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Encl: As stated above.

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Summer here, intense heat in store this year

ALARMING Heat waves could come early, more frequently; likely to have an adverse impact on agriculture, public health

Malavika Vyawahare
letters@hindustantimes.com

NEW DELHI: Summer seems to arrived early across India with maximum temperatures already hovering around 2-5 degrees Celsius above normal in many parts of the country on February 28 — the day the IMD picked to predict an intense summer across India, implying a greater threat to human and crop health.

The early onset of summer also means a higher probability of heat waves developing earlier than expected, IMD said. On Wednesday, the agency issued a heat wave warning for Mumbai, Raigad and Ratnagiri for Wednesday and Thursday.

Heat waves don't just impact human health; they also affect crops, deplete water resources and put pressure on the power system because of the spike in demand for cooling. The above-average temperatures could affect winter crops, including staple wheat, in the absence of precautionary measures, experts warned. "Wheat is susceptible to a condition called terminal heat if, during maturing and harvesting stage, temperatures rise abnormally," said Dr R Nagesh, a retired scientist from the Indian Agricultural Research Institute.

CONTINUED ON P6

North to get hotter

IMD's forecast of the expected rise in maximum temperature across India between March and May

Less than 0.5°C

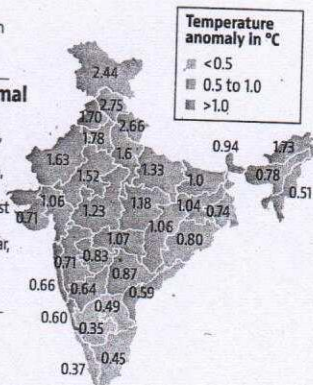
Kerala, Tamil Nadu, south interior Karnataka and Rayalaseema

Warmer than normal by 1°C or more

Jammu & Kashmir, Punjab, Haryana, Chandigarh & Delhi, Himachal Pradesh, west and east Rajasthan, Uttarakhand, west and east Uttar Pradesh, west and east Madhya Pradesh, Bihar, Jharkhand, Chhattisgarh, Vidarbha, Gujarat and Arunachal Pradesh.

Between 0.5°C and 1°C

Remaining subdivisions



GRADED RESPONSE ENDS, BAN ON DIESEL GENSETS OFF TODAY

NEW DELHI: With air quality in Delhi-NCR showing signs of improvement, the SC-appointed Environment Pollution (Prevention and Control) Authority has decided

to lift the Graded Response Action Plan from March 1, at least 15 days before schedule. The ban on diesel generators in Delhi would be lifted from Thursday.

P4

Summer here

"There is a danger of productivity losses."

A sustained heat wave is bad news for farmers across the country who are already battling an agricultural crisis.

The National Disaster Management Authority describes a heat wave as a period of abnormally high temperature. IMF's own criteria says a heat wave need not be considered till the maximum temperature reaches 40 degrees Celsius or, if it is lower than that, when the maximum temperature is 5-6 degrees Celsius more than the normal temperature. On Wednesday, Mumbai recorded a maximum temperature of 37.4 degrees Celsius, 5.5 degrees above normal. This was the third successive day of heat-wave conditions in the city (the maximum temperature was higher at 37.8 degrees on February 27), which perhaps explains IMD's move. Other parts of Maharashtra were hotter. The highest temperature in the state was recorded at Bhira (41 degrees Celsius, 5 degrees above normal).

Heat waves normally occur between March and June, although some have been recorded even later.

In Delhi, heat wave conditions normally develop in the beginning of May, when maximum temperatures breach the 40 degrees Celsius threshold. That looks likely to happen earlier this year with the northern plains already heating up. "The maximum temperature in the northern region has already touched 36.2 degrees C on February 27," Kuldeep Srivastava, a senior IMD scientist said. "The maximum and minimum temperatures in February were about 3 degrees C above normal."

"It is likely that heat wave conditions will hit the region earlier than expected," he added.

The core heat wave zone spreads over Punjab, Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Delhi, Haryana, Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh, Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Bihar, Jharkhand, West Bengal, Odisha and Telangana and the meteorological subdivisions of Marathwada, Vidarbha, and Madhya Maharashtra in Maharashtra and coastal Andhra Pradesh in Andhra.

This summer too will be hotter, IMD said, with mean temperatures between March and May being 1 degree Celsius above normal.

A draft IMD report noted that 2017 was India's 4th hottest year, and the 4th consecutive record-breaking year, mostly because of record-breaking temperatures in the January-February period.

classified as winter.

Officials in Mumbai cited unique conditions for heat wave conditions forming in the region. "The heat wave conditions are for isolated parts of the Konkan coast, including Mumbai, due to a lower level anti-cyclonic circulation over Gujarat and parts of Maharashtra, which is pulling warm easterly to north-easterly winds over Mumbai and surrounding areas. The easterly winds are also not allowing the sea breeze (cool westerly winds) to settle over the city fast enough," said KS Hosalkar, deputy director general, western region, IMD.

