

North-West, East India face another spell of heatwave

NEW DELHI, June 10 (PTI)

NORTHWEST and east India are in for another spell of extreme heat, with temperatures predicted to rise by two to three degrees over the next five days, the India Meteorological Department (IMD) said on Monday.

India experienced multiple intense and prolonged heat waves in April and May which tested the limits of human endurance and the country's disaster preparedness, as many states, including Uttar Pradesh, Bihar and Odisha, reported heat wave-related deaths.

"Heat wave to severe heat wave conditions (are) likely over northwest and east India during the next five days," the IMD said in a statement.

The heat wave is likely to impact parts of Jammu & Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Punjab, Haryana, Delhi, Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, Jharkhand, Odisha and Gangetic West Bengal, the



Met office said.

Experts say the extreme heat is a result of the naturally occurring El Nino phenomenon -- unusual warming of the ocean surface in the central and eastern tropical Pacific Ocean -- and the rapidly increasing concentration of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere.

Studies show that rapid urbanisation has worsened the warming in urban areas, with outdoor workers and low-income households bearing the maximum impact.

The heatwave in May saw the hills of Assam, Uttarakhand, Himachal Pradesh and Arunachal Pradesh, recording all-time high temperatures.

MODI 3.0 CABINET- WHO GETS WHAT

Shah retains Home, Rajnath Defence, Gadkari continues as Road Transport Minister



Prime Minister Narendra Modi chairs the first meeting of his new Cabinet attended by the newly-inducted ministers, at the Prime Minister's 7, Lok Kalyan Marg residence in New Delhi on Monday.

(PTI)

NEW DELHI, June 10 (PTI)

PRIME Minister Narendra Modi's top four ministers -- Amit Shah, Rajnath Singh, Nirmala Sitharaman and S Jaishankar -- have retained their respective Home, Defence, Finance and External Affairs portfolios, according to an official statement.

Among the new entrants to the Union Cabinet, former Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan has been given the Agriculture and Rural Development portfolios, BJP President J P Nadda the Health portfolio and former Haryana Chief Minister Manohar Lal Khattar the Power portfolio.

Nitin Gadkari will continue as Road Transport Minister, while Dharmendra Pradhan will retain his Education portfolio. Kiren Rijju has been moved from the Earth Sciences Ministry to the Parliamentary Affairs Ministry, while Arjun Ram Meghwal will continue as Law Minister. Sarbananda Sonowal has retained the Shipping Portfolio, according to the statement. Modi and 71 ministers took oath of office and secrecy on Sunday at a ceremony at the Rashtrapati Bhawan.

AT 36, Kinjarapu Ram Mohan Naidu is the youngest minister while 79-year-old Jitan Ram Manjhi is the oldest minister to be inducted in the 18th Lok Sabha.

Naidu, Srikakulam MP from Telugu Desam Party (TDP), was sworn in as a minister of state (MoS) in Prime Minister Narendra Modi's new Council of Ministers. Another young minister is Raksha Khadse (37), an MP from Maharashtra. She won the Raver Lok Sabha seat in Maharashtra. Manjhi was sworn in as a Union Cabinet Minister in Modi 3.0 Government. He has served as the 23rd Chief Minister of Bihar, and is the founding president of Hindustani Awam Morcha (HAM). Some of the other young ministers include Chirag Paswan and Jayant Choudhary.

PM Modi, along with his 71 ministers, took oath on Sunday as the new coalition government was formed after two full tenures in which the BJP enjoyed a majority on its own.

Cabinet Ministers

- Amit Shah - Home
- Rajnath Singh - Defence
- Nitin Gadkari - Road Transport and Highways
- S Jaishankar - External Affairs
- Nirmala Sitharaman - Finance & Corporate Affairs
- J P Nadda - Health & Family Welfare and Chemicals & Fertilisers

