

Commission for Air Quality Management in NCR and Adjoining Areas

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PRESS RELEASE

**CAQM reviews preparedness of States for elimination of Stubble Burning in 2026;
Emphasis laid on strengthening enforcement, crop residue management and
coordinated action**

NEW DELHI:

Targeting elimination of paddy stubble burning incidents during year 2026, a meeting was convened by the Commission for Air Quality Management in NCR and Adjoining Areas (CAQM) on 06.05.2026 under the Chairmanship of Shri Rajesh Verma, Chairperson, CAQM, with senior officials from the State Governments of Punjab, Haryana and Uttar Pradesh, including Deputy Commissioners/ District Magistrates (DCs/ DMs) of hotspot districts and representatives of the Punjab Pollution Control Board (PPCB), Haryana State Pollution Control Board (HSPCB) and Uttar Pradesh Pollution Control Board (UPPCB), to review the State Action Plans and preparedness for the forthcoming paddy harvesting season.

During the meeting, the urgent need for systematic and coordinated preparedness ahead of the forthcoming paddy harvesting season was highlighted. The importance of strengthening both *in-situ* and *ex-situ* crop residue management mechanisms, along with focused enforcement and awareness measures, was also emphasized to ensure effective implementation at the field level.

Further, it was observed that stubble burning is not merely a seasonal concern but a larger air pollution mitigation challenge throughout the year affecting the 'ambient air quality across the region. It was stressed that elimination of stubble burning requires sustained and coordinated efforts by all concerned States, Districts and enforcement agencies, with particular emphasis on effective implementation at the grassroots level.

The State Officials presented their respective Action Plans for elimination of paddy stubble burning in the year 2026, encompassing strategies for *in-situ* crop residue management, *ex-situ* utilization of paddy straw and compliance with Direction No. 92 pertaining to co-firing of paddy straw-based biomass pellets/ briquettes in brick kilns. Deliberations were also held on key operational and logistical aspects including timely availability of Crop Residue Management (CRM) machines, promotion of zero stubble

burning villages through incentives, intensified IEC activities and enforcement measures for ensuring compliance.

Implementation of Direction No. 96 regarding wheat stubble management was also reviewed. While reviewing the status of wheat residue burning incidents, it was observed that during the period 01.04.2026 - 06.05.2026, Punjab has already recorded 3,729 fire counts, similarly Haryana has recorded 2,683 incidents and Uttar Pradesh (NCR) has recorded 176 incidents.

The DCs/ DMs of hotspot districts including Sangrur, Firozpur and Bathinda in Punjab; Jind, Jhajjar and Sonapat in Haryana; and Gautam Buddha Nagar and Meerut in Uttar Pradesh also presented district-level strategies for crop residue management and measures being undertaken during the ongoing wheat harvesting season.

Following detailed deliberations, the following action points emerged during the meeting:

- Revised and comprehensive Action Plans aligned with the prescribed parameters and formats to be submitted by Punjab, Haryana and Uttar Pradesh on or before 11.05.2026.
- Detailed reports on the status of functional CRM machines to be submitted by Punjab, Haryana and Uttar Pradesh within two months.
- District-wise reports on the status of co-firing in brick kilns for the period 01.11.2025 to 30.04.2026, along with monthly progress reports thereafter, to be submitted in a time-bound manner by Punjab and Haryana.
- Preventive measures to avoid accidental fires leading to spurt in stubble burning to be strengthened by Punjab, Haryana and Uttar Pradesh.
- Information, Education and Communication (IEC) activities to be intensified by Punjab, Haryana and Uttar Pradesh for enhancing awareness and compliance with crop residue management measures.
- A dedicated portal for monitoring compliance of Direction No. 92 (co-firing in brick kilns) to be developed by the State Govt. of Punjab on the lines of the existing portal developed by the State Govt. of Haryana.

The concerned stakeholder agencies and officials assured the Commission that necessary measures and coordinated efforts would be undertaken for effective implementation of the State Action Plans and for prevention and elimination of stubble burning during the forthcoming harvesting season.
