



Environment Minister Urges State Governments to Initiate Necessary Action to Manage Air Pollution

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Union Minister of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Dr. Harsh Vardhan has called upon State Governments of Delhi-NCR region, to initiate all necessary actions on a war footing for management of air pollution, so that the kind of episodic rise of air pollution seen last year is not repeated during the coming months. Addressing the meeting of the Chief Secretaries and senior officers of Delhi and NCR States regarding abatement of air pollution during the ensuing winter months, the Minister said that efficient management of air pollution is the duty of all concerned. He sought the participation of people in the matter and said that without it, desired results will be difficult to achieve. Dr. Harsh Vardhan stated that simple steps can go a long way in mitigating the levels of pollution such as prevention of biomass and crop burning, better management of crop residue, sprinkling water on dusty roads, dust mitigation at all construction and demolition sites, strict prevention of crop burning, closure of unauthorised brick kilns, installation of vapour recovery at fuel stations, avoidance of over-loaded vehicles and strict implementation of 'Pollution Under Check' certification.

Dr. Harsh Vardhan said that we should ensure implementation of all long-term actions as directed by the Central Government in right earnest besides strict implementation of Graded Response Action Plan for various levels of pollution. He called upon the States to put up systems to ensure that action according to various levels of pollution are implemented with full involvement of stakeholders. The Minister added that the success will lie in ensuring that the emergency levels are not reached, as per the Graded Response Action Plan. Dr. Harsh Vardhan also called upon all the States to ensure that Control Rooms are set up in all the States and regular meetings of the Task Force are held for timely intervention. He also referred to the FIFA U-17 World Cup 2017 and Diwali and said that the Ministry has already initiated efforts for Clean Air by organising Harit Diwali - Swasth Diwali campaign with large number of students. He further said that requests have been made to all the Chief Secretaries to ensure that firecrackers which are not compliant to the laid down norms are not sold. He said that the Central Government shall keep a close watch on the progress during the next 4-5 months to ensure cleaner air during winter this year.

Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) Chairman said that CPCB had constituted 40 teams for the purpose of monitoring implementation of actions identified so that remedial measures can be initiated against defaulters.

The meeting was attended by Minister of State of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Dr. Mahesh Sharma, Chief Secretary of NCT of Delhi, Dr. M.M Kutty, Chairman, CPCB, Shri S.P.S Parihar, Additional Chief Secretary, Haryana government, Smt. Dheera Khandelwal, Additional Chief Secretary, Rajasthan government, Shri R.K Grover, Principal Secretary, Environment, Punjab, Dr. Roshan Sunkaria, along with other senior officers of the State governments/UTs and State Pollution Control Boards.

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