- Shivraj Singh - Chouhan Agriculture and Farmers Welfare and Rural Development
- Dharmendra Pradhan - Education
- ML Khattar - Housing & Urban Affairs and Power
- Kiren Rijju - Parliamentary & Minority Affairs
- Sarbananda Sonowal - Ports, Shipping & Waterways
- H D Kumaraswamy - Heavy Industries and Steel
- Piyush Goyal - Commerce and Industry.
- Jitan Ram Manjhi (HAM) - MSME
- Rajiv Ranjan Singh (JD-U) - Panchayati Raj and Fisheries and Animal Husbandry and Dairying
- K Ram Mohan Naidu (TDP) - Civil Aviation
- Chirag Paswan (LJP-RV) - Food Processing
- Pralhad Joshi - Consumer Affairs and Food & Public Distribution and New & Renewable Energy
- Dr Virendra Kumar - Social Justice & Empowerment
- Jial Oram - Tribal Affairs
- Giriraj Singh - Textiles
- Ashwini Vaishnaw - Railways, Information & Broadcasting and Electronics & IT
- Jyotiraditya Scindia - Communication and Dept of N-E region
- Bhupender Yadav - Environment, Forest and Climate Change
- Jagendra Singh Shekhawat - Culture & Tourism
- Annpurna Devi - Women & Child Development
- Hardeep Singh Puri - Petroleum & Natural Gas
- Mansukh Mandaviya - Labour & Employment and Youth Affairs and Sports
- G Kishan Reddy - Coal and Mines
- C R Paatil - Jal Shakti

MoS (Independent Charge)

- Rao Inderjit Singh - Statistics and Programme Implementation, Planning and Culture
- Dr. Jitendra Singh - Science and Technology and Earth Sciences
- Arjun Ram Meghwal Law and Justice; and Parliamentary Affairs
- Prataprao Ganpatrao Jadhav - Ayush; and Health & Family Welfare.
- Jayant Chaudhary - Skill Development and Entrepreneurship and Education

Minister of State

- Dr. Jitendra Singh - MoS in Prime Minister's Office, Personnel, Public Grievances and Pensions; Atomic Energy; and Department of Space

- Jitin Prasad - Commerce and Industry; and Electronics and Information Technology
- Shripad Yesso Naik Power; and New and Renewable Energy.
- Pankaj Chaudhary - Finance
- Krishan Pal - Cooperation
- Ramdas Athawale - Social Justice and Empowerment
- Ram Nath Thakur - Agriculture and Farmers Welfare
- Nityanand Rai - Home Affairs
- Anupriya Patel - Health and Family Welfare; and Chemicals and Fertilisers
- V. Somanna - Jal Shakti; and Railways
- Dr. Chandra Sekhar Pemmasani - Rural Development; and Communications.
- Prof. S.P. Singh Baghel - Fisheries, Animal Husbandry and Dairying; and Panchayati Raj
- Sushri Sobha Karandlaje - Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises; and Labour and Employment
- Kirtivardhan Singh - Environment, Forest and Climate Change; and External Affairs.
- B. L. Verma - Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution; and Social Justice and Empowerment
- Shantanu Thakur - Ports, Shipping and Waterways
- Suresh Gopi - Petroleum & Natural Gas; and Tourism
- Dr. L. Murugan - Information and Broadcasting; and Parliamentary Affairs
- Ajay Tamta - Road Transport and Highways
- Bandi Sanjay Kumar - Home Affairs
- Kamlesh Paswan - Rural Development
- Bhagirath Choudhary Agriculture & Farmers Welfare
- Satish Chandra Dubey - Coal and Mines
- Sanjay Seth - Defence
- Ravneet Singh - Food Processing Industries & Railways
- Durgadas Uikey - Tribal Affairs
- Raksha Nikhil Khadse - Youth Affairs and Sports
- Sukanta Majumdar - Education and Development of North Eastern Region
- Savitri Thakur - Women and Child Development
- Tokhan Sahu - Housing and Urban Affairs
- Raj Bhushan Choudhary - Jal Shakti
- Bhupathi Raju Srinivasa Varma - Heavy Industries and Steel
- Harsh Malhotra - Corporate Affairs Road Transport and Highways
- Nimuben Jayantibhai Bambhaniya - Consumer affairs, Food and Public Distribution
- Murlidhar Mohol - Cooperation and Civil Aviation
- George Kurian - Minority Affairs and Fisheries, Animal Husbandry and Dairying
- Pabitra Margherita - External Affairs and Textiles

Modi 3.0 must bite the bullet to make military future-ready

China's Aggression Bolsters Case For Urgent Systemic Reforms

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New Delhi: An aggressive China, along with its expanding military collusiveness with Pakistan in the maritime domain after the land borders, will remain the foremost security threat confronting the Indian defence establishment for the foreseeable future.

