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**Title:** Ambient air quality and health status during construction of hydropower projects in the hilly region of Kullu Valley, Himachal Pradesh

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**Abstract:** The present study is focused on two major hydropower projects Parbati Stage II (800 MW) and Stage III (520 MW) in the Kullu district of Himachal Pradesh. Assessment of ambient air quality on surrounding environment and health status of the local communities were assessed during construction period. The monthly mean TSP concentration from July, 2005 to September, 2007 was 66.4 µg m<sup>-3</sup> ranging from 10.7 µg m<sup>-3</sup> on October 13, 2005 to 239.7 µg m<sup>-3</sup> on January 6, 2007. The monthly mean SO<sub>2</sub> concentrations was 2.83 µg m<sup>-3</sup> ranging from 0.25 µg m<sup>-3</sup> on June 22, 2007 to 9.65 µg m<sup>-3</sup> on November 18, 2005. While monthly mean concentration of NO<sub>2</sub> is 2.81 µg m<sup>-3</sup> ranging from 0.04 µg m<sup>-3</sup> on November 18, 2005 to 19.36 µg m<sup>-3</sup> on March 24, 2006. Present study unfolds that the ambient air quality were deteriorating and number of patients are increasing due to ongoing construction activities in the region

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