

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE

LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 792
TO BE ANSWERED ON 14.12.2018

Stubble Burning

792. SHRI JITENDRA CHAUDHURY:

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

- (a) whether the National Green Tribunal has denied minimum support price to farmers who are involved in stubble burning in all over the country;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether field stubble burning is main cause of air pollution and if so, the details thereof;
- (d) the corrective measures taken by the Government in this regard?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE
(DR. MAHESH SHARMA)

(a)&(b)NGT in its Order dated 12.11.18 mentions that “the existing Minimum Support Price (MSP) Scheme must be so interpreted so as to enable the concerned States to wholly or partly deny the benefit of MSP to those who contribute to burn the crop residue.”

Further, NGT in its Order dated 15.11.18 took note of the meeting organised by the Ministry of Agriculture on 14.11.18 with the Chief Secretaries of the States of Punjab, Haryana, Uttar Pradesh and Delhi. The Order mentions that “The steps considered in the meeting. Incentives and dis-incentives with reference to MSP will not be practical.” The Order further mentions “The Tribunal had a chamber meeting, before the hearing, attended by all the members of the Tribunal, Chief Secretaries of the States of Punjab, Haryana, Uttar Pradesh and Delhi, Secretary, Agriculture Department, Govt. of India and also the representative of Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change (MoEF&CC) and the Chairman of Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB), wherein the issue was discussed for about two hours to emphasize the need for monitoring at highest level, in view of seriousness of the issue, impacting to the public health and environment. It was unanimously agreed that multi-pronged approach will be adopted for in-situ and ex-situ management with a view to stop burning of crop residue in the light of experience, apart from the management strategies.” Subsequently, the Order mentions “We direct the Ministry of Agriculture, Govt. of India, to continue to monitor the steps in contribution of its meeting held on 14.11.18 and furnish a status report to this Tribunal on or before 30.04.2019 by e-mail at ngt.filing@gmail.com.”

(c) Stubble burning in Northern States contributes to air pollution in Delhi and NCR in winter season as per the report of Indian Institute of Tropical Meteorology (IITM),Pune, Ministry of Earth Sciences. System of Air Quality & Weather Forecasting & Research (SAFAR) has analysed the contribution of stubble burning in the total PM_{2.5} for the kharif season of this year. The estimated % share of stubble burning in PM_{2.5} reached to a high of 36% on 26th October, 2018 and 33% on 5th November, 2018.

(d) To stop burning of crop residue that leads to higher level of air pollution in Delhi and NCR especially during adverse meteorological conditions in early winter in North India, the Central Government has introduced a new Central Sector Scheme on 'Promotion of Agricultural Mechanization for in-situ management of Crop Residue in the States of Punjab, Haryana, Uttar Pradesh and NCT of Delhi' for the period from 2018-19 and 2019-20 with an outlay of Rs. 1151.80 crore. This year's allocation of Central funds is Rs. 591.65 crore.

Ministry of Power has brought out the policy for Biomass Utilization for Power Generation through Co-firing in Pulverised Coal Fired Boilers in November, 2017. As per the policy, all fluidized bed and pulverized coal units (coal based thermal power plants) except those having ball and tube mill, of power generating utilities, public or private, located in India, shall endeavour to use 5-10% blend of biomass pellets made, primarily, of agri residue along with coal after assessing the technical feasibility, viz. safety aspects etc. In line with the policy, Central Electricity Authority has issued an Advisory to all concerned State Governments, power plant utilities, power equipment manufacturers and other stake holders to promote use of biomass pellets.