There is an increase in the frequency and duration of heat waves according to IMD officials. The rise in average temperatures that is fuelling the heat waves is attributed to increasing greenhouse gas emissions and warming of sea surface temperatures.

The National Disaster Management Authority reported recently that heat wave deaths have dropped significantly in recent years partly because of early warnings.

However, experts say the cost of heat waves go beyond fatalities and include health care costs and the loss of productivity.

"When people are exposed to very high temperatures, they start developing a temperature and the body's heat-regulation mechanism and circulation fails; people can die if they are not cooled down immediately," said Dr Dileep Mavalankar, director of Indian Institute of Public Health, Gandhinagar-Public Health Foundation of India.

It isn't just Mumbai and the North, Hyderabad has seen an increase of 3-4 degrees C from normal in the minimum temperature during January and the first week of February. "We entered summer in the second week of February and the maximum temperatures are gradually rising. It is quite common to have a deviation of 1.5 to 2 degrees Celsius during this period, but the deviation will go up to four to five degrees in the peak summer season in May," an official in the IMD control room in Hyderabad said, asking not to be identified.

Responding to the IMD forecast, West Bengal chief minister Mamata Banerjee held an emergency meeting with the ministers and officials of the agriculture and irrigation department.

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Amid drought threat, Kashmir begins mapping its water resources

AZHAR QADRI
TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

SRINAGAR, FEBRUARY 28

As the threat of drought looms over the Kashmir valley, a top administration official has directed immediate mapping of the water resources in the region.

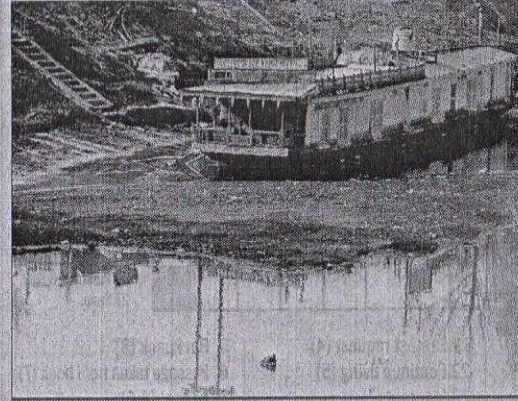
Baseer Ahmad Khan, Divisional Commissioner of the Kashmir zone, directed civilian administrators of all districts of the division to formulate teams that will map water resources in their respective districts, a government spokesman said.

The directions were issued yesterday at a high-level meeting attended by

deputy commissioners of all districts of the Kashmir division, chief engineer of the public health engineering (PHE) department, vice-chairman of the Lakes and Waterways Development Authority and other senior officials.

Khan, who heads the civil administration in the Kashmir division, also "set into motion" the preliminary work for the formulation of the water regulatory policy, the spokesman said. The policy is aimed at conserving and exploiting the water bodies of Kashmir "in an eco-sustainable way".

"The state is bestowed with bountiful water resources which need to be



preserved for posterity. The water regulatory policy will go a long way in formulating a roadmap for their conservation," Khan

said at the meeting. The directions have come at a time when the region faces an alarming threat of drought during

Plan to save water bodies

The aim of the exercise is to save water bodies, address all environmental concerns that affect water bodies, indicate areas prone to drought and other problems, map water resources in each district, suggest a way to help maintain the quality of water and other related issues

Baseer Ahmad Khan,
DIVISIONAL COMMISSIONER, KASHMIR

«A houseboat rests on the partially dried riverbed of the Jhelum in Srinagar. TRIBUNE PHOTO

the coming summer caused by a lengthy dry spell and lack of significant precipitation during the winter's core period.

Abdul Wahid, PHE chief engineer who attended the meeting, told The Tribune that the direction to formulate the water regulatory policy and map the region's water resources was part of the "long-term prospective planning".

He said the recent precipitation had brought "five to 10 per cent" relief even as the department had readied its drought action plan.

The Divisional Commissioner directed the deputy commissioners of all districts to formulate a team comprising departments of irrigation and flood control, forest, revenue and other allied sections that will map water resources

in their respective districts, the spokesman said. "The team will validate the data with other sources and also delineate their boundaries as were present in the earliest records," Khan said and further directed the formulation of a comprehensive report within a month.

"The aim of the exercise is to save water bodies, address all environmental concerns that affect water bodies, indicate areas prone to drought and other problems, map water resources in each district, suggest a way to help maintain the quality of water and other related issues," the Divisional Commissioner said.

