

# Dr. Harsh Vardhan Requests State Governments of NCR to take Effective steps to Mitigate Air Pollution

## “Management of Air Pollution Requires Sustained Action over a long Period of time to be Effective”: Environment Minister

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Union Minister of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Dr. Harsh Vardhan, who is currently in Bonn, Germany, to attend the 23<sup>rd</sup> Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework on Climate Change, has requested all the State governments in the National Capital Region of Delhi to take effective steps for mitigating the levels of air pollution and bring them to acceptable levels. He has also requested for the effective implementation of Graded Response Action Plan, as well as other steps identified in various meetings held by the Central Government with the State Governments to improve the situation.

Dr. Harsh Vardhan recalled that he had held several meetings with all the State Governments, including the Government of Delhi and the measures required to deal effectively with the issue of air pollution have been agreed upon and reviewed regularly at his level and highest levels in the concerned State Governments. He also referred to the steps taken to involve people in management of air pollution through Clean Air Campaign this year. He said that every possible step required to tackle the situation has been already identified and the need of the hour was to put them into action at ground level, which will yield significant results. He also called for cost-effective measures since management of air pollution requires sustained action over a long period of time to be effective. Referring to some media reports that Central Government has not supported the demand of the government of Delhi for sprinkling of water through helicopter, he said that it had already responded to the request and asked the State Government to examine cost-effectiveness of the measure vis-a-vis other simpler measures such as mechanised/vacuum sweeping of roads, blacktopping of dusty roads and road shoulders etc. However, he said that if the Government of Delhi thought that sprinkling water through helicopter was the most cost effective measure, it was free to do so.

The Minister also requested the State Governments of Punjab, Haryana and Uttar Pradesh to implement the ban related to stubble burning. He stated that the current high levels of the smog in some areas was the result of adverse meteorological conditions and hoped that the situation will improve in the near future. He has also requested EPCA to effectively implement identified steps in a practical manner, so that visible improvement is seen on the ground.

Dr. Harsh Vardhan assured the people that the Central Government shall do everything possible to bring about improvement in the air quality in Delhi and NCR.

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