

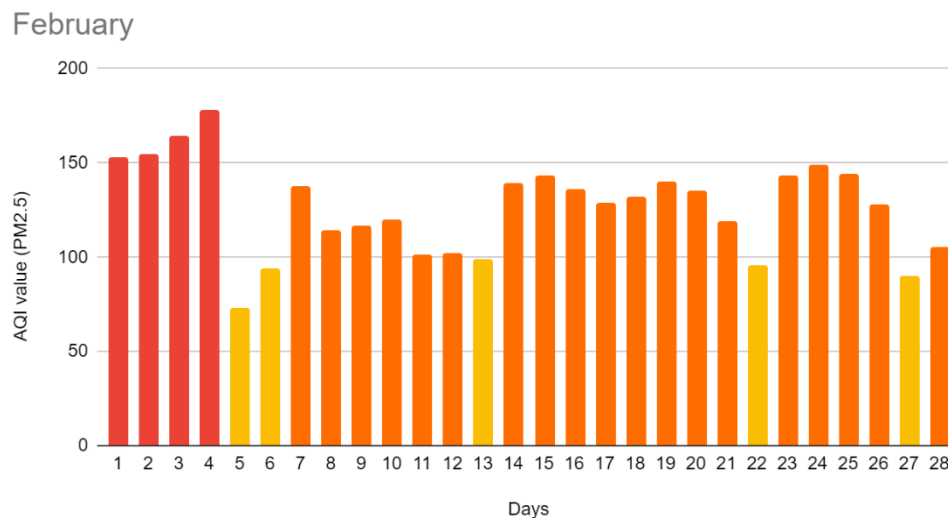
Our Concern



E-Newsletter February 2022

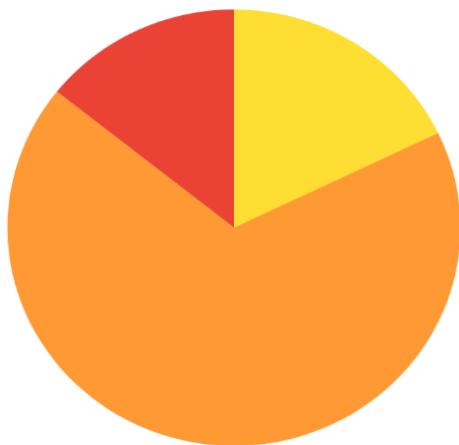
Our Concern, a monthly e-newsletter, is a compilation of news and views from local, and international, media coverage as an attempt to keep our readers abreast on the recent happenings on clean air, energy, urban mobility and climate change issues.

Kathmandu Valley Air Quality overview (PM 2.5)



Data retrieved from: <https://aqicn.org/city/nepal/kathmandu/us-embassy/>

● Moderate
 ● Unhealthy for Sensitive Groups
 ● Unhealthy



There are zero day in February with AQI values from 0 to 50 where air quality is considered satisfactory, and air pollution poses little or no risk.

- There are 5 days 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.

- 19 days 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 4 days where AQI values reach 151 to 200 where everyone may begin to experience health effects; members of sensitive groups may experience more serious health effects.
- There was no day with very unhealthy and hazardous air quality which may experience more serious health effects.

News and Views

Pollution causing more deaths than Covid, action needed, UN expert says

According to UN rights chief Michelle Bachelet, environmental threats are the greatest threat to human rights, and a growing number of climate and environmental cases incorporate human rights arguments. Pesticides, plastics, and electronic waste, according to the report, cause widespread human rights violations and at least 9 million premature deaths each year, and the matter is widely ignored. UN Human Right Council posted a document declaring a clean environment a human right urged a ban on polyfluoroalkyl and perfluoroalkyl; substances that have been linked to cancer and are not broken down easily.

Published on: February 16, 2022

Source: <https://kathmandupost.com/world/2022/02/16/pollution-causing-more-deaths-than-covid-action-needed-un-expert-says>

An electricity project stuck in limbo for 60 years hopes to see the light of day

The project on the Seti River was proposed with main project features of a 195-metre-high concrete-faced rock-fill dam, 2,060-hectare reservoir area, 6.7 km headrace tunnel, underground power station, 20.3 km permanent access roads, and 132.5 km of 400 kV double-circuit transmission line to evacuate the power. The West Seti and Seti River (SR-6), a joint storage project, now has a capacity of 1,200 megawattst. Despite being rich in natural resources, the far west region, including Karnali, has remained underdeveloped for decades and comes at the bottom of the human development index.

