

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE

RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 1180
TO BE ANSWERED ON 05.12.2024

Environmental compensation for stubble burning

1180. SHRI MOHAMMED NADIMUL HAQUE:

Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Government is planning to increase the environmental compensation imposed on farmers for stubble burning and, if so, the details thereof;
- (b) whether Government has taken steps to implement the provisions of the Jan Vishwas Act, 2023, which decriminalises environmental offences under the Environment Protection Act, Air Act, and Water Act;
- (c) the current status of action taken under Section 15 of the CAQM Act, 2021, for imposing and recovering compensation from violators; and
- (d) the measures taken to assist farmers with viable alternatives to stubble burning, if so, the details thereof?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE
(SHRI KIRTI VARDHAN SINGH)

(a) The Central Government has revised the environmental compensation for stubble burning. The Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change vide notification no. G.S.R. 690 (E) dated 06.11.2024 published the Commission for Air Quality Management in National Capital Region and Adjoining Areas (Imposition, Collection and Utilization of Environmental Compensation for Stubble Burning) Amendment Rules, 2024.

Now the Commission may impose environmental compensation as per the provisions of the Act for stubble burning, at the following rates:-

- (i) the Farmer having an area of land of less than two acres shall pay an environmental compensation of five thousand rupees, per incidence;
- (ii) the Farmer having an area of land of two acres or more but less than five acres shall pay an environmental compensation of ten thousand rupees, per incidence;
- (iii) the Farmer having an area of land of more than five acres shall pay an environmental compensation of thirty thousand rupees, per incidence.”

(b) : The Government has published the following rules and notifications to implement the provisions of the amended Acts i.e. the Environment Protection Act, the Air Act and the Water Act .

- (i) S.O. 4790 (E) dated 4-11-2024 : The Environment Protection (Manner of Holding Inquiry and Imposition of Penalty) Rules, 2024;
- (ii) G.S.R. 696(E) dated 11-11-2024: The Water (Prevention and Control of Pollution) (Manner of Holding Inquiry and Imposition of Penalty) Rules, 2024;
- (iii) G.S.R. 701 (E) dated 12-11-2024: The Air (Prevention and Control of Pollution) (Manner of Holding Inquiry and Imposition of Penalty) Rules, 2024;
- (iv) G.S.R. 703 (E) dated 12-11-2024 : Exemption of certain categories of industrial plants from application of provisions of Section 25 (1) of Water (Prevention & Control of Pollution) Act, 1974.;
- (v) G.S.R. 702 (E) dated 12-11-2024 : Exemption of certain categories of industrial plants from application of provision of Section 21 (1) of Air (Prevention & Control of Pollution) Act, 1981 .

Apart from the above, the Government has issued orders regarding appointment of Adjudicating officers for implementation of the manner of holding inquiry and imposition of penalty rules and has also issued Standard Operating Procedure (SoP) for streamlining the implementation of exemption notifications.

(c) The reported information as on 30-11-2024 is as below:-

Description	Punjab (as on 30.11.2024)	Haryana (as on 30.11.2024)
Cumulative no. of fire incidents reported in the district as per ISRO protocol	10,909	1,406
Monitoring and enforcement actions		
Cumulative number of fields inspected	10,791	1,406
Cumulative number of cases where EC has been imposed	5,525	638
Cumulative amount of EC imposed	2,16,97,500	21,12,500
Cumulative amount of EC realised	1,27,17,500	16,27,500

(d): For viable measures to assist the farmers w.r.t. stubble burning a framework has been advised by the Commission through direction dated 10.06.2021 to the concerned State Governments of Punjab, Haryana, Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan and Government of NCT of Delhi

to prepare state specific detailed, monitorable action plans and learnings from the years 2021, 2022 and 2023, Action Plans were reviewed, updated and finalised by the State Governments of Punjab, Haryana and Uttar Pradesh for the year 2024. Accordingly, a statutory direction for strict implementation of the framework and revised Action Plan for prevention and control of paddy stubble burning during the year 2024, targeting to eliminate the practice through strict enforcement was issued to the respective States on 12.04.2024. The Action Plans, inter-alia, comprises of following components:-

In-situ Crop Residue Management:

- i. Availability and allocation of CRM machinery
- ii. High yield and short duration paddy varieties, as substitute of PUSA-44.
- iii. Harvesting schedule staggered to improve machine utilization
- iv. Super SMS mandated with Combine harvester
- v. Extensive use of Bio-decomposer developed by IARI

Ex-situ Crop Residue Management

The Commission from time time has appropriately communicated and issued directives & advisories to various stakeholders Including the 11 thermal power plants located within 300 km of Delhi, State Governments of Punjab, Haryana and Uttar Pradesh on "Ex-Situ Stubble Management" and to establish an ecosystem and robust supply chain mechanism to boost ex-situ utilisation of straw for tackling the problem of stubble burning. The Commission has also involved coal based Captive Thermal Power Plants in the NCR. The exercise mandated at least 5% co-firing of biomass pellets/torrefied pellets (with focus on paddy straw).

Major alternate usage of paddy straw as economic resource are:

- i. Biomass Power Projects
- ii. Co-firing in Thermal Power plants
- iii. Feed stock for 2G Ethanol plants
- iv. Feed stock in Compressed Biogas plants
- v. Fuel in Industrial Boilers, WTE plants, Brick Kilns etc.
- vi. Packaging materials, Agri-panels etc.

IEC Activities

Extensive IEC activities /Awareness programs have been undertaken by the Concerned State Governments/GNCTD through electronic media, social media, print media, fixing of hoardings, audio- visual clips on TV, broadcast f radio jingles, PA system mounted vans, District and State level 'Kharifgosthi', 'Nyay panchayat level kharifgosthi', demonstration camps etc.

Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) has framed Guidelines for grant of one-time financial support under Environment Protection Charge funds for establishment of pelletization and Torrefaction plants to promote utilisation of paddy straw. In case of setting up of palletisation plant, Rs. 28 lakhs per tonne per hour (TPH), or 40% of the capital cost considered for plant and machinery of a 01 TPH plant, whichever is lower, is provided as one-time financial assistance with a maximum total financial support of Rs. 1.4 crore per proposal. In case of setting up of torrefaction plants, Rs. 56 lakhs per TPH, or 40% of the capital cost considered for plant and machinery of a 01 TPH plant, whichever is lower, is provided as one-time financial assistance with a maximum total financial support of Rs. 2.8 crore per proposal.

A total of 15 applications have been approved for the establishment of pelletization and Torrefaction plants under the above mentioned CPCB Guidelines.
