

Annual Frontier Report, 2022

March 29, 2022

In news— The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) has published the 'Annual Frontier Report, 2022' recently.

Key highlights of the report-

- **Urban noise pollution, wildfires and phenological shifts – the three topics of this Frontiers Report** – are issues that highlight the urgent need to address the triple planetary crisis of climate change.
- **The report ranks 61 cities around the world, of which Dhaka tops the list** with a noise pollution of 119 dB.
- **As per the report, Uttar Pradesh's Moradabad is the second-most noise polluted city globally.**
- **Islamabad is third**, with maximum noise pollution of 105 dB.
- Thirteen cities from South Asia feature in the list and five of them are from India.
- **The other four are Kolkata at 89 dB, Asansol (89 dB), Jaipur (84 dB), and Delhi at 83 dB.**
- The World Health Organization had recommended a 55-dB standard for residential areas in its 1999 guidelines and for traffic and business sectors, this limit is 70 dB.
- The sounds with a frequency of over 70 dB are considered harmful to health.
- The **quietest cities in the world are Irbrid**, Lyon, Madrid, Stockholm and Belgrade.

NOISIEST CITIES	
Dhaka (Bangladesh)	119 dB
Moradabad (UP, India)	114 dB
Islamabad (Pakistan)	105 dB
Rajshahi (Bangladesh)	103 dB
Ho Chi Minh City (Vietnam)	103dB

- **Terming noise pollution “a raucous killer”,** the report said that unwanted, prolonged, and high-level sounds from road traffic, railways, or leisure activities, impair human health and well-being.
- Chronic annoyance and sleep disturbance caused by traffic can result in severe heart diseases and metabolic disorders with the very young, and mostly affect the elderly and marginalized communities near busy roads.
- **The report encourages urban planners to prioritize noise reduction by investing in urban infrastructure that creates positive soundscapes such as tree belts, green walls,** and more green spaces in cities – also offering diverse health benefits.
- **The report also outlined that between 2002 and 2016, an average of 423 million hectares of the land surface – about the size of the European Union – burned,** projecting that the dangerous wildfires will likely become more frequent, intense, and longer lasting, including in areas previously unaffected by fires.