

# Cops learn how to keep noise down

**FOR GANESHOTSAV** Navi Mumbai's police personnel learn how to use decibel meters, get updated on noise pollution rules



HT Correspondent

htmetro@hindustantimes.com

**MUMBAI:** As the city prepares to celebrate its favourite festival, the police have started getting trained to handle cases of noise pollution during Ganeshotsav.

Anti-noise campaigners, in a bid to keep noise levels under control, trained more than 70 police personnel on Wednesday.

Representatives from 20 police stations across Navi Mumbai attended the session at the Kalamboli police headquarters.

Noise pollution rules and the Bombay high court orders that need to be implemented during the festival were discussed.

"The police personnel were enthusiastic, as we spoke to them about how noisy processions can affect the health of residents," said Sumaira Abdulali, the convener of Awaaz foundation, which conducted the session.

Abdulali and Ajay Marathe from the NGO also got the officers familiar with the Environment Protection Act (EPA) and how to take readings on decibel metres in public places and private spaces.

"Noise levels can be recorded from anywhere, when it comes to loudspeakers in public places," said Marathe, adding, the police were also briefed about details of various court orders, including a

## BRINGING THE VOLUME DOWN

On August 3, the Maharashtra government filed an affidavit in the Bombay high court saying that the home department had, on July 28, appointed in charge of police stations in the state as competent officers, in addition to the senior police officers, to take action against any violation of noise norms.

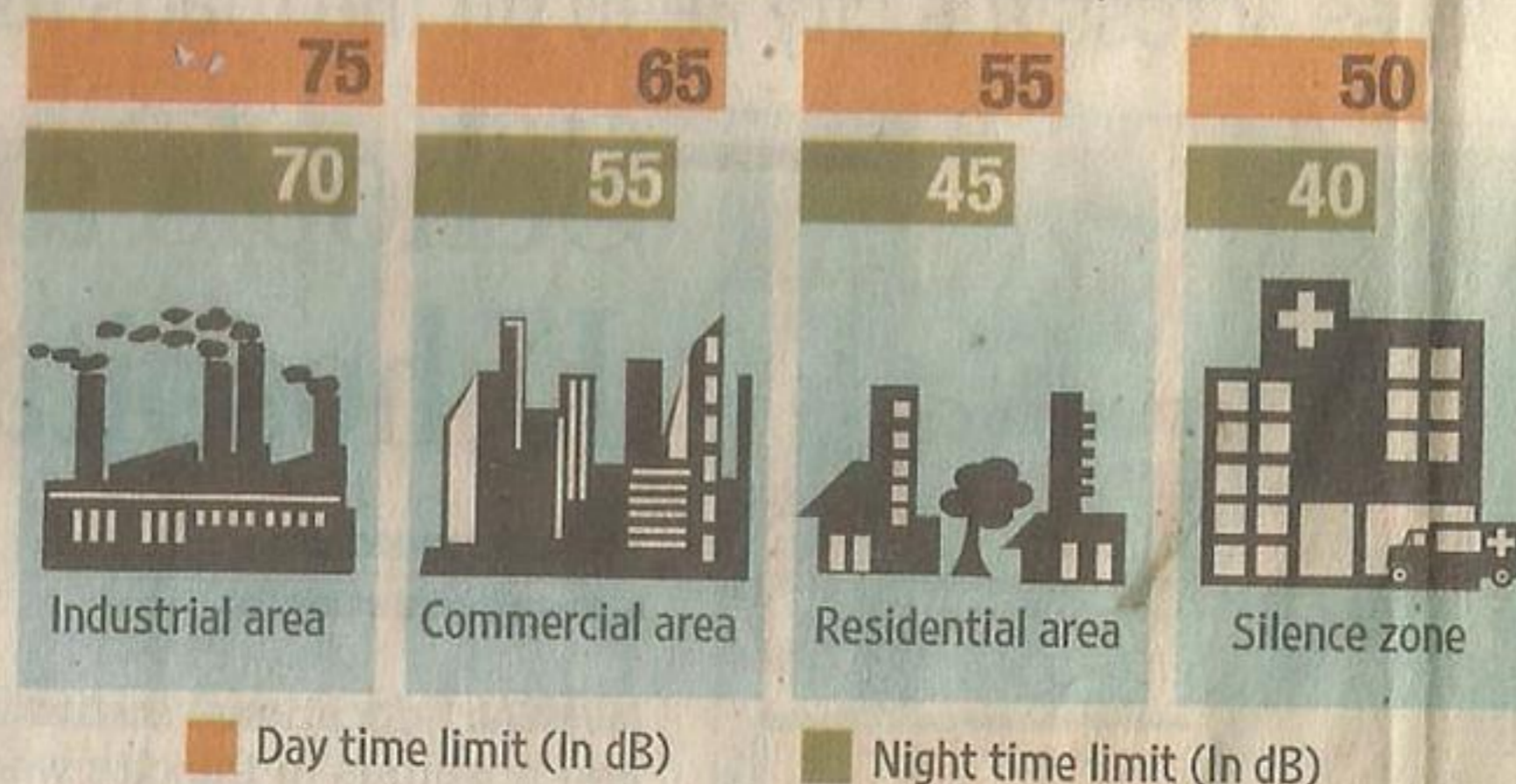
Dr Mahesh Bedekar, who had filed a PIL in 2010 complaining about lack of compliance of rules and regulations during festivals such as Ganeshotsav, Navratri and Dahi Handi and the violation of noise pollution rules, said, "According to SC guidelines from 2005, which were based on a World Health Organisation (WHO) report, something related to public health has to be taken seriously."

