

Commission for Air Quality Management in NCR and Adjoining Areas

17th Floor, Jawahar Vyapar Bhawan,
Tolstoy Marg, New Delhi-110001

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PRESS RELEASE

CAQM issues comprehensive Statutory Direction regarding implementation of Action Plans for Elimination of Wheat Stubble Burning in 2026

NEW DELHI:

With a view to mitigate air pollution in the region, the Commission for Air Quality Management in NCR and Adjoining Areas (CAQM) has issued a Statutory Direction mandating coordinated and time-bound implementation of State Action Plans for prevention and elimination of wheat stubble burning during the 2026 harvesting season. The Direction has been issued to the Governments of Punjab, Haryana and Uttar Pradesh, with complementary efforts expected from GNCTD and Rajasthan.

The Commission noted that agricultural residue burning contributes to deterioration of air quality both locally and across the NCR and adjoining areas and therefore requires structured seasonal preparedness. As per the standard protocol developed by ISRO/IARI, the number of fire events recorded during wheat harvesting season (1st April to 31st May 2025) in Punjab, Haryana, and NCR districts of Uttar Pradesh were 10207, 1832, and 259 respectively. Satellite-based monitoring during the wheat harvesting season (April-May 2025) recording such fire incidents across the region, highlighted the need for targeted wheat-season interventions alongside existing paddy-season measures.

The Commission had provided a broad Framework to the States concerned for control/elimination of crop residue burning and directed them to draw up detailed State-specific Action Plans based on the major contours of the Framework. Further, the matter of wheat stubble burning was deliberated in the 26th meeting of the Commission held on 22.12.2025 and subsequent meeting held with the State Governments of Punjab, Haryana and Uttar Pradesh on 22.12.2025 wherein, the State Governments of Punjab, Haryana and Uttar Pradesh presented their respective plans of action and the Commission advised these States to update and refine the Action Plans.

Accordingly, through its Direction No. 96, the Commission has directed the concerned States to implement their respective Action Plans to abate burning of wheat straw, with specific facilitative measures to ensure viable alternatives. The Commission has directed the State Governments of Punjab, Haryana and Uttar Pradesh to:

- Effectively implement the State Action Plan in letter and spirit, to eliminate and control the wheat stubble burning.
- Map each farm in all the villages for the proposed mode of wheat stubble management (crop diversification/ in-situ management/ ex-situ management/ fodder etc.).
- Tag specific nodal officers to a group of farmers, covering all farmers in the district. Maximum 100 farmers could be tagged with each nodal officer, for effective monitoring.
- Ensure optimum utilization and timely availability of CRM machines to the farmers, mainly during the peak harvesting season, through a mobile app.
- Mandate rent-free availability of CRM machines for small / marginal farmers through the CHCs.
- Provide adequate and appropriate storage facility for wheat straw, ensuring minimization of losses due to fire.
- Establish a robust and continuous supply chain of wheat straw in various forms for *ex-situ* applications including its use as fodder. A District Level Supply Chain Management Plan to be formulated for each District considering demand and supply throughout the year.
- Constitute a dedicated “Parali Protection Force” (PPF) at the District / Block level comprising of police officers, officers of the Agriculture Department, administrative officers, nodal/ cluster officers and officials from other stakeholder Departments, to closely monitor, oversee and guard against any incidence of open wheat stubble burning.
- Intensify patrolling by enforcement agencies during late evening hours.
- Ensure appropriate environmental compensation mechanism.
- Undertake extensive IEC activities and awareness programs about various measures and schemes to prevent crop residue burning and also to educate farmers about best practices and adverse impact of stubble burning.

Further, Government of NCT of Delhi and the Government of Rajasthan have also been advised to make all possible efforts to eliminate wheat stubble burning incidents during the ensuing harvest season. States shall submit monthly progress reports to the Commission for continuous monitoring and necessary action(s).
