COMMISSION FOR AIR QUALITY MANAGEMENT
IN NATIONAL CAPITAL REGION AND ADJOINING AREAS
17th Floor, Jawahar Vyapar Bhawan (STC Building)
Tolstoy Marg, New Delhi- 110001

F. No. A-110014/10/2020/CAQM-SB-Vol.XIII/238 Dated 18th November, 2026

SUBJECT: NON-COMPLIANCE / CONTRAVENTION OF THE DIRECTION(S) / ORDER(S) ISSUED BY THE COMMISSION REGARDING PREVENTION AND CONTROL OF AIR POLLUTION CAUSED DUE TO PADDY STUBBLE BURNING.

WHEREAS, Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Government of India, in exercise of the powers conferred under Section 3 of the Commission for Air Quality Management in National Capital Region and Adjoining Areas Act, 2021 (hereinafter referred to as the Act), has constituted the Commission for Air Quality Management in National Capital Region and Adjoining Areas (hereinafter referred to as the Commission);

WHEREAS, under section 12(1) of the Act, the Commission has powers to take all such measures, issue directions, etc., as it deems necessary or expedient for the purpose of protecting and improving the quality of the air in the National Capital Region (NCR) and Adjoining Areas;

WHEREAS, Section 12(2)(xi) of the Act, empowers the Commission to issue directions in writing to any person, officer, or any authority and such person, officer or authority shall be bound to comply with such directions;

WHEREAS, paddy stubble burning is a matter of grave concern due to its impact on air quality in NCR and the Commission has been deliberating upon the issue in a series of meetings held with major stakeholders including with the State Governments of Punjab, Haryana, Uttar Pradesh and Rajasthan, Government of National Capital Territory (NCT) of Delhi, State Pollution Control Boards of NCR States and Punjab, Delhi Pollution Control Committee (DPCC) and knowledge institutions;

WHEREAS, Section 12(6)(d) of the Act mandates the Commission to provide an effective framework, action plan and take appropriate steps for tackling the problem of stubble burning;

WHEREAS, Section 12(6)(e) empowers the Commission for monitoring the measures taken by the States to prevent stubble burning;

WHEREAS, the Commission, in exercise of the powers conferred to it under Section 12(2)(xi) of the Act, through its comprehensive Direction(s) dated 10.06.2021, asked the State Government of Punjab to formulate and implement state specific detailed action plan, based upon the local conditions and requirements, towards prevention and control of stubble burning and provided a guiding Framework to enable State to draw up detailed State-specific action plan, based on the contours of the Framework;

WHEREAS, the Commission through its directions issued on 16.08.2021 had also directed the Governments of NCR States, Government of NCT of Delhi and Government of Punjab to adopt the standard protocol developed by ISRO for the monitoring and reporting of the fire events owing to stubble burning, using the Satellite data;

WHEREAS, the Government of Punjab based on the framework directed by the Commission vide Direction dated 10.06.2026, formulated their respective action plan for prevention and control of paddy stubble burning during the paddy harvest seasons, on a year-to-year basis in 2021,2022, 2023, 2024, 2025 and 2026;

WHEREAS, towards effective monitoring / enforcement and ensuring compliance of extant laws and also the orders / judgements of the Hon'ble Supreme Court/ High Court/ National Green Tribunal/ State Government/ State Pollution Control Boards regarding banning of the stubble burning, the Commission, under clause 14 of the Direction(s) dated 10.06.2021, *inter alia*, stipulated appointment of nodal and supervisory officers at various levels i.e. village, cluster, tehsil/ sub-division, district and State;

WHEREAS, the above noted Directions also call for the police authorities to enforce and implement various Directions and Orders issued with respect to ban on burning of crop residue and that the police shall particularly render special assistance to the District Administration for monitoring of hotspots with large scale incidence reported traditionally;

WHEREAS, the clause 14 of the above noted Direction(s) dated 10.06.2021 also directed for end-to-end reporting of each incident of crop residue burning and taking appropriate coercive and punitive actions under extant laws;

WHEREAS, the Government of Punjab, Haryana and Uttar Pradesh, based on the framework directed by the Commission, formulated action plans for prevention and control of paddy stubble burning during the paddy harvest seasons, on a year-to-year basis and action plan 2026 submitted by the State

Government to the Commission proposes to eliminate the paddy stubble burning event in the State;

WHEREAS, the Commission issued a Statutory Direction No. 99 dated 15.05.2026 to the State Government of Punjab mandating effective implementation of the Action Plan 2026 in letter and spirit, including preventive, enforcement and safeguard measures for comprehensive residue management;

