

High number of heatwave days in 3 yrs, says IMD data

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THE country has experienced highest number of heatwave days in the past three years, fresh data of India Meteorological Department (IMD) shows.

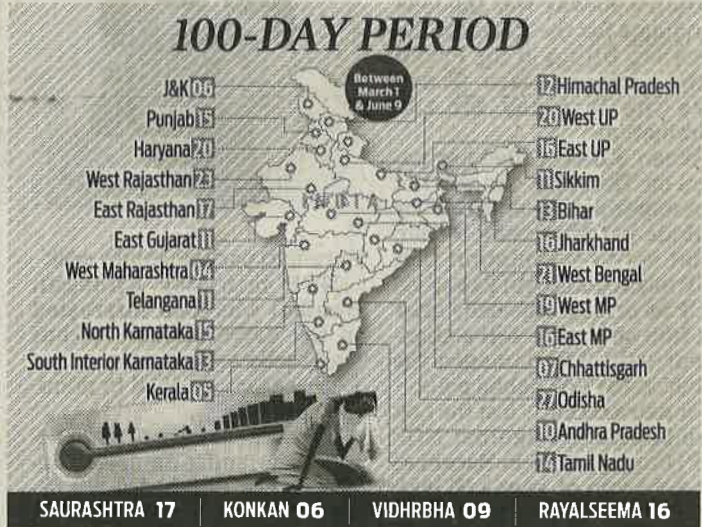
Against around 170 days of normal heatwave days in the past 100 days in all 36 meteorological sub-divisions, India has experienced 446 days of heatwave days in different regions.

Odisha experienced the highest number of heatwave days followed by Rajasthan. However, Kerala, coastal Karnataka, Lakshadweep, north-eastern region and Andaman & Nicobar have reported no heatwave days.

"In the current year the number of heatwave days is the highest when compared to past three years," said RK Jenamani, a scientist with IMD.

Heatwave arrival this year has different character. Onset of severe heatwave started in April to the first week of May in southern India and a part of east India. However, northern India was immune to it due to back-to-back western disturbances. North and east India experienced sizzling heatwave from mid-May to early June.

According to IMD data, there was a record jump of 125% in



heatwave days in May and 66% increase in April.

In 2023, heatwave days mostly started from June. April and May had lesser number of heatwave days. In 2022, onset of heatwave days was quite early — it started from early March and continued till early May.

In the last one month, most parts of the country, especially northwest and east India, saw temperatures ranging between 44°C and 49°C for many days.

Longer duration of heatwave days has caused a large number

of heat-related casualties. Reports say there would be over 25,000 suspected heatstroke cases and at least 56 casualties across the country in May.

A new report by ClimaMeter shows that India's heatwave in May 2024 was 1.5°C more warmer than previously observed. IMD scientists say the intense and prolonged heat wave in May was a result of the El Nino effect. However, El Nino phase ended in early June and La Nina phenomenon has started, indicating bountiful monsoon.

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