

Act on complaints or face action: CPCB to agencies

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New Delhi: “Take immediate action on air pollution complaints placed through social media or face prosecution,” Central Pollution Control Board told authorities in NCR.

A meeting was held earlier this month with government departments and civic bodies. “Their performance was found to be below 40-60% on the social media account”, so the apex pollution control body asked the agencies to “enhance their performance, which is declining especially on social media”.

“It was advised to all agencies to ensure timely action on complaints with proper action taken reports uploaded for information of the complainants.... the expected target of resolution of complaints must be more than 80%,” said CPCB.

The review meeting was conducted by the CPCB member secretary with the nodal officer of south, east and north municipal corporations, Delhi Development Authority, Delhi Pollution Control Committee, authorities of Gurgaon, Ghaziabad, Faridabad, Noida and Greater Noida.

Agency-wise performance graphs from November 2018 to April 2019 were shown. “Member secretary, CPCB, has given instructions to all agencies to take immediate action on pending complaints on social media accounts within a week, otherwise CPCB will be constrained (to) prosecute the defaulter agency for non-compliance as per the direction of Hon’ble Supreme Court,” minutes of the meeting state.

In November last year, CPCB had directed public and enforcement agencies to immediately join social media platforms on which citizens can lodge their complaints on pollution directly, noting that actions of these bodies have been “inadequate”.

In a meeting with the agencies and state pollution control boards, CPCB member secretary Prashant Gargava had asked the agencies to join social media platforms like Twitter and Facebook to facilitate citizens on lodging complaints on air polluting activities.

“It has been observed that most of the agencies are yet to join social media platforms and take action with respect to complaints concerning them,” CPCB was quoted as saying by the minutes of the meeting.

The pollution control body said that the reported complaints are forwarded to the agencies concerned for action. However, “it is observed that most of the agencies are yet to join and also action taken on complaints”.

“It was reiterated that agencies must immediately create a Facebook page and a Twitter handle to join CPCB’s social media platform to address complaints,” it said.