

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE

LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 1362
TO BE ANSWERED ON 08.12.2025

Prevention of Stubble burning

1362. SMT. HARSIMRAT KAUR BADAL:

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

- (a) The current number of stubble-burning incidents reported from the State of Punjab during the current winter season;
- (b) The details of major initiatives taken by the State and Centre to prevent stubble burning and curb air pollution in North India;
- (c) Whether the Government has introduced new incentives or penalties for farmers in this context;
- (d) The budgetary allocation and actual disbursement for in-situ crop residue management in 2025; and
- (e) The details of outcomes achieved in reducing air pollution and health hazards vis-à-vis previous years?

ANSWER

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

(a) to (e) : As per the information provided by the Commission for Air Quality Management in National Capital Region and Adjoining Areas (CAQM), a total of 5114 number of cumulative paddy residue burning incidents have been reported in Punjab during 15th September to 30th November 2025.

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

- i. Farmers are facilitated with alternative measures like *in-situ* crop residue management, *ex-situ* utilization of paddy straw in various applications. The *in-situ* crop residue management includes *in-situ* mulching / incorporation of the paddy residue in the field itself through efficient and affordable mechanised means / crop residue management machinery. To support the efforts of the Governments of Punjab, Haryana, Uttar Pradesh and NCT of Delhi to address air pollution caused due to paddy stubble burning and to subsidize machinery required for management of crop residue,

a Central Sector Scheme on Crop Residue Management (CRM) has been implemented w.e.f. 2018-19.

- ii. Under this scheme, financial assistance @ 50% is provided to the farmers for purchase of crop residue management machinery and @ 80% is provided to Rural Entrepreneurs (Rural youth and farmer as an entrepreneur), Cooperative Societies of Farmers (Agriculture/ Horticulture/Makhana etc.), Day-NRLM Cluster Level Federations and Self Help Groups (SHGs), Farmer Producer Organizations (FPOs) and Panchayats for establishment of Custom Hiring Centres of crop residue management machines. Financial support of 65% up to a maximum of Rs. 1.50 Crore is also provided to paddy supply chain projects on the capital cost of machinery and equipments like higher HP Tractors, Cutters, Tedder, Medium to large Balers, Rakers, Loaders, Grabbers & Telehandlers. Financial assistance to the States and ICAR is also provided for undertaking Information, Education and Communication activities for mass awareness of farmers on crop residue management. The scheme promotes the usage of machines and equipments recommended by Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) for management of crop residues such as Super Straw Management Systems, Happy Seeder, Super Seeder, Smart Seeder, Zero Till Seed cum Fertilizer Drill, Mulcher, Shrub Master/Rotary Slasher, Paddy Straw Chopper, Hydraulically Reversible Mould Board Plough, Crop Reapers and Reaper Binders for in-situ management of crop residue and Balers & Straw Rakes for collection of straw for further ex-situ utilization.
- iii. During the period from 2018-19 to 2025-26 (as on 02.12.2025), Rs. 4090.84 crores have been released. The States have distributed more than 3.45 lakh machines to the individual farmers and established more than 43270 CHCs in the States.
- iv. Commission for Air Quality Management in National Capital Region and Adjoining Areas (CAQM) through Direction 90 dated 09.05.2025 directed to Plan for rent-free availability of CRM machines for small / marginal farmers.
- v. 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.
- vi. 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.
- vii. 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.

- viii. 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.
- ix. 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.
- x. Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) has framed Guidelines for grant of one-time financial support under Environment Protection Charge funds for establishment of pelletization and Torrefaction plants to promote utilisation of paddy straw.
- xi. 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, 11.11.2025 and 03.12.2025 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.

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 as per the information made available by CAQM.

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).
