakh machines to the individual farmers and to more than 33,800 CHCs in these States.
- ii. CAQM through Direction 90 dated 09.05.2025 directed to Plan for rent-free availability of CRM machines for small / marginal farmers. Punjab and Haryana have 1,59,194 and 1,08,729 CRMs for the paddy residue management.
- iii. CAQM, vide Direction No. 92 dated 03.06.2025, directed the State Governments of Punjab and Haryana to mandate use of paddy straw-based bio-mass pellets / briquettes in all brick kilns located in the districts beyond NCR, as one of the means towards elimination of the practice of open paddy stubble burning, aiming for 50% co-firing of paddy straw based pellets / briquettes with a target of at least 20% w.e.f. 01.11.2025, 30% w.e.f. 01.11.2026, 40% w.e.f. 01.11.2027 and 50% w.e.f. 01.11.2028.
- iv. CAQM has issued Direction No. 95 on 01.10.2025 authorizing the Deputy Commissioners / District Collectors / District Magistrates in the States of Punjab, Haryana, NCR areas of Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh and in the NCT of Delhi to file a complaint before jurisdictional judicial magistrate, in case of inaction in respect of officials, including nodal officers and supervisory officers at various levels and Station House Officers, responsible for effective enforcement towards ensuring elimination of paddy stubble burning in their respective jurisdiction.

- v. CAQM has issued directions to all the Coal based Thermal Power Plants located within 300 Kms radius of Delhi to co-fire biomass based pellets, torrefied pellets/ briquettes (upto 5-10%) with coal to promote use of biomass.
- vi. The MoEFCC through notification dated 11.07.2023, as amended, notified Environment (Utilisation of Crop Residue by Thermal Power Plants) Rules, 2023 mandating minimum five per cent blend of pellets or briquettes made of crop residue along with coal by the Thermal Power Plants in the NCR and Adjoining Areas, failing which said Rules stipulates certain amount of Environmental Compensation against the Thermal Power Plants, as per unit of electricity generated.
- vii. CAQM has issued directions to State Governments of Punjab and Haryana to mandate use of paddy straw-based biomass pellets / briquettes in all brick kilns located in the districts beyond NCR, as one of the means towards elimination of the practice of open paddy stubble burning.
- viii. 31 Flying Squads from CPCB have been deployed from 01-10-2025 to 30-11-2025 in identified hotspot districts in Punjab and Haryana to closely monitor the actions and coordinate with the concerned authorities / officers at the district level, officers of the Pollution Control Boards/CAQM cell. These teams provide daily updates, photographic evidence, and compliance status.

In addition to the above mentioned measures/action, the Government has regularly reviewed and monitored the actions taken to address air pollution including stubble burning related issues in Delhi-NCR and adjoining areas. Some of the recent key meetings are as below:

- i. Minister level Inter-Ministerial meeting was held on 07.10.2025 under the Co-chairmanship of Hon'ble Minister for Environment, Forest and Climate Change and Hon'ble Minister for Agriculture & Farmers' Welfare on the issues of management of Crop Residue Burning;
- ii. Regular review meetings have been held on 08.08.2025, 16.09.2025, 10.10.2025 and 11.11.2025 under the chairmanship of the Hon'ble Minister for Environment, Forest and Climate Change, on the issues relating to air pollution control in Delhi-NCR, to deliberate upon the undertaking of air pollution abatement measures and strategies for further strengthening air quality management across the region;
- iii. Meeting of CAQM's Statutory Sub-Committee on Safeguarding & Enforcement was held on 28.08.2025 under the Chairmanship of the Chairperson, CAQM to review and monitor the actions taken by the concerned implementing agencies and also to assess preparedness for the upcoming winter season;
- iv. Meeting of the full Commission (CAQM) was held on 17.10.2025 to review actions taken by the respective State Governments/ GNCTD and concerned agencies and also to assess the preparedness for the upcoming winter season;
- v. A meeting was held on 07.11.2025 in Chandigarh under the Chairmanship of the Chairperson, CAQM and Co-chairmanship of Chief Secretary, Government of Punjab with senior officers of the State Government and representatives of the concerned agencies as well as the Deputy Commissioners and SSPs of all districts.

In the review meetings held under the Chairmanship of Hon'ble Minister for Environment, Forest and Climate Change, further decisions, inter-alia, were taken to address stubble burning issue:

- To enhance co-firing of paddy stubble to 5% or more, in TPPs in light of specific directions of MoEF&CC.

- Sensitize districts level officers to intensify efforts for the prevention and control of stubble burning focusing on the hotspot districts aiming to eliminate stubble burning.
- In view of serious concerns regarding sub optimal utilization of CRM machines, it was directed to review the ground level utilization of CRM machines provided through CHCs under the CRM scheme and intensify efforts for optimum utilization of machines during the peak harvesting season.
- Review the operational status of CRM machines provided through CHCs after paddy stubble harvesting season to ensure timely and adequate availability of CRM machines and optimum utilization for the next season. A comprehensive plan may also be prepared well in advance targeting next paddy harvesting season. Responsibility may be fixed on DCs and even upto to Block/Tehsil level. Skill development and training for the operation of CRM to be provided.
- Conduct assessment of supply and storage of the paddy stubble in TPPs, Biomass pellets plants, 2G ethanol plants by inspecting these sites through flying squads and ensure proper supply chain and storage facilities for the stubble management and also ensure that accountability is fixed in cases of inadequate storage facilities.

To review the action taken by the concerned authorities on the above decisions, regular follow up meetings are conducted at different levels by the MoEF&CC, MoAFW, CAQM, respective State Governments and other concerned agencies.

Annexure I

The district-wise details of the number of farm fires reported in the State of Punjab during October and November (up to 29.11.2025) in the year 2025

Place	October, 2025	November, 2025 (upto 29.11.2025)
Amritsar	142	118
Barnala	31	71
Bathinda	91	277
Faridkot	19	112
Fatehgarh Sahib	24	25
Fazilka	20	249
Firozpur	166	381
Gurdaspur	49	37
Hoshiarpur	7	9
Jalandhar	33	52
Kapurthala	59	77
Ludhiana	26	193
Malerkotla	18	70
Mansa	41	265
Moga	32	300
Muktsar	33	343
Pathankot	0	1
Patiala	87	138
Rupnagar	0	0
Sangrur	279	414
SAS NAGAR (Mohali)	22	6
SBS Nagar	5	10
Tarn Taran	363	322
Total	1547	3470
