

# **Report on Riverside Cleanup Initiative and Climate Smart Club Launch in Chitrasari, Chitwan**

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## Riverside Cleanup Initiative – Chitrasari, Chitwan

On 30th April 2026, the team of South Asian Youth for SDGs (SAYS), in collaboration with Climate Action Nepal, organized a riverside cleanup initiative at Chitrasari, Chitwan. The initiative aimed to promote environmental awareness, responsible waste management, and stronger community participation in sustainability efforts.



What made the initiative especially meaningful was the active involvement of local community members who came together not only to clean the riverside area, but also to contribute towards a shared vision of environmental responsibility and collective action. The cleanup created a platform where community members and youth volunteers could engage with one another and reflect on the growing environmental challenges caused by unmanaged waste disposal and pollution.

Mr. Jonas Nitschke, Advisor of SAYS, delivered a keynote address on behalf of Konrad Adenauer Stiftung (KAS) Political Dialogue Asia. He emphasised the importance of local environmental initiatives within both national and global contexts. He highlighted that environmental issues such as pollution and climate change require not only policy-level action but also strong participation at the grassroots level. He appreciated the efforts of local communities and youth in contributing toward environmental protection through collective initiatives like the riverside cleanup.

Mr. Ujjwal Upadhyay, Advisor of SAYS, spoke about how small community-driven actions can create larger long-term impacts. He emphasized that initiatives focused on waste management and environmental awareness can gradually influence behavioral change within communities.

Mr. Aaditya Gautam, Vice President of the SAYS Nepal Chapter, thanked the participants for their support and engagement throughout the activity. He reflected on why environmental initiatives like the cleanup matter, especially in communities located near water bodies. He explained how dumping waste in one area negatively impacts not only the immediate surroundings but also the living conditions of people and animals downstream.

The cleanup initiative became more than just an environmental activity. It fostered community bonding, encouraged conversations around sustainability, and created opportunities for the exchange of ideas among participants. The initiative reflected the importance of collective responsibility in environmental protection and reinforced the idea that local action remains essential in addressing broader environmental challenges.

## Climate Smart Club Launch at Shree Secondary School, Chitrasari

Later that day, South Asian Youth for SDGs (SAYS) successfully launched another Climate Smart Club with 31 students at Shree Secondary School Chitrasari. The initiative was organized with the objective of strengthening environmental awareness among students and encouraging climate-conscious behavior and sustainable practices within schools and communities.

The pre-survey conducted with 31 students reflects a strong awareness of environmental and climate-related issues among students. All respondents (100%) agreed that plastic pollution is dangerous to the environment, while 83.9% understood that plastic does not degrade easily. Around 64.5% reported having good knowledge about recycling, and an encouraging 93.5% stated that they segregate waste regularly. Additionally, 96.8% believed that using cloth bags is an effective way to reduce plastic pollution.

The findings also highlight awareness regarding climate safety practices. About 67.7% of students said they check the temperature before going outside to protect themselves from heat stress, while the same percentage reported assessing road and water conditions before leaving school during heavy rainfall. Overall, the survey indicates positive environmental consciousness among students, while also revealing the need for continued awareness programs on recycling, sustainable practices, and climate resilience

The event brought together students, teachers, youth leaders, local representatives, and environmental advocates for a day of interactive learning and engagement.

The program was moderated

by Ms. Moxada Tuladhar, Secretary of the SAYS Nepal Chapter. The program began with welcome remarks by the Vice Principal of Shree Secondary School Chitrasari, Mr. Bhim Acharya, who highlighted the growing importance of environmental education among students. He emphasized that climate awareness and sustainability education are becoming increasingly important as young people today are directly witnessing environmental changes and climate-related challenges within their communities.



Mr. Ujjwal Upadhyay further spoke about the importance of climate change education and disaster management awareness for students. He discussed how Nepal remains highly vulnerable to climate-induced disasters such as floods, landslides, droughts, and heatwaves, making it necessary for students to understand both environmental issues and practical preparedness measures.

Mr. Aaditya Gautam, Vice President of SAYS Nepal Chapter, spoke about the vision and mission of SAYS and highlighted the organization's ongoing efforts. He introduced the participants to the objectives of SAYS, emphasizing its commitment to promoting sustainable development, environmental awareness, and youth-led community initiatives. He further shared the current activities being carried out under the Climate Smart School initiative and also discussed the future plans for strengthening collaboration with schools .

