

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:243
ANSWERED ON:24.02.2010
NOISE POLLUTION
Ponnam Shri Prabhakar

Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether noise pollution has increased in major cities of the country;
- (b) if so, the reasons therefor;
- (c) the present status of noise pollution in major cities including Hyderabad;
- (d) the standards laid down by World Health Organisation (WHO) in this regard; and
- (e) the steps taken by the Government to implement the WHO standards in the country?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE (INDEPENDENT CHARGE) FOR ENVIRONMENT & FORESTS (SHRI JAIRAM RAMESH)

(a) to (c). The Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) and the State Pollution Control Boards (SPCBs)/ Pollution Control Committees (PCCs) have been carrying out sporadic noise monitoring in urban areas, mainly during festivals such as Deepawali. A few SPCBs and PCCs have initiated regular noise monitoring since 2008-09. As per available data, the laid down noise norms for respective zones (Industrial, Commercial, Residential or Silence) are exceeded at many locations. However, a definite trend can not be ascertained for major cities, including Hyderabad, since data is available only for a limited period.

The practice of exploding sound emitting firecrackers on religious occasions & weddings, playing of bands during processions, blowing of horns, operation of generator sets, movement of traffic (highways, railways and airways), use of public address systems, construction activities and operation of generator sets increase the ambient noise levels in urban areas.

The Andhra Pradesh Pollution Control Board is monitoring ambient noise levels at six different places in Hyderabad city and the average noise levels are exceeding the limits at all the places.

(d) The World Health Organisation (WHO) has published guidelines on occupation and community noise which is based on specific environment concept. In India, the occupation noise is governed under the Factory Act, 1948 whereas the ambient noise norms have been notified under the Environment (Protection) Act, 1986.

(e) WHO guidelines are in a different conceptual framework than the noise regulations in India. The various steps undertaken by the Government to control noise pollution include the following:

1. Implementation of the provisions of The Factory Act, 1948, the Air (Prevention and control of Pollution) Act, 1981 and the Noise Pollution (Regulation and Control) Rules, 2000 has been undertaken.
2. The notified noise standards at the manufacturing stage for generator sets, motor vehicles, select domestic appliances and firecrackers are under implementation by the concerned authorities.
3. Nodal agencies have been designated for implementation of notified noise norms at manufacturing stage for generator sets and fire crackers.
4. The blowing of horns, bursting of sound emitted fire crackers, operation of sound emitting construction equipments, playing of bands, etc. have been restricted during night time (10.00 pm to 6.00 am) under the Noise Pollution (Regulation and Control) Rules, 2000.
5. The Central Government has also undertaken the task to create an ambient noise monitoring network at national level.
6. The various SPCBs, PCCs and CPCB have initiated actions for systematic monitoring of ambient noise.