News item/letter/article/editorial published on 02.03.2018 in the

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Rain deficit 72%, fruit growers jittery

Kinnaur, Lahaul and Spiti with 82% and 81% shortfall worst affected in state

PRATIBHA CHAUHAN
TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

SHIMLA, FEBRUARY 28

The state has witnessed one of the driest winters in the last five years with a mere 55.1 mm rain, which was 72 per cent less than normal in January and February.

The months were not only the driest but also relatively warm with the temperatures over the mid and high hills remaining above normal.

All 12 districts received deficient rain with tribal districts of Kinnaur and Lahaul Spiti being the worst hit at 82 per cent and 81 per cent.

The deficient rain and

above normal temperatures are giving anxious moments to apple and other fruit growers as these are not beneficial for good crop.

"In January and February, the total rainfall received in the state was 9.2 mm and 46 mm, which was deficient by 91 and 53 per cent," said Manmohan Singh, Director of the local Meteorological centre.

He disclosed that the highest rainfall/snowfall in the season was recorded at Salooni in Chamba, 54mm on February 25, 2018.

He said the winter months in 2017 had sur-

plus rain of 4 per cent at 203.9 mm. Even in 2015, the rainfall in winter was 9 per cent surplus.

This winter was quite like 2016 when the rainfall deficiency was 71 per cent with only 57.1 mm rainfall being recorded over a span of two months.

In 2014 winter, the rain was close to normal with surplus of a mere 4 per cent as there was 187.2 mm rain.

The relatively warm winter this year saw sunny days.

During this winter season, the average minimum temperature of Shimla in January was 4.7 degree Celsius which was

2.1 degree more than normal and in February, it was 5.5 degree Celsius which was 1.9 degree more than normal.

The average minimum temperature of Kalpa in January was -2.2 degree Celsius which was 1.7 degree more than normal and in February, it was -0.8 degree Celsius which was 1.1 degree more than normal.

However, the average minimum temperature of Una in Jan was 3.8 degree Celsius which was 0.4 degree more than normal and in February, it was 7.9 degree Celsius which was 0.9 degree more than normal.



GRIM SCENE

DISTRICT	RAIN (MM)	DEFICIENCY (MM)
Bilaspur	50.4	-61
Chamba	75.3	-68
Hamirpur	54	-60
Kangra	58.3	-64
Kinnaur	38.6	-82
Kullu	73.6	-60
Lahaul Spiti	51.8	-81
Mandi	56.2	-59
Shimla	44.2	-68
Sirmaur	61.7	-45
Solan	54.9	-60
Una	42.3	-64
HP (AVERAGE)	55.1 MM	-72

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The 113-year-old Ranbir Canal in Jammu lies in a dismal condition. TRIBUNE PHOTO: INDERJEET SINGH

Fund crunch stalls Ranbir Canal desilting

SUMIT HAKHOOL

TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

JAMMU, FEBRUARY 28

Delay in the release of funds in time and the 'culture of corruption' in the Irrigation and Flood Control Department have again stalled the annual desilting work of the 113-year-old Ranbir Canal, the lifeline of thousands of farmers in Jammu and Kashmir.

The situation has not changed even during the PDP-BJP government as no major effort has been made to bring reforms in the system and strengthen the canal network.

The 60-km-long canal is the largest irrigation network in J&K which starts from the Chenab at Dumi Malpur village in Akhnoor and ends up at Nekowal near the International Border with Pakistan's

“Despite assurances, funds are not released in time. We have floated tenders for desilting works but the final go-ahead has not been given. If the approval is not granted within a week, it might create problems in summer months.”

ENGINEER, IRRIGATION AND FLOOD CONTROL DEPARTMENT

Sialkot sector. There are allegations of money being siphoned off by the 'contractor-official' nexus in the name of desilting, bringing the canal on the verge of destruction.

Constructed in 1905 by erstwhile Dogra rulers, Rs 6 crore are required every year for keeping the canal system functional which snakes through the Jammu district but the government continues to ignore its maintenance. This is hitting the repair and desilting process, mainly carried out during winter months.

“Despite assurances, funds

are not released in time. We have floated tenders for the works but the final go-ahead has not been given. If the approval is not granted within a week to start desilting, it might create problems in summer months,” said a senior engineer in the department.

The canal irrigates an area of 29,700 hectares covering 12 panchayats and 489 villages of Jammu region.

“We are quite concerned about the way the canal system is being maintained in Jammu which is important for farmers during the paddy-growing sea-

son. The situation is bad in canals passing through the interior areas,” said Tejinder Singh, president, J&K Flower Growers' Association.

Usually, desilting used to start in mid-February and by March-end, the work would complete before the water was released from the Chenab on Baisakhi but this timeline is not adhered to by the authorities now, affecting the flow and water-carrying capacity of the canal.

“The Ranbir Canal is in a bad shape as it has lost its heritage status due to encroachments and lack of policies. At times, the money has been siphoned off by showing false cleaning works. This has been going on for years,” said Bushan Parmoo, an environmentalist working to save water bodies.

