

Need to declare heat waves a natural disaster.-laid

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Tamil Nadu's recent decision to classify extreme heat as a State-specific disaster has set an important precedent for deploying mechanisms that provide timely relief to those impacted by increasing heatwaves. The state has implemented measures such as water kiosks, ORS distribution, and public education on heat wave preparedness. The Government has also ensured ex-gratia relief for the families of victims. This swift and efficient response demonstrates how state-level interventions can protect vulnerable populations. The Government of Tamil Nadu has launched a climate change mission focusing on long-term resilience. Given the rising frequency and severity of heat waves due to climate change, the Union Government must declare heat waves a nationally notified disaster. Studies suggest India will experience a 2°C temperature rise by 2100. In 2025, India recorded 536 heat wave days, the highest in 14 years, with 143 official deaths. Over 74% of districts were affected, leading to public health, economic, and environmental crises. To combat this, expanding green spaces, promoting sustainable urban development, enforcing labor protections, and enhancing public awareness are crucial. The IPCC identifies heat waves as a climate crisis marker. I urge the Union Government to act swiftly in declaring heat waves a national disaster.