

Preparing for the Summer

What is the news?

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• The IMD forecast an above-normal temperatures over much of India in the summer months.

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Also, the Australian international weather bureau says there is a 50% prospect of a similar phenomenon this year as well, thus indicating a debilitated monsoon and weaker agricultural prospects.

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What are the facts?

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• NASA has pointed out, there has been a record three-year warming trend, with 2016 the hottest and 16 of 17 warmest years recorded, occurred since 2001.

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• Global weather in recent times has come under pressure from the El Nino warming that began in 2015.

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• But, the effect of El Nino on the global temperature is only a small part of the overall rise, indicating that the **trend could be correlated with the rise in greenhouse gases.**

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- India, a major emitter of GHGs, has classified 2016 as the century's warmest year, with an increase of $0.91^{o}C$ over the long-term average. \n

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What the government must do to adopt?

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- We must shift away from further high-emission pathways in the economy and adopt leapfrogging technologies.
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- It is also a call for policy initiatives to build resilience by improving water harvesting and expanding tree cover, including in cities.
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- For rural India, we must build surface irrigation facilities such as ponds through the employment guarantee scheme and climate funds. \n
- In urban areas, more reservoirs needs to be built to augment water supply.

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- A carefully planned school examination schedule could spare the students from the worst of the summer. \n
- Last year, schools in some states have decided to extend their summer vacations by a week or two. It might become necessary again this year. \n
- Administrative decisions for summer management will need to be refined on the basis of coming IMD updates. $$\n$

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What should be done to save farmers?

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- The IMD, ICAR and agriculture universities should work towards a more precise, micro-level understanding of rainfall, temperature, crop choice and inputs, particularly in rainfed areas.
- In The focus of farm research should shift towards mapping climate patterns at the taluk level over long periods to arrive at better surmises on the monsoon.

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• Research focus on the effects of input-intensive farming in irrigated regions has led to the neglect of more traditional areas such as managing rain variability.

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• Climate intelligence must form a more integral part of agriculture policy and extension services.

- Finally, there must be a concerted shift towards integrated, sustainable farming, with agro-forestry practices.
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- \bullet Farmers need credit and support to manage this transition. $\slash n$

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Source: The Hindu

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