

## PRESS RELEASE

Date: 19 Feb 2018

### Air Quality Monitored across 7 arterial routes in Bengaluru reveals severe pollution levels

*Peak Hour Pollution: Particulate Matter spikes at 800 micrograms per cubic meter*

Bengaluru 's air quality crisis unlike the cities in the north is a silent one, most online ambient stations which provide information to the public paint a fairly clean picture of the city's air, though most of its citizens feel otherwise. In an effort to understand the breathable pollution levels in comparison to the ambient data being generated by the KSPCB, Co Media Lab and Climate Trends carried out a 7-day air quality monitoring exercise with the help of a low cost monitor used to measure personalised exposure levels.

The activity was spread over a period of 7 days, from 5<sup>th</sup> to 15<sup>th</sup> of February. The monitor was installed in an auto armed with a GPS tracker to locate various junctions and sensitive areas at which pollution spikes have taken place. The exercise covered 7 select arterial roads during the peaks hours, both in the morning as well in the evening to understand the impact of traffic on pollution levels. The auto driver, Sreedhar Gowda shares 'It's extremely hard to sit inside an auto during the peak hours, the BMTC buses, the two stroke autos and diesel smoke is unbearable, I had to have my mask on all days and the slow moving traffic would just cover me in smoke and make my eyes water'.

The 7 arterial routes had a common start point—Jayanagar/Banashakara touching Marathahalli, Silk Board, Electronic City, White Field, Uttarahalli, MG.Road and Mekhari Circle. Some of the **highest instant values** for Particulate Matter 2.5 and 10 were noted in the following locations:

Location	PM2.5 Levels	PM10 Levels
Near Angadi Silks, Marenahalli Road	193.5	858.5
ICON Central Labs, Hosur Road,	193	876
Nallurhalli, Whitefield,	166	513.5
Naidu Layout, Chikkalasandra,	149	502
Arehalli Gate Bus Stop	113	352.5
Jal Bhavan Bangalore	144.5	368
MG Road	116.5	355.5
Sri Chaitanya School	156	373.666 7
New Tharagupet	200.666 7	340.333 3
Kengeri Road, Aravalli, 3rd Main Rd	195	315.5

The safety limits for particulate pollutants are available for 24hr and annual averages only, therefore, one cannot directly say how *unsafe* the instant values are in comparison to the regulatory norms. However, the averages observed over the four hour auto rides carried out in two parts have consistently generated averages above 200micrograms per cubic meter, which indicates that very poor air quality levels prevail for several hours every day owing to traffic congestion.

“Dr.Rahul Patil, Cardiologist at Jayadeva Hospital shares that there is a high incidence of heart attacks among the auto and cab drivers in the city as they spend long hours in slow moving traffic. Particulate pollution gets absorbed into the blood stream within a few minutes and is responsible for blocking the arteries. Bengalureans should become more aware of the rising pollution crisis and not walk and cycle on or near busy roads as the benefits might not outweigh the risks”.

Annual averages published by the State Pollution Control Board are based on online and off line monitoring data and it clearly indicates that the Particulate Matter 2.5, the smallest and the most harmful of all have exceed the annual limits in the last one year by 3% to 45%<sup>1</sup>.

Contact : Aishwarya Sudhir – 9986808067

**NOTE:** As an attachment in the email, the entire route map with marked tracks along with downloaded and highlighted PM2.5 AND PM10 levels are available for further analysis.

---

<sup>1</sup> [http://kspcb.kar.nic.in/Air\\_Pollutants\\_2016\\_17.pdf](http://kspcb.kar.nic.in/Air_Pollutants_2016_17.pdf)