

## Link Between Domestic Violence and Climate Change

### Why in news?

A new study published in JAMA Psychiatry has found that the environmental risks of climate change are worsening social hazards, such as domestic violence.

### What is the study about?

- The study examined the "*association of ambient temperature*" with the "*prevalence of intimate partner violence*" (IPV) in India, Nepal and Pakistan.
- **Intimate partner violence** - Also called as domestic violence, IPV refers to behaviour within an intimate relationship that causes *physical, sexual or psychological harm*.
- It covers violence by both current and former spouses and partners.

### Types of IPV

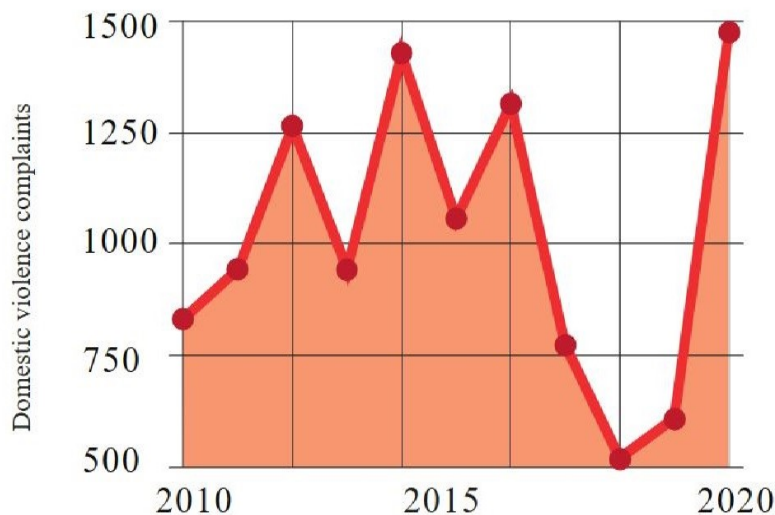
- **Sexual abuse**- It is the situation where the respondent is ever forced into unwanted sex or sexual acts by the husband or partner.
- **Physical abuse**- It is done by hurting or attempting to hurt someone by punching, kicking, slapping, hitting etc.,
- **Emotional abuse**- It is caused where someone was insulted, humiliated, or threatened by the husband or partner.
- **Psychological abuse**- It is an act of terrorizing the person, playing mind games with them, or threatening to harm them or their loved ones.
- **Financial abuse**- It is an act preventing an intimate partner from working, studying, or taking other steps to become financially independent.
- **Stalking**- It is a pattern of behaviour intended to harass, annoy, frighten, or harm the person.
- **Online abuse**- It is done using email, social media, dating apps, and other digital platforms to harass, abuse, stalk, threaten, bully, or manipulate an intimate partner.

### What are the findings of the report?

- Increase in temperature is connected to rise in domestic violence against women, with *India expected to experience the largest increase*.
- A 1 °C increase in the annual mean temperature is associated with a 4.5% increase in IPV prevalence.
- In India, the trend was observed in both urban and rural areas but was more prominent in lower-income households.
- Online hate speech also rose by 22% when temperatures inched from 42°C to 45°C.

## Do high temperatures fuel the risk of gender-based violence?

- Globally, women and girls are *14 times more likely* to be harmed during a disaster, per a 2019 analysis.
- Changes in temperature and precipitation increase the likelihood of assault, murder, riots, even civil war; a global analysis found a 13.2% rise in intergroup conflicts.
- The *6th Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC)* pointed out that women, girls and LGBTQI people are at increased risk of domestic violence, harassment, sexual violence and trafficking during and after extreme weather events.
- Climate crisis also fans *economic distress* - extreme heat affects crop outcomes, or the livelihood of migrant workers takes a hit.
- Rising temperatures might result in India experiencing a 23.5% rise in domestic violence cases by 2090.
- **Uttar Pradesh** recorded highest domestic violence cases among the States during the pandemic.



Year wise Domestic Violence Trends

## What are the causes of Domestic Violence?

- **Cultural factors**- It is because historically, many cultures have granted men a sense of ownership towards women, as custodians of women's sexuality and the family's honour.
- **Social factors**-It is due to under representation of women in media, politics, Judiciary etc.,
- **Legal factors**- Low intervention of police and other law enforcement agencies.
- **Economic factors**: Lower economic status is linked to a greater risk of intimate partner violence.
- **Environmental factors**- It is due to growing up in an abusive environment and having witnessed or experienced domestic abuse. This phenomenon is known as the cycle of abuse.
- **Substance use**: Frequently using substances such as drugs and alcohol can make

someone more likely to be a violent or aggressive partner.

### How are climate change domestic violence interlinked?

- **Temperature-aggression theory**- When temperature increases it causes discomfort, frustration and impulsivity, hence increases interpersonal conflict and IPV.
- **Routine activity theory**- The temperature change does not cause discomfort. Instead, the disruption in people's daily activities due to changes in ambient temperature catalyses violence.
- **Post disaster Setting**- Loss of property, disability, minimised social contact, changing migration patterns, access to household resources, loss of economic output etc.,
- This would create "shake household environment" and impact mental well-being.
- **Negative coping Mechanisms**- Men gets addicted to alcohol or substance use when household face water scarcity, economic problems.
- **Increase in violence**- Changes in temperature and precipitation increase the likelihood of assault, murder, riots, even civil war.
- **Economic hardships**- Squeezing working hours, impact on the income of daily wage earners, affect agriculture productivity, impacts the migrant workers.

*Violence has been witnessed in Sundarbans due to family fragmentation, stress, a loss of livelihoods and support networks and disruption of social norms.*

### What lies ahead?

- In patriarchal societies that face climate stress, there is a need to prepare for social disasters accompanying the natural disasters.
- Gender sensitisation in climate action and disaster management responses can be brought by strengthening IPV infrastructures, building financial resilience and support systems.
- Greater involvement of women in climate action an emphasis on gender mainstreaming in the policymaking process is the need of the hour.

*Gujarat has launched the world's first heat insurance scheme which offers a small pay out to women to compensate for lost income when temperatures differ.*

### References

1. [The Hindu| Study by JAMA network](#)
2. [Down to Earth| link between domestic violence and climate change](#)
3. [UNFCCC| Climate Change](#)



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