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जमानिया: अधूरा है गंगा नदी पर पक्के पुल का अरमान, जोखिम में जान

जमानिया में गंगा नदी पर निर्माणाधीन पुल 12 वर्ष में भी पूरा नहीं हो सका 1-3-18

पत्रिका न्यूज नेटवर्क

rajasthanpatrika.com

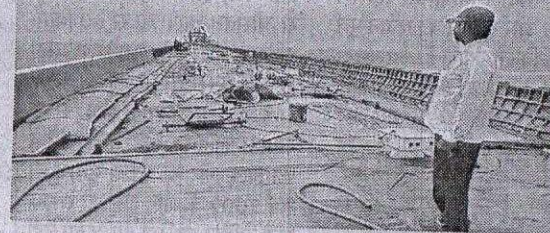


पत्रिका
इंडेपेंडेंट
स्टोरी

गाजीपुर जनपद के जमानिया में निर्माणाधीन पुल शिलान्यास के 12 वर्ष बाद भी पूर्ण होने के इंतजार में है। सत्ता परिवर्तन के कारण यह पुल सौतेलेपन का शिकार होता रहा। नतीजतन लोगों को अपनी जान जोखिम में खलकर आवागमन करने को

मजबूर हैं। प्रदेश सरकार के निर्देश पर अब विभागीय अधिकारी मार्च महीने के आखिर तक पुल का निर्माण पूर्ण करा आवागमन शुरू करा देने का दावा कर रहे हैं, लेकिन एप्रोच मार्ग का निर्माण कार्य शुरू होना तो दूर इसके लिए अब तक भूमि अधिग्रहण भी नहीं किए जाने को देखते हुए तय समय पर पुल पर यातायात शुरू होने की संभावनाएं नगण्य नजर आ

रही हैं। क्षेत्रीय नागरिकों का कहना है कि पीपा पुल बन जाने के बाद आवागमन में थोड़ी सहूलियत होती है, लेकिन बाढ़ के दिनों में जब पीपा पुल हटा लिया जाता है तब काफी मुश्किलों का सामना करना पड़ता है। कई माह तक आवागमन ठप रहता है। कोई अति आवश्यक कार्य होने पर लोग जान हथेली पर लेकर नाव के सहारे गंगा पार कर आते-जाते हैं। इस दौरान जब तक व्यक्ति सुरक्षित घर नहीं पहुंच जाता, किसी अनहोनी का भय सताता रहता है। लोगों के अनुसार पीपा पुल से भी ओवरलोडेड वाहनों के गुजरने से हादसों की



संभावना बनी रहती है। जनता की समस्या का निराकरण करने के उद्देश्य से सन 2006 में तत्कालीन मुख्यमंत्री मुलायम सिंह यादव ने गंगा नदी पर पुल का शिलान्यास किया था। शिलान्यास के कुछ ही महीनों बाद हुए विधानसभा चुनाव

में समाजवादी पार्टी को करारी मात मिली और सत्ता गंवानी पड़ी थी। पूर्ण बहुमत के साथ सत्ता में आई बसपा सरकार के कार्यकाल में पुल के निर्माण का टेण्डर एक निजी कंपनी को दे दिया गया और कार्य की रफ्तार सुस्त हो गई।

सत्ता बदली, बदले निजाम लेकिन नहीं बदला नसीब

जमानिया पुल का शिलान्यास सन 2006 में तत्कालीन मुख्यमंत्री मुलायम सिंह यादव ने किया था। उसके बाद तीन दफे सत्ता बदली, मुख्यमंत्री बदले। यहां तक कि समाजवादी पार्टी भी सत्ता में आई, लेकिन इस पुल का नसीब नहीं बदला। आज भी जनता को आवागमन के लिए पीपा पुल और नाव पर निर्भर रहना पड़ता है।

अखिलेश से जगी आस, किया निराश

क्षेत्रवासी बताते हैं कि सन 2012 में एक बार फिर सत्ता की सरकार बनने के बाद मुख्यमंत्री अखिलेश यादव से पिता के अधूरे कार्य को पूर्ण कराने की आस जगी थी, लेकिन उन्होंने भी निराश किया। पुल निर्माण का दायित्व निजी कंपनी से सेतु निगम को दे दिया गया, मगर निर्माण कार्य की सुस्ती रफ्तार नहीं पकड़ सकी।

32 से 72 करोड़ पहुंच गई लागत

एक दशक से अधिक समय तक निर्माण लंबित रहने के कारण पुल की लागत में भी इजाफा होता गया। शिलान्यास के समय पुल की अनुमानित लागत जहां 32 करोड़ थी, वहीं अब यही बढ़कर 72 करोड़ रुपये पहुंच गई है।