

Detailed SUMMARY of “The heat is on,” Rafia Zakaria, Published on October 18, 2023

September 2023 is marked as one of the hottest September ever recorded, with a sudden temperature surge of over half a degree Celsius. This drastic increase in temperature reaffirms the insurmountable challenge of climate change. Earth is now 1.7°C to 1.8°C warmer than pre-Industrial Revolution levels, and it is predicted that this year will witness a 1.4°C increase. This unrelenting warming is exacerbated by the El Niño weather system, intensifying global warming. This situation has led to catastrophic weather events across the globe, including devastating floods in Pakistan, hurricanes, storms, and soaring temperatures in major cities.

Cities like Ankara, Athens, and Seoul have seen significant temperature increases, with Ankara experiencing an 18.2% rise since 2019. The numbers reveal that the climate catastrophe is deeply rooted, while governments in these hot cities have failed to present viable solutions with global acceptance. The world is transforming into a hot and chaotic environment, and measures like the COP summits are viewed as futile. Commitments to reduce emissions, even if implemented, are too little and too late. An increase of 1°C or more will render areas of the Middle East and South Asia uninhabitable. Heatwaves are already becoming longer and more intense, affecting the health of even the young and healthy.

The scorching September of 2023 has exceeded the Paris Agreement’s target to limit the increase below 1.5°C, primarily due to unchecked emissions. If this trend continues, it will create unlivable regions of extreme heat in North and South America. The US could witness an extreme heat belt stretching from Texas to Illinois, with average temperatures crossing 50°C. Few effective measures are



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being taken to curb fossil fuel use, and many still deny the science behind global warming. This inability to reach a consensus is akin to the unending Israel-Palestine conflict and obstructs meaningful climate action. Nationalism has prioritized national interests and borders over collective responsibility for Earth's habitability, sealing the planet's fate.

The current state of the world has given rise to apocalyptic notions, with some individuals actively promoting a 'Day of Judgement.' Evangelical Christians from the US believe the cataclysm in Gaza signals the end times, endorsed even by former Vice President Mike Pence. This group's confidence in the end times paints wars and the Earth's transformation into a living hell as part of an expected course. The global catastrophe and chaos pose an eerie and unpredictable scenario, leading to contemplation on whether our generation is the first to witness such extreme chaos. Science suggests this might be the case, which is a burdensome and unfortunate reality.

Easy/Short SUMMARY:

September 2023 recorded extremely high temperatures, signaling a drastic temperature rise. Earth is now 1.7°C to 1.8°C warmer than before the Industrial Revolution, and this year is expected to be 1.4°C warmer. Global warming from unchecked fossil fuel usage is compounded by the El Niño weather system. This warming has caused catastrophic weather events worldwide. Major cities, like Ankara, Athens, and Seoul, have seen temperature spikes. The numbers indicate a climate catastrophe, with governments failing to provide effective solutions. This jeopardizes the Middle East and South Asia's habitability, and heatwaves are impacting health. September 2023 surpassed the Paris Agreement's target of a 1.5°C increase due to unchecked emissions. This trend could lead to unlivable regions with extreme heat, particularly in North and South America.

SOLUTIONS of The Problem:

1. International Collaboration

- Encourage stronger global cooperation to address climate change and reduce emissions.
- Develop international agreements and policies to mitigate the temperature

increase.

2. Renewable Energy Transition

- Promote a rapid transition to renewable energy sources to reduce dependence on fossil fuels.
- Invest in green technologies and sustainable practices to combat global warming.

3. Public Awareness and Education

- Increase public awareness about the urgent need to address climate change.
- Implement educational programs and campaigns to inform the public about climate issues and encourage sustainable practices.

4. Government Policies

- Enforce stricter government policies and regulations to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.
- Provide incentives for businesses and individuals to adopt eco-friendly practices.

5. Scientific Research and Innovation

- Invest in scientific research to develop innovative solutions for climate change.
- Support and fund climate research to better understand and combat global warming.

IMPORTANT Facts and Figures Given in the article:

- September 2023 marked one of the hottest Septembers ever recorded.
- Earth's temperature rose by over half a degree Celsius in one month.
- The average temperature may ultimately increase by 1.4°C this year.
- Major cities worldwide have experienced significant temperature increases.



- The situation exceeds the Paris Agreement target of a 1.5°C temperature increase.

MCQs from the Article:

- 1. Why is September 2023 significant according to the article?*
 - A. It marks the start of autumn.
 - B. It recorded one of the hottest Septembers ever.
 - C. It is the month of many climate conferences.
 - D. It is the anniversary of the Industrial Revolution.

- 2. What is the predicted increase in the average temperature for the current year, as mentioned in the article?*
 - A. 0.5°C
 - B. 1.0°C
 - C. 1.4°C
 - D. 2.0°C

- 3. What weather phenomenon is adding to global warming, as per the article?*
 - A. Tornadoes
 - B. Blizzard
 - C. El Niño
 - D. Hurricanes

- 4. How have major cities worldwide been affected, according to the article?*
 - A. They have experienced a drop in population.
 - B. They have seen a decline in tourism.
 - C. They have faced sharp temperature increases.
 - D. They have witnessed increased rainfall.

- 5. What target does the article mention in connection to the Paris Agreement?*
 - A. Reducing emissions by 10%
 - B. Limiting temperature increase to 2°C
 - C. Exceeding the Paris Agreement target of 1.5°C

D. Achieving worldwide renewable energy usage

VOCABULARY:

1. *Catastrophe* (noun) (كوارث): A sudden and widespread disaster, often with far-reaching consequences.
2. *Apocalyptic* (adjective) (كوارثي): Relating to or resembling an apocalypse, which is a catastrophic event that brings destruction and upheaval.
3. *Hastening* (verb) (تسريع): Speeding up or accelerating a process or event.
4. *Evangelical* (adjective) (انجيلي): Pertaining to a branch of Protestant Christianity emphasizing the authority of the Bible and the act of spreading the Christian gospel.
5. *End Times* (noun) (الوقت الأخير)

الوقت الأخير): A concept in some religious beliefs, referring to the period of divine judgment and apocalyptic events.

