

Our Concern

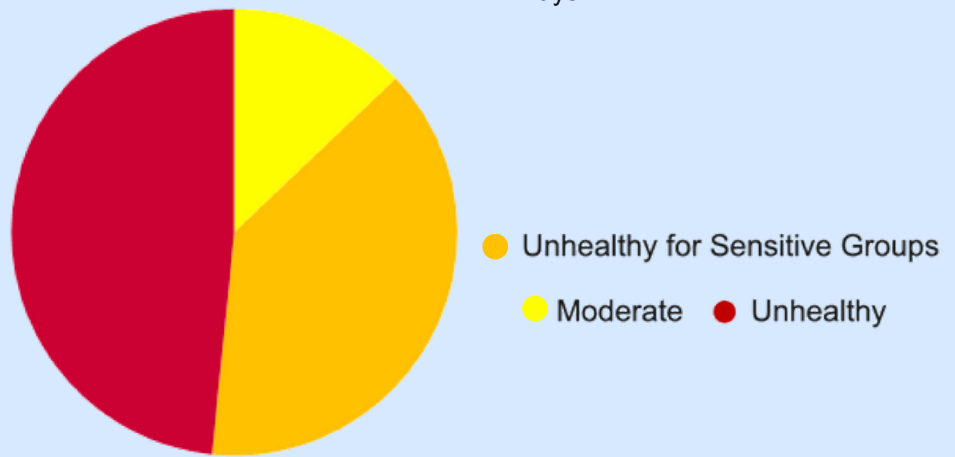
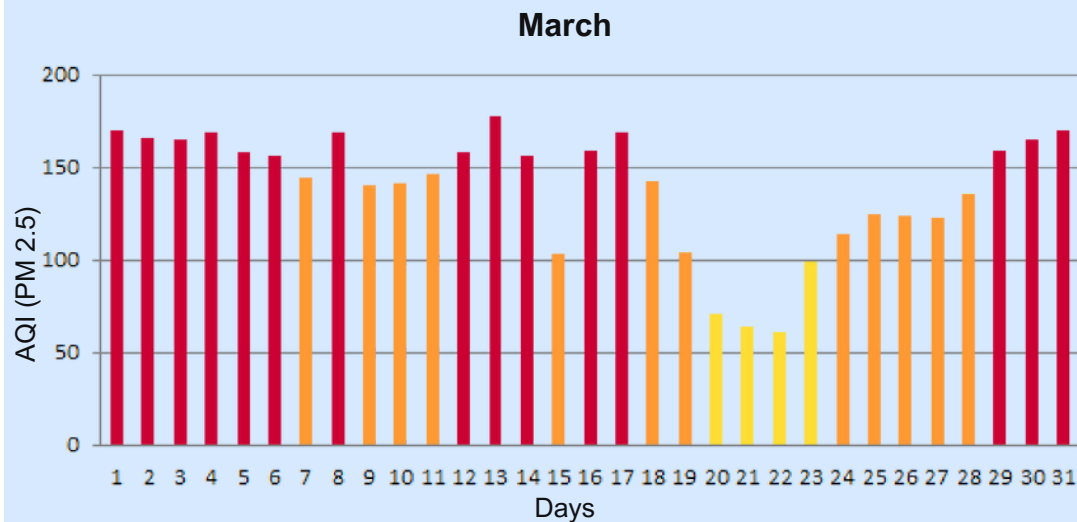


E-Newsletter March 2023

Our Concern, a monthly e-newsletter, is a compilation of news and views from local, and international, media coverage as an attempt to keep our readers abreast on the recent happenings on clean air, energy, and urban mobility and climate change issues.

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- None of the days in March were satisfactory with AQI values from 0 to 50 where air pollution poses little or no risk.
- 4 days in March where AQI values reach 51 to 100. During such period, air quality is acceptable; however, there may be a moderate health concern for people sensitive to air pollution. Active children and adults, and people with respiratory disease, such as asthma, should limit prolonged outdoor exertion.
- 12 days in March were unhealthy for sensitive group with AQI values reaching 101 to 150. Active children and adults, and people with respiratory disease, such as asthma, should limit prolonged outdoor exertion during such period.
- There were 15 days where AQI values reached 151 to 200 where everyone may begin to experience health effects; members of sensitive groups may experience more serious health effects.

Kathmandu one of world's most polluted cities



Kathmandu valley, the country's capital and the largest city, has once again been ranked one of the world's most polluted city by IQ Air, a Swissbased air quality technology company, after gathering information from various air quality monitors in the valley. On 16th March at 9:00am, Kathmandu's AQI stood at 181 and at around 2:00pm it was 137, making the city the seventh most polluted city in the world, with Delhi topping the list. Prior to that, Kathmandu's air was unhealthy for several consecutive days. Kathmandu's average PM2.5 concentration has remained over 10 times the WHO annual air.

