

# Environment minister holds meeting to review steps to manage air pollution in NCR

Updated: 11 Oct 2022, 04:07 PM IST

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New Delhi: Union minister for Environment, Forest and Climate Change Bhupender Yadav held a virtual meeting on Tuesday with environment ministers of states of the national capital region (NCR), GNCTD, and Punjab to review activities being planned and undertaken to manage air pollution in the region.

During the meeting, Centre for Air Quality Management (CAQM) made a detailed presentation on different aspects and challenges with regard to controlling air pollution in the NCR region. The major sectors discussed in the meeting include agricultural stubble burning, industrial pollution, pollution from diesel generator sets, vehicular pollution, electric mobility, dust from road & open areas and dust from construction and demolition activity.

CAQM reiterated the comprehensive policy formulated and directed at targeted short/ medium/ and long-term action in various sectors by different agencies concerned.

The issue of stubble burning is a prime concern for all stakeholders. Action taken and planned on the incidents of paddy residue burning were highlighted by states in the meeting. An update was provided regarding availability and allocation of CRM machinery by the state governments.

"The state governments have informed that they have involved the local bodies and are innovatively providing the machinery to the farmers to promote in-situ methods of handling crop residue," the Union environment ministry said..

CAQM shared that the Graded Response Action Plan has been revised as per AQI values in order to make it more understandable and actionable. GRAP now works on forecasts that will help to plan and execute action better.

Haryana, Rajasthan and Delhi were also informed about dust control and management actions being undertaken. "The area under green cover has expanded with 2,72,01,113 plantations as on 30.9.2022...States have also deployed machines for road sweeping and water sprinkling," the ministry added.

To combat pollution from dust from construction and demolition activities, a web portal is functional in Delhi, Haryana and Uttar Pradesh which mandates registration of projects on plot size more than 500 sqm to follow directions to control dust from construction activity. Deployment of anti-smog guns as per the total construction area as a requirement to counter pollution by dust was also discussed.

The states updated that progress being made to ensure the shift of industry to PNG/cleaner fuels. The issue of vehicular pollution was also deliberated upon in the meeting and the states informed about

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strict action being taken to ensure that all vehicles have the pollution under check (PUC) certificate. Road traffic management systems were also discussed.

CAQM added that the uninterrupted use of diesel generators will be permitted only for emergency services during GRAP. The Union minister had earlier met officials from DISCOM to ensure uninterrupted power supply in the region to discourage the usage of Diesel Gensets.

There was a detailed discussion on controlling burning MSW and open biomass in NCR with strict vigil and action on non-compliance. Bursting of crackers has completely been banned in Delhi, while Haryana and Uttar Pradesh have permitted the use of green fire crackers.