(From left) Ajay Marathe and Sumaira Abdulali conducted the session. HT



## WHY YOU SHOULD CARE

Noise standards as laid down in Noise Pollution (Regulation and Control) Rules, 2000.



said loudspeakers cannot be used after 10pm.

"We learnt how to record decibel levels and cleared doubts about carrying out investigations in such cases," said Atish Wagh, assistant police inspector

ing centre.

Wagh said this year, the police will get tough on mandals flouting noise rules.

"If caught, mandals will get 60 days to respond and if their response is not satisfactory,

"If decibel levels are between 80dB to 90dB, then over a period of time, people can develop nerve damage, leading to hearing loss or tinnitus, which is a recurring buzzing sound produced in the ear,"

**DR ASHWINI KUMAR MEHTA**, ear-nose-throat (ENT) specialist, Seven Hills Health Hospital in Andheri.

**REPRESENTATIVES FROM 20 POLICE STATIONS IN NAVI MUMBAI ATTENDED THE SESSION AT THE KALAMBOLI POLICE**

## App turns green guide for Ganpati

HT Correspondent

htmetro@hindustantimes.com

**MUMBAI:** For the tech-savvy devout, celebrating the upcoming Ganeshotsav in an eco-friendly manner just got easier. A free mobile application launched on Tuesday offers extensive information on ways to observe the 10-day festival in a green way.

Called 'Eco Bappa', the one-of-its-kind Android app has been prepared by Pratik Jadhav, a Ghatkopar-based green enthusiast, in collaboration with the Maharashtra Pollution Control Board (MPCB).

Jadhav, an event manager who has been running a dedicated website called ecofriendlyganasha.com for five years, said, "With increasing awareness about ecology, the website was getting popular every festival. Many people were writing to us asking for a related app. Seeing the demand, we decided to develop one."

Users can access data on the number of eco-friendly idol makers across the state including Mumbai, Navi Mumbai, Pune, Thane, Aurangabad, Palghar and Raigad. Idol makers who use natural clay and the papier mache technique are listed on the app, with their location and contact numbers.

"The data was provided by the pollution control board. In all, 42 idol makers are mentioned as of now, and we have appealed to other to get them-

It's perhaps the first mobile app in India which contains ways to celebrate any festival in an environmentally responsible way. We hope citizens will avail of its benefits.

SANJAY BHUSKUTE, MPCB spokesperson

available about 22 artificial ponds for immersing Ganesh idols that the municipal body creates across Mumbai. Also, the app elaborates on ways to celebrate a green festival at home. "Using images of similar celebrations in the past, we have elaborated on how idols can be created out of even vegetables and fruits, which is innovative and eco-friendly," said Jadhav.

The app is currently available in Marathi, but the English and Hindi versions will be operational soon, he said.

He also said that he was helped by three students - two pursuing engineering and one a degree in Commerce - to develop the app. It took the team a month to put together information.

Sanjay Bhuskute, MPCB official and spokesperson, said, "It's perhaps the first mobile app in India which contains ways to celebrate any festival in an environmentally responsible way