

## State of Climate of India in 2019

### Why in News?

The State of Climate of India Report was released by the India Meteorological Department (IMD) recently.

### What does the report say?

- The Statement on Climate of India in 2019 confirms that the **extreme weather events** have become par for the course in the country.
- This is what climate scientists have been claiming for more than half a decade.
- It notes that excessive heat, cold and rainfall killed 1,562 people in 2019.
- In 2019, the mean **temperature was 0.36 above normal** while the country also recorded **excess rainfall** during both the southwest and northeast monsoons.
- Intense dry spells were interspersed with floods in several parts of the country.
- This is a phenomenon that policymakers will increasingly be called to factor while drawing up projects in areas as diverse as agriculture, urban planning, water resources and disaster management.

### How the report should be seen?

- The IMD report should be seen in conjunction with **long-term meteorological trends**.
- The World Meteorological Organisation, for example, reckons that the decade starting 2011 remains on track to be the warmest on record.
- At the same time, data from the European Centre for Medium Range Forecast shows that the relative humidity in the mid-troposphere in the Subcontinent has increased by about 2% in the past four decades.
- Such warming has increased the capacity of oceans to form intense cyclonic disturbances.

### What are the observed vagaries?

- In 2019, as the IMD report notes, the Indian Ocean witnessed **eight cyclones**.
- By that very fact, cyclones don't kill but buildings can turn hazardous during

such extreme weather events.

- The Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs does have guidelines for climate-friendly construction.
- But planners in coastal cities and towns rarely pay heed to its provisions.
- Kerala, southern Karnataka and Gujarat were **heavily deficient** till July 2019.
- But in the last week of July, these states recorded **surplus rainfall**.
- For farmers, such vagaries mean **disruptions in the entire cropping cycle**.

### What is needed?

- Increasing their resilience calls for efficient **rainwater storage and use**.
- The changing dynamics of weather also demand cooperation between states that share a river basin.
- This year, Maharashtra and Karnataka debated over opening the gates of the Almatti dam on the Krishna.
- By the time the two states agreed over the amount of water to be discharged from the dam, the damage was already done.
- It's clear that dealing with exceptional weather will require **interventions at the national, state and local-levels**.
- The Statement on Climate of India 2019 drives home the urgency of such interventions.

**Source: Indian Express**