

Air pollution to hit northern China during upcoming holiday

A new round of air pollution is expected to hit the Beijing-Tianjin-Hebei region in north China during the upcoming Tomb-sweeping Day holiday, or Qingming, the environment ministry warned Friday.

The Ministry of Environmental Protection (MEP) said the Beijing-Tianjin-Hebei region and its neighboring areas will experience medium to heavy air pollution from Monday to Wednesday, as weather conditions will turn unfavorable for the dispersion of pollutants.

Pollution levels are likely to peak between Tuesday evening and Wednesday, with the cities of Beijing, Langfang and Baoding facing heavy pollution.

The ministry expects the pollution to ease from April 6.

Chen Jining, head of the MEP, urged timely air quality forecast and pollution warning, as well as strict supervision and inspection on enterprises and automobiles with excessive emission.

Beijing and Tianjin, together with another 26 smaller cities in north China, have drawn up detailed action plans to address air pollution, vowing to cut coal consumption, close down polluting businesses and scale down steel production in winter.

China is targeting cutting emissions of both sulfur dioxide and nitrogen oxide by 3 percent this year, and markedly reducing PM2.5 density in key areas, according to this year's government work report.