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THE TIMES OF INDIA

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City chills out as mercury hits new low

28 Jan 2008, 0256 hrs IST, TNN

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MUMBAI: The city is getting colder by the day with the minimum temperature dropping to a new low of 10.2° Celsius on Sunday. Cold wave conditions brought on by northerly winds are likely to prevail in different parts of the state and chances are that the mercury may dip even further.

Santa Cruz was at 10.2°C—six degrees below normal— when temperature was recorded at 8.30 am on Sunday. Colaba too felt the chill at 14.8°C— eight degrees below normal. This drop in temperature has been recorded after almost a decade. But there's a big difference between the minimum and maximum temperatures, which climatologists say, is not a healthy sign.

Maximum temperature was recorded at 26.6°C for Santa Cruz and 27.3°C for Colaba.

Yo-yoing weather has been the pattern all through this winter and doctors say such wide variations in the span of 24 hours are a recipe for a blocked nose, irritant cough or poor lung function. In fact, due to changing wind conditions, humidity levels too are rising and falling—on Saturday, it was 34°C in Santa Cruz, and by Sunday it had risen to 56°C.

However, the weather seems to have uplifted sartorial spirits— many Mumbaikars are being spotted in elegant winter wear. Shops too are displaying their woollen collections, which till last month were buried under cotton cloth lines. At chains like Shopper's Stop, special counters for woollens were put up over the weekend. Boards of 'Woollens available here' were displayed at many big and small cloth shops across the city.

The mercury has been hitting new lows all through last week. On January 19, 2005, the city temperature had dropped to 11.5°C. On January 25, it fell a shade lower to touch 11.4°C, the lowest in 10 years. And on Republic Day, Santa Cruz recorded a minimum of 10.8°C while Colaba was 15.8°C. Weather bureau officials are now waiting to see whether the all-time low of 7.4°C for Mumbai recorded in the city on January 22, 1962 will be broken this winter.

It is also expected to get colder in north and south Madhya Maharashtra comprising cities like Pune, Nashik, Ahmednagar, Jalgaon, Dhule, Satara, Sangli, Solapur and Kolhapur. Nashik on Sunday was 4.4°C while Pune was 5.8°C. Temperature in Mahabaleshwar dropped to 6.9°C and in Aurangabad and Solapur, it was similar to that of Mumbai on Sunday.

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