

PARLIAMENT QUESTION: MAPPING OF HEATWAVES

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The India Meteorological Department (IMD) has been providing heatwave forecasts and warnings at multiple spatial and temporal scales and shares them with the public and disaster management authorities for mitigation and preparedness. For this, IMD has developed a web-based GIS (Geographic Information System) heatwave portal, where current heatwave conditions and 5-day forecasts are displayed at the district and sub-city scales on interactive maps. IMD has also developed a Climate Hazards and Vulnerability Atlas of India for 13 major meteorological hazards, including heatwaves. This Atlas, hosted on a GIS-based web platform, provides district-level maps of hazard occurrence and vulnerability for each month and annually, and identifies hotspots with high hazard potential and higher vulnerability for heatwaves.

IMD issues impact heat wave forecasts and warnings in a colour-coded format, considering different meteorological parameters like maximum temperature, minimum temperature, relative humidity, winds, and their co-existence & persistence. The heat action plan & any thresholds within it are developed under the aegis of the National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) and other concerned disaster management authorities. IMD issues heat wave alerts tailored to geographic characteristics—plain, hilly, or coastal stations—to better capture region-wise temperature extremes. Heat wave and temperature outlooks are provided on multiple temporal scales (from seasonal to monthly, followed by extended range and medium to short range) to facilitate both anticipatory and immediate response measures. IMD issues a dedicated heat wave bulletin specifically for Indian Railways, ensuring operational preparedness for this critical sector. Heat wave and temperature information is disseminated via a web-based GIS system, making the data accessible to various sectoral stakeholders for customised use. The heat wave bulletins include generalised impact assessments and recommended actions aligned with NDMA guidelines. The generation of sector-wise heat thresholds (e.g., for health, agriculture, energy) is possible, contingent on the availability of detailed impact data from those sectors.

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