

CAQM holds detailed review meetings with State Governments of Punjab and Haryana on preparedness to prevent Stubble Burning incidents during Paddy Harvest Season 2025

Flying Squads to be deputed in the two States for Monitoring Progress at field level in the Hotspot Districts

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In continuation of its sustained efforts to abate paddy stubble burning incidents in the region, the Commission for Air Quality Management in NCR and Adjoining Areas (CAQM), held two significant review meetings with senior officials of Punjab and Haryana on 25.09.2025 and on 26.09.2025, respectively. Senior officers of various concerned departments, including District Magistrates (DMs)/ Deputy Commissioners (DCs) and SSPs from 23 Districts of Punjab and 22 Districts of Haryana, attended the respective review meetings.

The review focused on the preparedness of both the States for the paddy harvesting season 2025, in compliance with the Commission's Directions 90 and 92. These directions mandate effective *in-situ* and *ex-situ* crop residue management, eliminating paddy stubble burning in hotspot Districts, for monitoring and actions being undertaken by the States of Punjab and Haryana.

Further, Flying Squad teams will be deputed in the two States for monitoring progress at field level in the hotspot Districts. The State Governments were requested to direct all concerned in the district administration to facilitate the Flying Squads and provide them with updated status from time to time.

It was highlighted that the CAQM Cell has been established at Kheti Bhawan, SAS Nagar (Mohali) which will monitor paddy stubble management and pollution activities to facilitate Inter-State coordination between Punjab and Haryana. The Commission urged close cooperation with the Cell to accelerate on-ground action with continuous monitoring and vigil.

Detailed presentations were made by both States on the implementation of their respective State Action Plans for 2025. After extensive deliberations, the following action points were directed by the Chairperson, CAQM to address the issue of stubble burning and diversification of agricultural practices:

Action Points for Punjab

- Identify and bridge gaps in *in-situ* management measures, including availability of CRM machinery, and *ex-situ* utilization through strengthened supply chain applications to ensure that surplus paddy residue is fully managed.
- It was suggested to develop a State level strategy requiring coordination with adjoining districts for inter district movement of balers. The State Government was directed to ensure supply of balers

and CRM on time and mobilize them, based on harvesting pattern.

- The State will intensify vigilance through the 'Parali Protection Force', including extensive evening patrolling by officers to identify burning events and take strict enforcement measures for implementing a robust Crop Residue Management (CRM) regime for needy farmers.
- The issues of pest infected areas (Dwarfism pest and Yellow rust in paddy), addressing silted and water logged areas were highlighted during the meeting and directed the State to develop a plan to address these issues to avoid burning activities.
- Accelerate biomass co-firing in Thermal Power Plants, to achieve the co-firing target of 5% and efforts to promote the use of paddy straw in power generation.
- Coordinate closely with the CAQM Cell for real-time monitoring and round-the-year management of paddy residue.

Action Points for Haryana

- Identify and bridge gaps in *in-situ* management measures, including availability of CRM machinery, and *ex-situ* utilization through strengthened supply chain applications to ensure that surplus paddy residue is fully managed. The State shall review the gaps in the CRM machinery and send proposals for the additional machines as per requirement.
- Develop State level strategy for the coordination of the stubble management across neighboring districts to ensure robust supply chain and *ex-situ* utilization of paddy residue in various applications. HSPCB to have separate meetings with District level administration for robust supply chain management and micro level planning. The State Government shall ensure supply of balers and CRM on time and mobilize them based on harvesting pattern.
- The State shall intensify vigilance through the 'Parali Protection Force', including extensive evening patrolling by the officers to identify the burning events.
- The State shall make provisions for storage of the Bales and take all the necessary precautions to prevent fires in storage facilities. Training and capacity building of the farmers and stakeholders to be conducted for storage and prevention of fires. Adequate insurance options to be made available to farmers and aggregators.
- The State Government must ensure that any farmer who resorts to stubble burning shall not be given incentivization, impose penal actions.
- In addition to Stubble Burning, the State shall sensitize the ULBs/DCs about the critical issue of open burning of MSW/Biomass in urban areas. They shall ensure compliance with Direction 91 of the Commission for prevention of open burning of MSW/Biomass etc.

While appreciating the efforts and arrangements made so far by both the States, CAQM reiterated that zero stubble burning during the upcoming season is non-negotiable and directed all district administrations to enforce statutory measures both incentives and deterrence. The long-term aim is to make an ecosystem for self-propelled stubble management system which adequately provides benefits to farmers. The Commission will conduct frequent and intensive reviews to monitor progress and ensure strict implementation of the approved Action Plans.

CAQM calls upon all stakeholders, including farmers and citizens, to work in close coordination with the Government agencies to achieve the shared goal of clean air for the NCR and Adjoining Areas.

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