Joint Funding for Heatwave Mitigation

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Why in News?

Recently, National disaster Management Authority (NDMA) indicated to form a joint funding mechanism between Centre & State for Heatwave Mitigation as per recommendations by the 16th Finance Commission (FC) to classify heatwaves as a national notified disaster.

Proposal Proposals by FC

- **Joint funding –** Will involve "seed funding" from Centre & States, Backed by local governments, civil society & Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) & Civil Society.
- **Resources –** Will be pooled from National & State Disaster Mitigation Fund (NDMF/SDMF) & National and State Disaster Mitigation Funds (NDRF/SDRF).
- **District led –** Initiative is designed for minimum financial allocations based on population, while cities will have separate considerations.
- **Local Leadership -** The initiative is designed to be district-led, with minimum financial allocations based on population, while cities will have separate considerations.
- **Focus on Mitigation -** Moving beyond immediate relief (ex-gratia), the focus is now on long-term cooling solutions like **cool roofs**, shaded footpaths, and drinking water stations.

The Shift in Disaster Financing

Historically, heatwaves were not part of the national disaster list. The evolution is as follows:

- **Pre-2015 -** Heatwave management was strictly a State subject. States like Odisha and Rajasthan notified it locally.
- **15th Finance Commission -** Declined to include extreme heat in the national list.
- **2024 Decision -** The Centre permitted the use of Mitigation Funds (NDMF/SDMF) for extreme heat for the first time.
- **16th Finance Commission (Nov 2025) -** Recommended notifying both heatwaves and lightning as national disasters due to their increasing scale and frequency. It proposed a Rs2 lakh crore corpus for state-level funds for 2026–2031.

Heat Action Plans (HAPs)

- **Coverage -** HAPs currently exist in **23 States**, 270 districts, and 64 cities (totaling 304 plans including those under preparation).
- **Challenges -**The NDMA has flagged issues regarding the "uneven quality" of these plans, noting that some are merely imitations of others rather than being tailored to local climate data.
- **Risks -** A primary concern remains the potential for mitigation to turn into mere "procurement exercises" (e.g., buying water coolers) without long-term strategic cooling.

For Reference: [The Hindu | IAS Parliament]



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