The keynote address was delivered by Mr. Jonas Nitschke from KAS Political Dialogue Asia. During his speech, he spoke about the ecological and environmental importance of the Chitwan region and highlighted why climate change awareness is especially important in areas closely connected with biodiversity and natural ecosystems. He encouraged students to actively engage in conversations surrounding their own future and emphasized that young people deserve platforms where their voices and concerns are heard. He also acknowledged the importance of organizations such as the Konrad Adenauer Stiftung in supporting youth-led initiatives and environmental education programs. He concluded by wishing success to the newly formed Climate Smart Club and encouraged students to continue taking action for environmental sustainability.

Remarks were also delivered by the school chairperson, Mr. Shiva Prasad Acharya, who stated that such programs broaden students' understanding of climate change and environmental issues beyond what is included in the academic syllabus. He appreciated the practical and interactive nature of the sessions, which allowed students to connect environmental concepts with real-life experiences. Similarly, Ms. Sita Adhikari, Ward Official of Ratnanagar Municipality Ward No. 8, emphasized that awareness programs among students can eventually create a wider impact within communities, as students often share knowledge and influence behavioral changes within their families and neighborhoods. The program concluded with a vote of thanks delivered by Principal Mr. Shankar Ghimire.

## **Sessions**

### Climate Change and its Impacts

One of the major sessions of the program focused on climate change and its impacts on communities and students. The session was conducted by Ms. Moxada Tuladhar, Ms. Godhulee Adhikari, and Ms. Prapti Gartoula. Through interactive discussions and activities, students learned the difference between weather and climate and were introduced to climate change as a long-term environmental issue caused mainly by greenhouse gas emissions and human activities.

The facilitators explained major causes of climate change such as fossil fuel use, industrialization, transportation, and deforestation, while also highlighting climate impacts in Nepal, including melting glaciers, floods, and droughts. The session further explored the effects of climate change on health, agriculture, and biodiversity, with discussions on climate-sensitive diseases like dengue and scrub typhus. Students also learned about heat stress, its symptoms, and preventive measures. Interactive scenario-based activities and weather station demonstrations helped students better understand climate-related health risks and environmental monitoring practices in schools.

### **Plastic Pollution and Waste Management**

Ms. Priyashma Shrestha conducted a session on “Waste Management for Carbon Reduction,” focusing on sustainable waste management practices and their role in reducing carbon emissions and environmental degradation. The session introduced students to waste management, environmental pollution, and the impacts of improper waste disposal on ecosystems and climate change. Interactive discussions encouraged students to reflect on their daily consumption patterns and waste generation.

A key highlight of the session was the detailed explanation and practical demonstration of the seven types of plastics and their physical and chemical compositions. Students learned about plastic identification codes, properties, uses, and the differences between recyclable and non-recyclable plastics. Various plastic products and resin pellets were displayed to help students better understand segregation and recycling processes. The session also addressed plastic pollution, informed consumption, and the concept of a circular economy, encouraging students to adopt more sustainable and environmentally responsible practices in their daily lives.

The post-survey conducted after the club launch and informative sessions reflected a strong improvement in participants’ environmental awareness and understanding of sustainable waste management practices. Out of 31 respondents, 80.6% correctly identified the meaning of the 3Rs as “Reduce, Reuse, Recycle,” while only 12.9% were unsure. Awareness regarding plastic reduction was particularly high, with 96.8% agreeing that decreasing plastic use is the best solution to reduce pollution. Similarly, 96.8% stated that they would manage waste through segregation, showing a clear understanding of responsible waste disposal.

The workshop also positively influenced attitudes toward sustainable behavior, as 77.4% said they would definitely adopt the concept of reuse, while 12.9% said they would try. Furthermore, 96.8% recognized that plastic harms both humans and animals. The session was highly appreciated, with 96.8% rating it as “very effective,” and 87.1% expressing interest in attending similar workshops in the future.

## Oath Taking and Handover of Climate Smart Kits

An important moment of the programme was the oath-taking ceremony of the newly formed Climate Smart Club members. Through the oath, students pledged to actively contribute toward environmental protection, sustainability, and climate awareness within their school and community. The event concluded with the handover of Climate Smart Kits, including dustbins, weather stations, student kits, reusable bottles, and bags. These resources were provided to encourage practical environmental action and support the implementation of climate-smart practices within the school.

Overall, the Climate Smart Club launch and educational sessions at Shree Secondary School Chitrasari reflected the importance of youth engagement, environmental awareness, and community-based climate action. Through interactive learning, practical demonstrations, and collaborative participation, the programme empowered students with knowledge and tools to better understand climate challenges and contribute toward a more sustainable future.

