

**Environment Ministry Holds Meeting to Discuss Mitigation of Air Pollution****Environment Ministry Holds Meeting to Discuss Mitigation of Air Pollution**

A meeting to deliberate the issue of mitigation of air pollution was held here today under the Chairmanship of Secretary, Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEF&CC). Several decisions were discussed at the meeting. After detailed deliberations, it was decided that all concerned organisations of State Governments and the Central government involved in this will work towards effectively implementing the following short-term measures immediately:-

- (i) Strict compliance of Graded Response Action Plan (GRAP) and all other directives issued by Hon'ble Courts;
- (ii) Effective enforcement of ban on diesel gen-sets, brick kilns, stone crushers, hot mix plants etc.
- (iii) Ban on entry of unauthorised trucks into Delhi;
- (iv) Enhancing parking fee and capacity augmentation of public transport;
- (v) Use of methods of dust containment and stop civil construction activities for the moment;
- (vi) Ensure watering over unpaved roads to contain road dust;
- (vii) Impose fines on defaulters through Municipal Corporations/State Pollution Control Boards and other organisations; and
- (viii) Improve waste management and stop garbage burning.

The Committee also noted that these steps have already been initiated and that each of these steps needs to be enforced effectively. It was decided that each State Government will set up one or more Monitoring Groups, which will continuously look at compliance. There were suggestions that State Governments should also set up Flying Squads to assess the situation on the ground, prevent violation and report.

Chief Secretary, Haryana and representatives from Punjab government informed the Committee that stubble burning in both the States was over and in the medium term, further problems because of that may not arise. However, both the States had requested that long-term measures to ensure that this does not happen every year need to be put in place. On these issues, it was decided that the Committee will continue to meet regularly and discuss viable options like incentivising the farmers, providing subsidised equipment and using existing technologies to tide over this problem.

The meeting discussed the critical issue regarding deteriorating air quality in NCR and the short-term measures which were required to be urgently put in place.

Among those who attended the meeting were - Chief Secretary, Haryana - Shri Deepender Singh Dhesi, Chief Secretary, Delhi - Dr. MM Kutty, Principal Secretary, Department of Environment, Uttar Pradesh – Ms. Renuka Kmar, Chairman, Punjab Pollution Control Board, Punjab – Shri KS Pannu and Secretary, Department of Environment, Rajasthan – Shri RK Grover.

The meeting was also attended by Secretary, Ministry of Earth Science; Secretary, Department

of Science and Technology; and Secretary, Department of Biotechnology and Chairman, CPCB.

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