

International Day of Clean Air for Blue Skies

7TH SEPTEMBER 2023



Theme: "Together for Clean Air"

The International Day of Clean Air for Blue Skies is observed annually on 7TH September. This day is celebrated in recognition of the fact that clean air is important for the health and day-to-day lives of people. Air pollution is one of the greatest environmental risks to human health and one of the avoidable causes of death and disease globally. Air pollution disproportionately affects women, children, and older persons, and also has a negative impact on ecosystems.

The international community acknowledges that improving air quality can enhance climate change mitigation and that climate change mitigation efforts can improve air quality. The United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) designated the day to emphasize the need to make further efforts to improve air quality, including reducing air pollution to protect human health.

Theme

The theme for the International Day of Clean Air for Blue Skies, *"Together for Clean Air"*, highlights the urgent need for stronger partnerships, increased investment, and shared responsibility for overcoming air pollution. Air pollution, indoors and outdoors directly impacts human and ecosystem health. According to WHO, 99% of the global population breathes polluted air.

Impact of air pollution

- 1. Health impact:** Tiny invisible particles of pollution penetrate deep into our lungs, bloodstream, and bodies. These pollutants are responsible for about one-third of deaths from stroke, chronic respiratory disease, and lung cancer, as well as one-quarter of deaths from heart attacks. Ground-level ozone produced from the interaction of many different pollutants in sunlight, is also a cause of asthma and chronic respiratory illness.

2. Climate impact: Short-lived climate pollutants (SLCPs) are among those pollutants most linked with both health effects and near-term warming of the planet. They persist in the atmosphere for as little as a few days or up to a few decades, so reducing them can have almost immediate health and climate benefits for those living in places where levels fall.

Preventing and reducing air pollution to improve air quality globally

- Air pollution is a global problem with a far-reaching impact owing to its transport over long distances. In the absence of aggressive intervention, the number of premature deaths resulting from ambient air pollution is estimated to be on track to increase by more than 50 percent by 2050.
- Air pollution is the single greatest environmental risk to human health and one of the main avoidable causes of death and diseases globally.
- Society bears a high cost of air pollution due to the negative impacts on the economy, work productivity, and healthcare cost among others. Therefore, the economic benefits of investing in air pollution control cannot be overestimated. It must be understood that there is also an economic rationale to act and that cost-effective solutions exist to address air pollution.

Did You Know?

It is estimated that 6.5 million premature deaths (2016) across the world are attributed to indoor and outdoor air pollution.



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