

Karachi braves season's coldest night

Residents of Karachi experienced the coldest night of the ongoing winter season when temperatures dropped to 10 degrees Celsius (°C) on the night between Sunday and Monday. Meanwhile, experts of the Pakistan Meteorological Department (PMD) have predicted that temperatures would further drop in the days to come.

“Yesterday night was the coldest so far in Karachi with the temperature dropping to 10 degrees Celsius but we are expecting it to further drop to a single digit in the days to come,” said PMD Karachi Director Abdur Rashid.

The lowest temperature recorded in Karachi in 2017 was 8.6°C, which was recorded on December 7, the Met Office director said, adding that it was likely that minimum temperature in the current season would further drop and break the last year's record. Being the coastal city, Karachi remains relatively warm during winters compared to some other regions of Pakistan, where temperatures remain below 0°C. Even in Quetta, temperatures drop below freezing point in December and January, PMD officials said.

The lowest temperature was expected to remain between 8 and 10°C on the nights of Monday and Tuesday, the experts said. They added that the influence of a western wave would cause cold weather to persist in the city.

The experts maintained that although the minimum temperature recorded on the night between Sunday and Monday was 10°C, it felt like 7°C due to Siberian winds and the same condition was likely to prevail for the next 48 hours.

Meanwhile, environmentalists and weather scientists blame extreme lack of tree cover, excessive carbon emissions from vehicles and gases emitted in the air from the chimneys of factories as main reasons behind rising temperatures even in the winters.

“A thick layer of aerosol – a composition of tiny particulate matter comprising dust, gases and tiny solid particles has been formed in the atmosphere over Karachi due to environmental pollution and it is preventing heat trapped in the city to radiate back to the outer surface of the earth”, says Dr Ghulam Rasool, former director general of the PMD.

He advised the residents of Karachi to increase tree cover in the city irrespective of types or species of plants, immediately bring a halt to construction activities and expansion of the city, and most importantly, decrease emissions of carbon and harmful gases.

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