

CAQM reviews Paddy Stubble Management measures in Amritsar and Tarn Taran

Directs Field Officers to ensure Timely Availability and Maximizing Facilities for Utilisation of Paddy Stubble

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A high-level team led by Shri Rajesh Verma, Chairperson, Commission for Air Quality Management in NCR and Adjoining Areas (CAQM), today held a review meeting with the Deputy Commissioners and other concerned officers of Amritsar and Tarn Taran districts of Punjab. The meeting reviewed the measures being undertaken for comprehensive management of paddy stubble. It also focused on further containing and eliminating incidents of paddy stubble burning.



The team reviewed the *in-situ* and *ex-situ* utilisation of paddy stubble management, facilities and infrastructure for stubble management in the two Districts. The action taken by two District in light of the increased number of fire incidents was also reviewed. The team expressed concern at the increased number of fire incidents, and the concerned officers were directed to ensure all the efforts to arrest the numbers henceforth.

The Commission emphasized on ensuring maximum utilisation of paddy stubble as a fuel in thermal power plants, brick kilns and industries where such fuel usage is feasible. The Commission further directed that sector-wise Nodal Officers must be given responsibility for ensuring actual utilisation of paddy stubble by the respective sectors/ industries and for regularly monitoring and reporting compliance.

Emphasising the importance of timely field-level intervention, the Commission directed the officers to undertake regular visits to villages and farmers and not merely inform them about the availability of stubble management facilities but also ensure that the required machinery and facilities reach the farmers in a timely manner. The District Administrations were asked to strengthen coordination between farmers, Custom Hiring Centres (CHCs), machinery providers and other stakeholders so that farmers are able to access residue management solutions without delay.

As Tarn Taran District continues to report amongst the highest number of paddy stubble burning incidents, the Deputy Commissioner was directed to accord topmost priority to the issue and intensify field-level measures for prevention and management of such incidents. The Commission also warned that any laxity or failure in taking effective measures would invite strict action and accountability.

During the visit, the high-level team also inspected facilities in Amritsar where paddy stubble is being utilised as a source of fuel. The team visited the industrial boiler at an industrial complex in Amritsar, where paddy stubble pellets are being used as fuel in the industrial boiler. The visit provided an opportunity to assess the practical utilisation of processed paddy residue and the potential for scaling up such productive end-use models.

The Commission reiterated that paddy stubble management needs to be approached as a comprehensive residue-management and resource-utilisation exercise from the farmer facilitation standpoint. It was stressed that concerted efforts by District Administrations must be made by all concerned stakeholders to ensure that available *in-situ* and *ex-situ* solutions are effectively deployed, residue is channelized for productive use and incidents of paddy stubble burning are brought to an end.

VM/SK

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