WHEREAS, the Commission, during various reviews held from time to time during the ongoing paddy harvesting season, has called for effective prevention and control of paddy stubble burning, entrusting responsibility and fixing accountability on the identified officers;

WHEREAS, Section 14(1) of the Act stipulates that any non-compliance or contravention of any provisions of the Act, Rules, Directions or Orders issued by the Commission shall be an offence punishable with imprisonment for a term which may extend up to five years or with fine which may extend up to one crore rupees or with both;

WHEREAS, Section 14(2) of the Act provides that the offence under the Act shall be non-cognizable and triable by the Jurisdictional Judicial Magistrate of the First Class;

WHEREAS, the Commission, in exercise of the powers conferred upon the Commission under Section 14(2) of the Act, through Statutory Direction No.95 dated 01.10.2025, authorized the Deputy Commissioners / District Collectors / District Magistrates in the State of Punjab to file a complaint / prosecution before jurisdictional Judicial Magistrate, in case of inaction in respect of officials including nodal officers and supervisory officers at various levels and Station House Officers, responsible for effective enforcement towards ensuring elimination of paddy stubble burning in their respective jurisdiction;

WHEREAS, the Commission held meetings with the officials of the Government of Punjab and the DCs on 22.10.2026 and with DC of Sangrur on 13.11.2026, which were also attended by the concerned officials of the district to review the measures being undertaken to prevent and control incidents of paddy stubble burning and emphasized on the importance of stringent enforcement and proactive measures during the ensuing harvesting season to prevent and control the incidences of stubble burning;

WHEREAS, it has also been noticed that there are paddy stubble burning incidences which are not recorded through standard protocol. However, for

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addressing such issues, the Commission has time and again stressed on stringent supervision through drones, parali protection force, nodal officers, low-cost sensors, strict implementation and rigorous enforcement of the Action Plan to achieve complete elimination of paddy stubble burning;

WHEREAS, despite above noted review meeting and Statutory Directions issued by the Commission to ensure complete elimination of paddy stubble burning during 2026, it has been noticed that paddy residue burning events are reported to have increased in certain districts of Punjab comparing to previous year which indicates that adequate supervision, effective implementation and enforcement of the action plan to eliminate paddy stubble burning has not been forthcoming;

WHEREAS, during the period from 15th September to 16th November 2026, 741 fire incidents were reported in Sangrur, as against 694 fire incidents recorded during the corresponding period in 2025, indicating an increasing trend; Despite specific directions issued during the review meeting held on 13.11.2026 to ensure no further spurt in stubble-burning incidents, the district reported spike of 52 fire incidents on 16.11.2026, indicating lapses in enforcement and field-level monitoring measures for effective prevention of stubble burning;

WHEREAS, it is further observed from the Action Taken Report dated 16.11.2026 furnished by the Government of Punjab that, notwithstanding the continued occurrence of fire incidents in Sangrur, no action has reportedly been initiated against the concerned officials under Section 14 of the CAQM Act, 2021 for non-compliance with or contravention of the directions issued by the Commission. It has also been reported that only 23 non-AFL fields with burning traces were detected/reported by the Parali Protection Force/Nodal Officers, despite the large number of fire incidents recorded in the district, which raises concerns regarding the adequacy of field-level surveillance, monitoring, and detection efforts in the district indicating the need for strengthening enforcement and recovery mechanisms to ensure effective deterrence against stubble burning;

WHEREAS, it is thus evident that adequate supervision, effective implementation and enforcement of the action Plan to eliminate paddy stubble burning has not been forthcoming and the high level of paddy stubble burning events still being recorded are indicative of non-compliance / contravention of the order(s) / direction(s) issued by the Commission towards targeting complete elimination of paddy stubble burning in your District including the directions related to the broad framework issued by the Commission, which tantamounts to an offence punishable under the Act;

NOW, THEREFORE, in view of the above, the Commission, hereby directs you to explain why action should not be initiated as stipulated under Section 14 of the Act, for non-compliance / contravention of the order(s) / direction(s) issued by the Commission.

Your explanation should reach the commission latest by **05:00 PM of 23.11.2026**, failing which it shall be presumed that you have nothing to state and action shall be initiated as per the provisions of the Act.

(Tarun Kumar Pithode)
Member Secretary
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To,

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Deputy Commissioner, Sangrur, Punjab
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Copy to:

The Chief Secretary, Government of Punjab, Punjab Civil Secretariat, Sector- 1, Chandigarh - 160001
(cs@punjab.gov.in)

Copy also to:

1. Administrative Secretary, Agriculture, Government of Punjab
2. Administrative Secretary Environment, Government of Punjab

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