Published on: February 9, 2022

Source: <https://kathmandupost.com/national/2022/02/09/an-electricity-project-stuck-in-limbo-for-60-years-hopes-to-see-the-light-of-day>

IBN okays feasibility study of two solar projects

The Investment Board Nepal (IBN) has granted permission to conduct a feasibility study of two mega solar projects. The 49th meeting of the IBN convened at the official residence of the Prime Minister in Baluwatar decided to approve the feasibility study of 125-megawatt solar projects in Dipayal Silgadhi Municipality of Doti district and 225-megawatt systems in Amargadhi Municipality of Dadheldhura district with an estimated cost above Rs 23 billion. The PM instructed IBN to accelerate the feasibility study of development projects and to emphasize construction of projects.

Published on: February 09, 2022

Source: <https://thehimalayantimes.com/business/ibn-okays-feasibility-study-of-two-solar-projects>

Nepal's electric vehicle imports surge after tax cuts

Electric car imports jumped more than twentyfold in the first half of the current fiscal year, with auto dealers attributing the surge to government moves to abolish excise duty and slash customs duty to boost internal consumption of electricity. According to the Department of Customs, 1,103 electric cars worth Rs3.24 billion entered Nepal during the period mid-July to mid-January. In the same period of the last fiscal year ended mid-July 2021, imports totaled 51 units valued at Rs105.19 million. The budget statement even stated that the top ten electric vehicle manufacturers in the world will be encouraged to set up manufacturing and assembly plants in Nepal by providing tax subsidies and land for lease.

Published on: February 2, 2022

Source: <https://kathmandupost.com/money/2022/02/02/nepal-s-electric-vehicle-imports-surge-after-tax-cuts>

Electric car

Many countries have set a deadline for a complete ban on traditional autos, some as early as 2030. In preparation for the ban on petrol and diesel cars in 2030, a driving school in the UK has urged the government to update the Highway Code. As one of the most vulnerable countries to the dangers of global warming, Nepal has no option but to follow the lead of nations such as the UK. Phasing out fuel-driven vehicles should help pollution control but will not be enough.

Published on: February 21, 2022

Source: <https://thehimalayantimes.com/blogs/electric-car>

Smart charging may be key to saving power grid in world of EVs

According to a report from EY and Eurelectric, Europe alone will need 9 million public chargers by 2035, up from 374,000 today. Therefore, Smart charging for public chargers is a significant challenge because so few are available for people who cannot charge at home because they park on the street.

Published on: February 14, 2022

Source: <https://kathmandupost.com/world/2022/02/14/smart-charging-may-be-key-to-saving-power-grid-in-world-of-evs>

Delhi's air quality in Feb was cleanest for the month since 2017

Delhi recorded a day of 'satisfactory' air quality, when the AQI was between 51 and 100. This was on account of strong winds and rainfall brought to northwest India by a western disturbance. This year, February also recorded nine days when the air quality was in the 'moderate' category. This is higher than two such days in February 2021, and six such days in February 2020.

Published on: March 1, 2022

Source: <https://indianexpress.com/article/cities/delhi/delhis-air-quality-in-feb-was-cleanest-for-the-month-since-2017-7795709/>

Things are up in the air in Nepal

In the first week of November in 2020, the concentration of PM2.5 in Kathmandu's air doubled in a matter of a few days. Satellite based sensors showed that the smoke was from more than 3,000 active fires in Punjab and Haryana, its plume transported by prevailing winds to the foothills of the Himalaya and up to Kathmandu Valley. Air pollution in Nepal's cities is getting worse and is a leading cause of asthma, high blood pressure, lung inflammation, congenital disabilities, mental disorders, various cancers and allergic hypersensitivity.

Published on: February 19, 2022

Source: <https://www.nepalitimes.com/banner/things-are-up-in-the-air-in-nepal/>

Good reads:

Plastic waste

Source: <https://thehimalayantimes.com/blogs/plastic-waste>

Soil – as important as air and water

Source: <https://thehimalayantimes.com/blogs/soil-as-important-as-air-and-water>

As climate dangers rise, scientists predict disasters before they happen

Source: <https://kathmandupost.com/world/2022/03/01/as-climate-dangers-rise-scientists-predict-disasters-before-they-happen>

What's wrong with us?

Source: <https://kathmandupost.com/editorial/2022/03/01/what-s-wrong-with-us>

The water and food nexus

Source: <https://kathmandupost.com/columns/2022/02/16/the-water-and-food-nexus>

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