

Raising awareness a must to check noise pollution

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speakers at a discussion yesterday called for raising awareness to check noise pollution to a great extent.

About 50 percent noise pollution caused by motor vehicles could be regulated by raising awareness among the drivers, they said.

Referring to the draft of the noise pollution control regulation, they said enacting laws would not help curb noise pollution unless people are ready to comply.

The Noise Pollution Prevention Coordination Committee organised the discussion on 'Noise pollution: past review, present

situation and future duties' in the city.

Speaking as chief guest, Prof. Muzaffer Ahmad said noise pollution is causing various diseases as well as economic loss.

Debra Efroymson, regional director of Path Canada, said a limited number of people are mainly responsible for creating noise pollution in the city, but all the citizens are suffering for it.

Dr Manash Ranjan Chakraborty, an ear, nose and throat specialist, presented a study on noise pollution in the capital.

He said the highest noise level of 104 decibel was recorded at Sayedabad bus terminal, one of the busy commercial zone.

Having the noise level at 99 decibel, Jatrabari tops the list of mixed zone while the noise level at Dhanmondi residential area was recorded at 75 decibel, according to the study conducted last year.

During the study, Dr Chakraborty selected 312 people

of 15-45 age group, including drivers, garment workers, students, traffic police, hawkers and shopkeepers, to determine the percentage of hearing impairment, one of the effects of noise pollution.

He said more than 64 percent of the respondents were not aware of their hearing impairment while 78 percent has poor knowledge about noise and noise-induced hearing loss.

The drivers and the traffic police were the worst sufferers of noise pollution in regard to hearing loss.

The permissible sound limit, according to the environment ministry, for silent zone, including hospitals, is 45 decibel, for residential area 50 decibel, for commercial area 70 decibel and for mixed zone 60 decibel.

Presenting another paper, Amit Ranjan Dey, project officer of Work for Better Bangladesh, listed the sources of noise pollution: hydraulic horn, brick-crushing machine, generator, mega-phone and industrial units.

Tk12 cr Norwegian aid for education of indigenous children

Norway and Brac signed a contract titled "Education for Indigenous Children (EIC)" yesterday, says a press release.

Norwegian Ambassador Aud Lise Norheim and Brac Deputy Executive Director Md. Aminul Alam signed the contract at the embassy in the city on behalf of their respective side. Counsellor and Deputy Head of Mission Hans P Melby, First Secretary Inger Sangnes and Dr. Saiful Islam of BRAC were present on the occasion.

Under the contract, Norway will give 2 million US dollar (Tk12 crore) with an objective for providing education to over 300,000 poor indigenous children. The thirteen-month contract will be effective from this month covering pre-primary schools, non-formal primary schools and post-primary basic education and continuing education.

Besides increasing enrolment of indigenous children in mainstream education, EIC will also facilitate participation of women and ethnic minorities in the implementation and management of primary and post-primary education programmes.