

CAQM's 28th Full Commission Meeting reviews Key agenda items pertaining to Prevention and Control of Air Pollution in Delhi-NCR

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The 28th meeting of the full Commission of Air Quality Management in Delhi-NCR (CAQM) was held on 15.05.2026, under the Chairmanship of Shri Rajesh Verma. Key agenda items pertaining to prevention and control of air pollution in Delhi-NCR were deliberated upon and reviewed in detail during the meeting.

The Commission approved issuance of Draft Direction No. 99 under Section 12 of the CAQM Act, 2021 regarding implementation of the Action Plan for prevention and control of paddy stubble burning in 2026 with a target of complete elimination of paddy stubble burning in the NCR States. The Commission noted that State Governments have prepared and updated State-specific Action Plans for the paddy harvest season-2026 in line with the broad framework provided by CAQM.

The Commission also approved issuance of Draft Direction No. 100 mandating registration of only Electric 3-Wheelers (Passenger and Goods) of L5 category in Delhi-NCR in a phased manner as part of sustained efforts towards cleaner mobility and reduction in vehicular emissions in the region. The Commission noted that the recent Report of Air Quality Experts identified the vehicular sector as one of the major contributors to PM_{2.5} emissions in Delhi-NCR and emphasized accelerated transition towards cleaner mobility. The Expert Committee constituted by the Commission in December, 2025 has also given interim report on 3 Wheelers recommending transition of 3-Wheelers to EV. The Commission accordingly mandated registration of only EV 3-wheelers of L5 category w.e.f. 01.01.2027 in Delhi, w.e.f. 01.01.2028 in adjoining High Vehicle Density (HVD) districts of Gurugram, Faridabad, Sonipat, Ghaziabad, Gautam Buddha Nagar and w.e.f. 01.01.2029 in remaining Districts of NCR.

Further, Draft Direction No. 101 imposing restrictions on fuelling of vehicles without valid Pollution Under Control Certificate (PUCC) in NCR was deliberated upon and approved by the Commission. The Direction envisages dispensing of fuel only upon production of valid PUCC w.e.f. 01.10.2026 in the entire NCR for controlling vehicular emissions contributing significantly to PM_{2.5}, NO_x and CO levels.

The Commission reviewed the sudden spikes in incidents of wheat stubble burning incidents and directed the concerned State Governments and agencies for strict enforcement. The Commission noted that from 01.04.2026 to 14.05.2026, a total of 8,986 incidents have been reported in Punjab as compared to 6,474 incidents recorded during the corresponding period of 2025, whereas Haryana reported 3,290 incidents during this period as compared to 1,503 incidents recorded during the corresponding period of 2025.

The Commission also reviewed the progress of strengthening of the Continuous Ambient Air Quality Monitoring Stations (CAAQMS) network across Delhi-NCR. The Commission noted that under the revised norms, one monitoring station is envisaged per 25 sq. km. (5 km. x 5 km. grid) for Delhi and contiguous cities (Ghaziabad, Noida, Greater Noida, Gurugram, Faridabad, and Sonipat) and one station per 50 sq. km. in other district headquarters and cities. A total of 46 additional CAAQMS are proposed to

be installed across Delhi-NCR (14 in Delhi, 16 in Haryana, 15 in Uttar Pradesh and 01 in Rajasthan), taking the total number of monitoring stations to 157. The Commission emphasized expeditious installation of the remaining stations by the concerned NCR States.

Reconstitution of the Sub-Committee on 'Monitoring and Identification' under Section 11(2) of the CAQM Act, 2021 was ratified by the Commission for further strengthening monitoring and compliance mechanisms in the region.

The Commission appreciated the initiatives undertaken by NCR State Governments and GNCTD for preparation and implementation of Annual Action Plans-2026 aimed at abatement of air pollution across various sectors including transport, industry, dust mitigation, waste management, crop residue management and enhanced air quality monitoring. The Commission also noted that a digital MIS portal is being developed by CAQM for monitoring implementation of actions under the Annual Action Plans.

The Commission also reviewed greening and plantation targets fixed for the year 2026-27 for NCR States and NCT of Delhi and stressed upon regular follow-up and effective implementation for achieving the stipulated targets. The Commission noted that an overall plantation target of about 4.60 crore trees, shrubs and bamboo plantations has been fixed for the year 2026-27 across NCR States, CAPFs and educational institutions (58.01 Lakh for Delhi, 1.71 Crore for Uttar Pradesh-NCR, 1.20 Crore for Haryana-NCR, 1.07 Crore for Rajasthan-NCR, 80,000 for CAPFs and 2.56 Lakh for Educational/Research Institutes/Universities & KVS).

Status of penalties imposed on Thermal Power Plants (TPPs) for non-achievement of biomass co-firing targets during 2024-25, along with appeals and conditional stay orders granted by the Hon'ble NGT, was also reviewed by the Commission. Environmental Compensation amounting to over Rs. 61.85 crore has been imposed on six non-compliant Thermal Power Plants under the Environment (Utilisation of Crop Residue by Thermal Power Plants) Rules, 2023.

The Commission took note of the extension of relaxation in the Standard List of Approved Fuels stipulated under Direction No. 65 dated 23.06.2022, as amended, allowing use of alternative fuels in industries till 13.06.2026 or until further orders.

The Commission also took note of the Order dated 12.03.2026 passed by the Hon'ble Supreme Court in the M.C. Mehta Case regarding implementation of revised Environment Compensation Charge (ECC) on Goods Vehicles entering Delhi. The Commission noted that the recommendations submitted by CAQM for revision of ECC rates were approved by the Hon'ble Supreme Court as reasonable, just and fair.

The Commission reviewed the GRAP orders issued since the last Full Commission meeting dated 20.02.2026 and was apprised of the invocation and revocation of different stages of the Graded Response Action Plan (GRAP) based on prevailing air quality scenario in Delhi-NCR.

The framework for targeted Information, Education and Communication (IEC) activities issued by CAQM on 03.03.2026 for NCR States and GNCTD for abatement of air pollution in Delhi-NCR was also reviewed by the Commission. The framework envisages sustained engagement with sector-specific stakeholders and intensified IEC campaigns throughout the year.

The Commission further reviewed the status of Enforcement Task Force (ETF) decisions, closures and resumption of industrial units for ensuring compliance with Statutory Directions and environmental norms. As on 08.05.2026, a total of 27,008 sites had been inspected by flying squads and closure directions have been issued in 1,779 cases across sectors including industries, C&D sites and miscellaneous categories.

CAQM reiterated the need for strict enforcement of directions issued and directed all concerned agencies and NCR State Governments to make concerted efforts for effective implementation of Annual Action Plans and sectoral actions for combating air pollution in Delhi-NCR.

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