
EPA to act tough with steel mills in Lahore over pollution issues

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The Post reported that the industries located in the urban areas of Lahore are posing severe environmental hazards by polluting the air and water.

Mr Asif Shuja chief of Pakistan Environment Protection Agency said that "Steel factories are a contributing factor in air pollution. Around 8 furnace mills, including Hussain Steel, Zia Steel, Modern Steel, Potohar Steel, Mumtaz Steel, Pak Steel and Al Hadeed Steel are located in I 9 and I 10. Smoke emissions from these factories have elevated carbon concentrations in the air."

He added that "Though all the 8 furnace factories have installed scrubbers in the mills, they do not operate them to avoid heavy electricity bills. Nor do they run treatment plants at night."

Mr Shuja said that the agency could slap more than a PKR 1 million fine and also order immediate closure of the mills polluting the environment. He added that the agency had issued notice to 3 steel mills namely Ittehad Steel, Modern Steel and Pothohar Steel and that it had taken action against four factories in the past and kept them closed until they installed treatment plants.

He said that Pakistan Environment Protection Agency took action on the complaints of residents and stakeholders to minimize environmental hazards. He added that "Pakistan Environment Protection Agency in collaboration with the civic authority and Islamabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry was cracking down on polluters.

As per report, steel and marble factories and flour mills in sectors I 9 and I 10 pose a threat to nearby residential areas as well as the whole environment. As many as 400 industrial plots are located in both the sectors, where residential populace live.

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