Union Environment Minister directs Delhi-NCR Civic Bodies to adopt Zero-tolerance Approach towards Air Pollution Violations; Calls for Strict Penal Action against Defaulters

Daily Monitoring, Accountability of Ward-level Officials and Time-bound Enforcement of Pollution Control Measures to be Prioritised: Shri Bhupender Yadav

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Union Minister for Environment, Forest and Climate Change (EFCC), Shri Bhupender Yadav, today chaired a review meeting virtually from Antalya (Türkiye), with the civic bodies of Delhi, Ghaziabad, Noida, Gurugram and Faridabad to assess preparedness and implementation of their Winter Action Plans for control of air pollution in Delhi-NCR. Emphasising that the current winter period demands visible and sustained action on the ground, the Minister requested the concerned public representatives and officials to ensure strict enforcement, daily monitoring and clear accountability at every level. He stressed that governance should increasingly be citizen-centric and facilitative, while ensuring that citizens are not subjected to unnecessary panic while taking pollution control measures.

The meeting was attended by Union Minister of State (MoEFCC), Shri Kirti Vardhan Singh; Secretary (MoEFCC), Shri Narendra Bhooshan; Chairperson (CAQM), Shri Rajesh Verma; Secretary (Department of Capital Development, MoHUA), Smt. D. Thara; Director General and Special Secretary (MoEFCC), Shri Santosh Tewari; Additional Secretary (MoEFCC) and Chairperson (CPCB), Dr. Amandeep Garg; Mayors and Commissioners of the respective Municipal Corporations, along with CEO Noida Authority and senior officials of respective State Governments. Shri Tarun Pithode, Member Secretary, CAQM, presented the progress made by respective NCR cities, while the Chairperson, CAQM, gave an overview of the on-ground implementation of their action plans and measures yet to be taken on different fronts.



Taking a strong stance against violations, Shri Yadav directed Municipal Corporations to adopt a zero-tolerance approach towards **open burning** of municipal waste, dry leaves and biomass, and ensure prompt penal action against violators. He called for operationalising **Quick Response Teams** in every ward to respond to complaints within hours, and fixing accountability of concerned officers for enforcement failures. He also called for immediate corrective measures for complete processing daily waste generated and time-bound accelerated legacy waste remediation, particularly at Bhalswa and Okhla dumpsites. Stressing the need for coordinated and decentralised governance, the Minister called for regular **ward-level reviews** by Mayors and dedicated WhatsApp groups with designated nodal officers for time-bound grievance redressal. He urged civic bodies to learn from and **replicate successful initiatives across NCR**, including MC Delhi's Malba App, MC Faridabad's Pothole Ambulance, MC Gurugram's survey-based identification of sanitation workers and Ghaziabad Nagar Nigam's shareable Construction and Demolition (C&D) waste portal.

On **road dust management**, Shri Yadav directed civic bodies to expedite road repairs, augment the capacity of Mechanical Road Sweeping Machines (MRSMs) on a war footing and ensure their full utilisation, including double-shift operations during winter. He called for GPS-enabled monitoring, **ICCC-based supervision** and daily removal of roadside dust, silt and construction debris. The Minister also stressed the need for advance planning of road development and dust mitigation measures in Gurugram, including greening of identified open spaces to address PM10 pollution. He directed strict compliance with dust mitigation norms at C&D sites, operationalisation of wheel-washing facilities and regular inspections, with stringent enforcement action, including closure of seriously non-compliant sites. The objective, he emphasised, must be to **ensure 'No Visible Dust**' in and around construction sites. The Minister further called for ensuring enhanced awareness about Solid Waste Management Rules, with proactive identification of bulk waste generators, as demonstrated by Delhi.

Reviewing **hotspot mitigation** and **GRAP implementation**, Shri Yadav directed civic bodies to assign **dedicated nodal officers** and prepare hotspot-specific action plans, which should be regularly reviewed by Mayors and the designated officers. He called for strict implementation of all measures applicable under the prevailing stage of GRAP, without exception. Emphasising institutional accountability, the Minister directed Collectors to regularly review the performance of municipalities and take corrective action against lagging bodies. He further called upon the Secretaries of MoEFCC and MoHUA, besides Chairpersons of the CAQM and CPCB, to review the performance of respective Municipal Corporations and municipalities across NCR cities to ensure effective implementation of the directions on the ground.



Stressing that **accountability must translate into measurable outcomes**, the Minister requested the concerned officials to monitor public grievances in real time and close complaints only after physical verification and resolution. He also called for intensive public awareness campaigns involving concerned stakeholders. Emphasising the need for sustained efforts throughout the winter season, Shri Yadav said every ward must demonstrate visible action every day, backed by strict enforcement, continuous monitoring, citizen participation and accountability.

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