Noise Pollution

What is the issue?

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A study by a German company across 50 cities in the world finds that noise is robbing nearly two decades of healthy hearing from the inhabitants of Delhi and Mumbai.

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What is noise pollution?

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- Noise pollution or noise disturbance is the disturbing or excessive noise that may harm the activity or balance of human or animal life.
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- Outdoor noise is summarized by the word environmental noise.
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- Poor urban planning may give rise to noise pollution.
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- Noise can also have a detrimental effect on wild animals.
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- It increases the risk of death by changing the delicate balance in predator or prey detection and avoidance, and interfering the use of the sounds in communication, especially in relation to reproduction and in navigation.
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What are the levels of discomfort?

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- According to a **2015 report commissioned by the European Commission** on the impact of noise on health, it is estimated that that 1.3 billion people worldwide suffer from hearing impairment due to noise exposure.
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- World Health Organization (WHO) estimates 10% of the global population is currently exposed to noise levels that could lead to hearing impairment.
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- The same body recommends that unprotected exposure to sound levels greater than 100 dB should be limited in duration of four hours and frequency of four times a year.
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- Additionally, it should never exceed 140 dB in adults and 120 dB in children.
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- But a firecracker normally generates about 125 dB of noise.
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- India’s Central Pollution Control Board conducts studies of ambient noise in commercial, residential and industrial townships and has found that noise levels in Delhi, Mumbai and Lucknow routinely break the national limit of 75 dB.
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What are the findings of the study?

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- Age irreversibly destroys the tiny hair in your inner ear, making it harder to hear high-pitched tones.
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- The older you are, the less the range of frequencies perceived.
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- The study is done by playing tones at various frequencies that cover the range of human auditory perception from **20-20,000 Hz** to the participants.
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- It determined how far, on average, people’s hearing abilities deviated from what’s ideal for their age.
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- Residents of Vienna were found to have the smallest average Hearing Loss(HL) of 12.59 years, meaning that a hypothetical 30-year-old had the hearing of a 42-year-old.
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- **Delhi performed the worst with an HL of 19.34**, meaning that a 30-year-old Delhiite had the auditory level of a 49-year-old.
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- The study also found that 64% of the hearing loss measured in people of a

city could be explained by the region’s noise pollution levels.
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\n**Source: The Hindu**

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