6. *Extremist* (noun) (متطرف): A person who holds extreme or radical views and is often associated with acts of violence or fanaticism.
7. *Unpredictable* (adjective) (غير متوقع): Not able to be foretold or anticipated; uncertain or erratic.
8. *Cursed* (adjective) (ملعون): Doomed or ill-fated; experiencing misfortune.
9. *Unchecked* (adjective) (غير مراقب): Not controlled, monitored, or restrained; allowed to grow or proceed without hindrance.
10. *Sustainable* (adjective) (مستدام): Capable of being maintained or continued without depleting resources or causing harm to the environment.

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The heat is on
Rafia Zakaria
6 - 8 minutes

IT was a hot one. In fact, climate scientists who study Earth’s temperature have found that September 2023 was perhaps the hottest September ever recorded.

According to The Washington Post, the scientists’ early analysis revealed that global temperatures surged last month by over half a degree Celsius. While scientists have long known and forecast Earth’s rising temperature, the fact that it rose so much in just one month suggests what most of us are already aware of: that the various governments and transnational organisations pretending to grapple with climate change will not be able to stop it.

Given this most recent rise, Earth is now 1.7°C to 1.8°C warmer than it was prior to the Industrial Revolution. Copernicus — the European Union’s Earth Observation Programme — is predicting that the average temperature this year will ultimately be 1.4°C warmer than before industrialisation, shattering records

that are thousands of years old.

In addition to global warming by the rampant and unchecked use of fossil fuels, the El Niño weather system is also putting pressure on the climate. The Post points out that besides global warming induced by the greenhouse effect, El Niño is adding to the temperature increase.

It is difficult not to feel a sense of gloom and foreboding over this worsening state of affairs that has already unleashed catastrophic weather events all over the world. Pakistan is still reeling from the after-effects of the floods that devastated the country last year, while other states are dealing with hurricanes, storms, and avalanches.

Major cities around the world have experienced sharp increases in temperatures, some exceeding beyond 10 per cent.

One of the highest temperature increases was seen in the Turkish capital of Ankara whose temperature was reported to have increased by 18.2 per cent since 2019. The average temperature in that city has increased from 22.4°C to 26.4°C. Temperatures in Athens and Seoul have similarly witnessed significant increases.

The numbers overall are forbidding and frightening. Not only do they show that the climate catastrophe is truly entrenched, but they also reveal another dark truth: the fact that governments in places such Seoul or Ankara or in any of the other much hotter cities have been completely ineffectual in pushing any proposal that can receive even a basic level of global acceptance.

Translated, this means that the world is quite literally turning into a hot and messy hellscape and those who could stop it have utterly failed to do so. Considered against the backdrop of this situation, the entire series of COP summits seems a ridiculous waste of time. To the extent that countries are willing to commit to reducing emissions — in whatever way they promise — it is obviously too late and not enough.

The world is quite literally turning into a hot and messy hellscape and those who could stop it have utterly failed to do so.

If temperatures continue to increase by 1°C or more above the current levels, billions of people largely in the Middle East and South Asia will find themselves



living in areas where the temperature will be too high for humans to survive.

According to a study published in the journal of the National Academy of Sciences, there is already plenty of evidence of heatwaves lasting longer, being more intense and causing difficult health conditions even among the young and healthy.

The hot September of 2023 has already produced temperatures that exceed the Paris Agreement target of keeping the increase below 1.5°C. This has much to do with emissions continuing their wild unchecked trajectory. If this goes on, the outcome will be unlivable bands of extreme heat in North and South America.

It has been forecast that the US will have an extreme heat belt stretching from Texas to Illinois where average temperatures could cross 50°C. So far, there are few everyday measures being put in place in any of these regions to curb the use of fossil fuels; many do not even believe in the proven science behind global warming.

It is difficult to ignore the fact that the same inability to reach consensus undergirds intractable conflicts such as the Israel-Palestine clash. These are the same forces that prevent meaningful action on the climate calamity. In a sense, the division of the world into nation-states seems to have set it on the course of self-destruction.

Nationalisms preach progress at every cost, but Pakistanis breathe in the polluted air that blows towards them from India. With so many nation-states that imagine their interests and responsibilities to be ending at their borders, the collective responsibility for ensuring Earth's habitability is elusive thus sealing the planet's fate. No one will have to wait to go to hell as most will be in hell right here on Earth.

Times like these encourage dark thoughts and predictions of the end of days. The most frightening thing about these is that some of the people who peddle them seem actually invested in hastening a calamitous 'Day of Judgement'.

Evangelical Christians from the US have been gleefully watching the cataclysm in Gaza because they believe it to be a sign of the end times. Proponents of this idea include none other than former US vice president Mike Pence. This dangerous lot



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is so confident of this idea of the end times that rabid wars and the transformation of Earth into a living hell seem to them par for the course.

The sheer excess of the catastrophe that prevails across the world makes our present an eerie and unpredictable moment. One cannot help but stop and wonder whether our parents or grandparents ever saw such an excess of chaos and tumult.

Surely, we cannot be the first ones to stand frozen before the collapse all around us. Science seems to suggest that we very well might be the first, and by dint of that truth are, very unfortunately, cursed.

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Published in Dawn, October 18th, 2023