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From left: API Aniket Pote, Sr PI Vinayak Vetal, DCP (Traffic) Vijay Nagar and MPCB secretary Dr Dilip Boralkar at the meeting on Tuesday. PHOTO: CHINWAKHAD

**DIAL 8975953100,
CR VAN WILL REACH
WITHIN 6-8 MINUTES**

'Emergency' clamped on noise pollution...

**Mirror's PUB(LIC)
meeting has experts
giving views to get
rid of nuisance;
police officers
extend help; city
police chief
releases helpline**



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Efforts made to bring about an end to the vexed issue of noise pollution seem to have come to fruition when Pune police commissioner Ritesh Kumaar announced the strengthening of the CR (control room) mobile system releasing the mobile number 8975953100 for citizens to complain directly regarding the menace. A complaint lodged through this number will see



a quick response to mitigate the problem anywhere in the city.

Speaking to Mirror, Kumaar said, "We had started the CR mobile two months back, but now we have strengthened the system and will be adding 100 beat marshals for quick response. The response time of CR mobile is 6 to 8 minutes within the city and in the outskirts, it may take 10 minutes. The CR mobile vans are controlled and communicated by the control room. We have 27 CR mobiles in various jurisdictions."

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'Emergency' clamped...

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"People may call CR mobile for any emergency. It is meant for patrolling and public calls only. We have appointed one officer and three constables for each CR mobile van," the top cop added.

Mirror organised an experts' meeting on the PUB(LIC) menace, on Tuesday. Deputy commissioner of police (traffic) Vijay Magar, senior police inspector Vinayak Vetal of Koregaon Park police station, assistant police inspector Aniket Pote of the social security cell of Pune crime branch, former member secretary of Maharashtra Pollution Control Board Dr Dilip Boralkar addressed the meet. Also, on behalf of the residents' groups, Amit Jain from Koregaon Park, Sujata Aghor from Wadgaon Sheri, Drayson Dixon from Kalyani Nagar, Pushkar Kulkarni from Baner-Balewad and Pashan were present.

According to citizens, the noise pollution that has been harassing them is caused by loud music played in bars and restaurants late into the night, modified bike silencers, heavy vehicles, construction site machines, loudspeakers, and the bursting of crackers at odd hours. Most of these cases are from places like Koregaon Park, Kalyani Nagar, Viman Nagar, Baner, and other neighbourhoods in the city.

According to various residents' organisations from the above-mentioned areas, the authorities were repeatedly approached for a solution to the problem of noise pollution. Mirror, in fact, conducted a fact-check drive on noise pollution caused by pubs and restaurants, bikers using modified silencers, loudspeakers, and also traffic congestion. Mirror had published several stories regarding this highlighting the effects that the menace is having on helpless citizens. Recently, a notice was served to restaurants and bars to adhere to the deadline of 10 pm for playing music.

Kumaar and joint commissioner of police Sandeep Kamik conducted meetings of DCIs and in-charge of police stations following Mirror's reports. The CP gave directions to handle the cases of noise pollution and alerted the CR mobile for

prompt response to complaints.

Speaking at the meeting on PUB(LIC) menace, assistant police inspector Aniket Pote said, "We have been taking action against the restaurants and pubs for playing loud music till late at night. Last week, we took action against several restaurants and seized their music systems. We sent the report to MPCB for further action. We have strictly informed them to follow the deadline of 10 pm for open restaurants and 1.30 am for playing music inside with the condition that there's sound-proof arrangement."

Dr. Dileep Boralkar explained the responsibilities of the Maharashtra Pollution Control Board. "Citizens' groups should work as pressure groups and they should write the complaints to the police commissioner or deputy police commissioner who are the appropriate authorities. The officer then forwards the complaint to the assistant commissioner of police who will conduct a detailed inquiry and forward the complaint to the MPCB. In order to maintain the status, MPCB officers will fix the decibel meter and appoint their staff at the spots. This will surely make a difference and keep a check on the people who are violating the norms."

He added that the pressure groups will create a huge impact and it will result in action. "Also, the authorities should declare silence zones in some areas, for which police and the MPCB can come together. Citizens can also file public interest litigations on this issue," he added.

Besides reports on loud music which resulted in the notice being served, Mirror also published a report on the illegal modified silencers. Their deafening sound is an irritant of the highest order.

Ambar Ayade, a resident of Nyati Meadows in Wadgaon Sheri tweeted the issue to chief minister Eknath Shinde. He complained that some notorious bikers visit their society premises every night and the modified silencers of their bikes produce high decibels of noise, which disturbs the sleep of children, senior citizens, and patients. The deputy commissioner of police Vijay Magar noted down the complaints and directed his team to look into the matter.



Citizens' representatives discussed their issues with the police officers at the Mirror office on Tuesday

Pushkar Kulkarni, BANER-BALEWADI-PASHAN

"In my area, rooftop bars have come up in the last 5-6 years. Underage drinking and noise pollution of bullet silencers is observed. Wine shop permissions have been issued to people. There are senior citizens living in the area, unbearable noises can be heard after 10 pm. We constantly call up to complain to the police but nobody responds."

Drayson Dixon, KALYANI NAGAR

"I have complained about the loud noises of Bullets. My concern is if Mumbai, Delhi, Goa can follow certain rules, why can't Pune do the same? Can't the city follow certain time limits for celebrations? Crackers also burst in the middle of the night disturbing people's sleep. Why should I file a complaint about the noise pollution? The responsible authorities should take suo moto action. DCP Vijay Magar replied, a meeting was conducted by CP Ritesh Kumaar and Jt CP Sandeep Kamik, where bar owners were told not to cause noise pollution after 10 pm as it disturbs the neighborhood."

Sujata Aghor, WADGAON SHERI

"Noise of celebrations during festivals is heard from huge trucks loaded with loudspeakers. There is loud noise from near Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj statue. Even after calling 112 we have no response. The songs played are also vulgar, we as women feel unsafe to pass through such huge crowds. I need a solution to the noise limit and their timings as the children have to also prepare for exams. DCP Magar immediately called, and told him on call that to conduct a meeting to review the whole scenario and survey the whole matter in the area mentioned by Sujata. The decibel limit exceeding will be taken strict action."

Amit Jain, KOREGAON PARK, LANE 7

"Citizens have been facing noise pollution issues for the past 12-13 years in my area. They have been dialing 100-112; however, no action has been taken by the police. Things are worsening now. We have met municipal commissioner Vikram Kumar and anti-encroachment department head Madhav Jagtap. We asked them on what basis the PMC gives permission and why cannot it take action on encroachments. We also met the joint commissioner of police and then social security department head, who used to raid. But all resto bars have got their equipment back again. We work with journalists and they are aware of our issues, particularly, Mirror. We have filed many RTIs. All resto bars are breaking fire, excise, FDA, parking and encroachment rules. I have been staying there since 2006. There were only 3 to 4 restaurants and bars, but now it has become a hub for noise pollution and traffic chaos. They play loud music even after 1.30 am. The DCP replied that they would set up a team to look into this matter."

Citizens should fearlessly lodge complaints

Residents complained that the police do not take action against noise pollution. The police said that the complainant did not come forward to give statements. Senior PI Vinayak Vetal said, "When a citizen complains about noise pollution or any illegal activity in their area, they do not come forward to give details. Under the procedure, we need a panch to lodge a complaint. Therefore, we request citizens to be present at the spot. If they are not present there, we cannot file a complaint. We appeal to citizens to file complaints fearlessly, we are here for them."