

Delhi will get mobile air quality stations for area-wise monitoring

POLLUTION CHECK Environment department plans to buy two mobile units that will help in collecting area-specific data, currently overall real-time data is available only from 4-5 stations



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NEW DELHI: The Delhi environment department is eyeing a mobile pollution monitoring device that can be taken to any spot in the city to measure pollution level in that particular area.

The mechanism will help in area-wise handling of air quality in the city.

A senior environment official said the mobile air quality monitoring unit would be capable of real-time sampling, analysis and control of air pollution from various sources. It will be equipped with a number of innovative technologies that will enhance the Delhi Pollution Control Committee's air quality monitoring capabilities.

"Air quality is not the same all over the city and monitoring at fixed points won't help us get a thorough view. For example, Anand Vihar with heavy vehicular traffic is one of the most polluted corners of the city. Compare this to Jor Bagh in the heart of the city where the pollution levels are well under control. Mobile monitoring stations will help us keep an eye on more spots in this vast city," the official told Hindustan Times.



■ Despite court orders, burning of waste continues in the city aggravating air pollution. The fixed monitoring stations of various agencies do not provide real time air quality data. MOHD ZAKIR/HT FILE PHOTO

"We are looking to get 1-2 such mobile monitoring units initially. We have six monitoring stations at present, which doesn't give a holistic picture of the air quality in the city. We plan to increase the number of monitoring stations, too, along with these mobile units to get a comprehensive view of the air quality of the Capital," he said.

Currently, the Delhi Pollution Control Committee has just six monitoring stations at Anand Vihar, Mandir Marg, Punjabi Bagh, RK Puram, IGI Airport and Civil Lines. The Central Pollution

Control Board has five stations but they don't monitor particulate matter (PM) 2.5 while the ministry of earth sciences has 10 such stations. Overall real time data is available from just 4-5 stations.

Experts feel this step can be helpful if strategies are developed according to the data provided by these units. "These supplementary measures will be helpful to generate local data and thereby the local exposure levels. Many areas might have unique issues and the data on how are people exposed will be complimentary to nor-

mal monitoring," Anumita Roychowdhury, head of Centre for Science and Environment's air pollution control team, said. The latest World Bank report on leveraging urbanisation in South Asia has identified "air pollution" as a big challenge for major cities in the region, including Delhi. The report quoted World Health Organisation findings on ambient air quality to suggest that Delhi is the worst among 381 cities from developing countries and 19 of the 20 most polluted cities are from South Asia.