Environmentalists say lack of adequate rainfall has boosted air pollution this time in Kathmandu valley. Further, the mornings in the valley seem more dangerous as the PM2.5 remains mostly above 100 $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$. The situation in the winter season worsens as PM2.5 concentration

Source | March 16th

Experts urge authorities to prepare for the worst of climate disasters

The IPCC report states that damage to climate will become irreversible if global temperature rises to 1.5 degrees celsius above pre-industrial levels and governments should drastically cut down on their emissions to avert that. It further says, if the countries just stick to their current policies, it would become impossible to limit global temperature to below 1.5 degree celsius. Nepal is one of the most vulnerable countries to the climate crisis, as pointed out by multiple studies. Over the past few years, drought and dry spells have become the new normal in the cultivation season and floods and inundation in the harvesting season. However, Climate experts in Nepal agree that limiting global temperature to below 1.5 degrees celsius is not in the hands of the Nepal government. They say that even though the role of the country in the emission of greenhouse gases is negligible, people in the country cannot escape the brunt of the adverse effects of climate change. As such, experts suggest other mitigation measures such as strengthening early warning and weather monitoring systems, encouraging farmers to opt for drought and flood-resistant crops or other alternatives to food crops, and launching crop insurance drives.



Source | March 24th

Kumjung women voice climate concerns



At an interaction held on International Women's Day, residents of the Solukhumbu village shared their grievances on the impact of climate change on their daily lives including reduced harvests owing to less rainfall and low soil fertility. The women in the Himalayan region have been hit hard, from household chores to agricultural activities as there is a serious issue of water supply in the region. Moreover, the with the untimely rainfall and snowfall, at one place the water springs have dried up and on the other hand is directly hitting the hospitality business

[Source](#)

March 8th

Nepal imports EVs worth Rs 5.5 billion in eight months of current FY

According to the Customs Department, during the eight months of the current financial year nine models of electric vehicles (EV) worth Rs 5.5 billion have been imported. However, the governments decision to increase the custom duty on the EVs is impacting the imports. In the current year's budget, the government increased the customs duty on EVs with a capacity of 300 kilowatts from 40 percent to 60 percent. Similarly, the excise duty on EVs with a capacity of 300 kilowatts was increased from 45 to 60 percent and 15 percent to 30 percent for EVs with a capacity of 100 kW to 200 kW. Due to the increase in custom duty EVs with a capacity of 300 kilowatts have been imported in a low amount



[Source](#)

March 24th

Nepal's electricity production capacity reaches more than 2,577 MW



According to the statistics maintained by Nepal Electricity Authority, Alternative Energy Promotion Center and independent power producing companies, the country has installed capacity of producing over 2,577 MW of electricity. Of the total amount, 2,492.95 MW is connected to the national grid, while remaining 84.53 MW is off-grid supply. The NEA operated companies and its subsidiaries have been producing 1,122.40 MW. The private sector has installed power plants of 1,370.54 MW. Similarly, small hydropower projects and alternative energy have been producing 4.53 MW and 80 MW, respectively, which are recorded under off-grid supply.

Source | March 7th

Nepal imported over 86,000 electric stoves in the first seven months of current FY

With the government promoting the domestic consumption of electricity, the use of electric cooking devices is on rise, shows the DoC records. According to the Department of Customs (DoC), Nepal imported 86,513 units of electric stoves in the first seven months of the current fiscal year. Of the imported 84,512 units were induction stove and 2,001 units were infrared cookers. Further, of the imported figure, largest number of electricity-based cookers were purchased from China (more than 68,000 units) and India



Source | March 24th

12 companies express interests in feasibility study to operate electric buses on Ring Road of Kathmandu



In response to the proposal call for pre-qualification test by Investment Board Nepal (IBN) on February 5, with the deadline was set for March 23, a total of 12 foreign companies have applied. The applicant companies are from countries including China, India, Bangladesh and Pakistan and from the European Union. The IBN under its project 'Electric Bus Rapid Transit in Ring Road of Kathmandu Valley' with estimated cost of NPR 20.19 billion has planned to operate 75 electric vehicles on the 27.30 km long ring road.

Source | March 28th

Good Reads

Some supplemental readings if you are interested in diving deeper into contemporary environmental issues in Nepal and beyond. Take a peek for a broader array of topics.

[Renewable Energy and Future of Sustainable Development](#)

[Satellites link rain, drought intensity to global warming](#)

[Only 13 countries and territories had 'healthy' air quality in 2022](#)

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