



CAQM reviews Actions Taken by Haryana and Punjab to eliminate Stubble Burning during Paddy Harvest Season 2025

Commission calls for Urgent and Coordinated Actions in Punjab to curb incidents of Stubble Burning

Haryana shows Significant Decline in Stubble Burning incidents through Incentive Schemes, Enforcement and On-ground Interventions

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Taking a tough call against the incidents of stubble burning, the Commission for Air Quality Management in NCR and Adjoining Areas (CAQM), under the chairpersonship of Shri Rajesh Verma, undertook field visits in Punjab to assess the ground situation related to crop residue management and enforcement activities aimed towards reduction in stubble burning incidents.

The Commission inspected Thermal Power Plant at Rajpura in Patiala district, Compressed Bio-Gas (CBG) plant at Lehragaga in Sangrur district, on ground *in-situ* management of straw through machinery and Thermal Power Plant in Lehra Mohabbat in Bathinda district. While inspecting the Lehra Mohabbat Thermal Power Plant, the Chairperson expressed serious concern over its poor operational condition and non-compliance with prescribed emission norms and air quality standards. Chairperson, CAQM cautioned that if immediate measures are not undertaken, the Commission may be compelled to issue closure directions to the plant. During the visit, the team witnessed stray incidents of stubble burning.

Following the visit, the Commission held a high-level review meeting with the State Government of Punjab on the 7th November 2025 at Chandigarh, to take stock of actions taken on ground by the concerned Departments to curb incidents of stubble burning in the region. During the review meeting, the Commission noted that between 15th September and 6th November 2025, Punjab recorded 3,284 stubble burning incidents compared to 5,041 during the same period last year, indicating marginal improvement compared to last year. Some districts *viz.* Muktsar and Fazilka have even shown increase in the number of fire counts, which is a cause of concern that requires immediate intervention by the State. The Commission observed that till September 2025 in Punjab, 4 Thermal

Power Plants (TPPs) (2 TPPs of PSPCL: Lehra and Ropar; TSPL- Mansa and NPL- L&T) altogether cofired only 3.12 Lakh MT of crop residue pellets against a target of 11.83 Lakh MT for the period of 2025-26.

The Commission expressed that a lot is required to be done in Punjab to achieve complete elimination of stubble burning. The Chairperson directed Punjab to immediately scale-up efforts to comply with Commission's directions and, run a robust IEC campaign. It was directed to ensure timely availability of Crop Residue Management (CRM) machinery to utilize paddy straw, and extend necessary support for Compressed Bio-Gas (CBG) plants and other industries utilizing paddy straw. Greater on-ground enforcement and accountability mechanisms were also stressed upon. It was also directed to take actions against the nodal officers and other functionaries under whom higher number of farm fires have been recorded.

Further, taking stock of actions taken by Haryana to curb air pollution in the State, the Commission also held a detailed review meeting with the State Government of Haryana on 7th November 2025 at Chandigarh. It was highlighted that between 15th September and 6th November 2025, Haryana reported 206 farm fire incidents compared to 888 incidents during the same period in 2024. The reduction is a result of proactive, incentive-based, and enforcement-driven approach. Further, CAQM noted that financial incentives extended to farmers for *in-situ* and *ex-situ* management of crop residue have brought about a major behavioural shift. The Commission underscored that with concerted efforts the incidences of farm fires can be eliminated completely.

The Commission also reviewed other key air pollution sectors in Haryana, including vehicular emissions, industrial sources, dust from construction and demolition activities, road dust, Municipal Solid Waste (MSW) management, etc. and directed to take necessary actions for abatement of pollution from these sources. The Commission reiterated the importance of enhanced coordination, targeted implementation of the Action Plans, and strict enforcement of the Statutory Directions issued by the Commission for sustainable crop residue management and for ensuring clean air in the region.

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