The new govt should bite the bullet on several fronts to ensure India's nuclear deterrence capabilities as well as conventional war-fighting machinery can meet this challenge with an integrated future-ready military within budgetary constraints in the years ahead, several experts and officials told TOI.

The systemic reforms needed range from a time-bound rollout of the long-pending tri-service theatre commands and formulation of a hard-nosed national security strategy to building a much stronger defence-industrial base backed by higher investment in R&D, overhaul of DRDO and defence PSUs, and greater private sector collaboration.

For credible deterrence, India requires a more robust nuclear triad — the ability to launch nukes from the land, air and sea. Ballistic missiles, including the



China's aircraft carrier Liaoning. The neighbour's expanding maritime axis with Pakistan will continue to be a key security threat

over 5,000-km range Agni-5, for instance, need to be inducted in greater numbers.

India also needs to bolster its weak underwater leg by inducting more and bigger nuclear-powered submarines armed with long-range nuclear-tipped ballistic missiles (SSBNs in naval parlance). At present, there is only the 6,000-tonne INS Arihant armed with the 750-km range K-15 missiles. Two similar-sized SSBNs, of course, are to be commissioned in the coming months.

Concurrently, govt should also kick off the long-pending projects to build six nuclear-powered attack submarines (SSNs) and a third aircraft carrier since they will take over a decade to roll out. "It cannot be an either-or debate," a top officer said.

The political leadership must also "own and push" the three proposed theatre commands, two for the land borders with China and Pakistan, and a maritime one for the Indian Ocean region. "Genuine integration among the Army, Navy and IAF, instead of piecemeal steps, is indispensable," said an official.

A greater thrust, of course, is needed in building military capabilities in space, cyberspace, disruptive technologies and other such arenas. With conflicts like the ongoing Russia-Ukraine one also underscoring the sheer operational utility of long-range precision-strike vectors, the proposed Integrated Rocket Force should also figure high in the plans.

Over the last decade, the

NDA govt has rightly pursued the 'Make in India' policy as a strategic imperative. But the country is still far away from manufacturing fifth-generation fighter aircraft, advanced submarines, jet engines and the like.

Consequently, a concerted push is required to design, develop and manufacture advanced weapon systems and platforms indigenously through a new defence production policy that will eventually help India get rid of its strategically-vulnerable position of being the world's largest arms importer.

"The 'strategic partnership (SP)' policy, for one, needs to be scrapped," a senior official said. Not a single project has till now taken off under the floundering SP policy, which was promulgated in May 2017 to boost indigenous production through tie-ups with foreign armament majors.

Connected to all this is also the major structural revamp of DRDO proposed by the Prof K VijayRaghavan-led expert committee. "DRDO should only concentrate on fundamental and applied R&D, leaving systems integration and product management to other agencies and the private sector," he added.

In Italy, Meloni's party wins in EU polls, likely to play kingmaker



Rome: Giorgia Meloni's far-right party won a decisive victory in European elections in Italy, boosting her leadership at home and consolidating her kingmaker role in Europe.

"It is a resounding result," Meloni said Monday of the gains made by her Brothers of Italy party, despite a historically low turnout of 49.6%. "Italy is going completely against the trend," she said, noting that elsewhere in Europe governing parties had suffered in the polls. With over 99% of all votes counted, Meloni's post-fascist party secured 28.8% of the vote — surpassing the 26% in 2022 national elections.

Meloni had pitched the European Parliament polls as a referendum on her leadership, asking voters to write "Giorgia" on their ballots. The result is a remarkable reversal from 2019 European elections, when Meloni's then-marginal party secured just 6% of the vote.

All eyes are now on what Meloni will do with her increased influence in Brussels. She has been courted both by Ursula von der Leyen of centre-right EPP and Marine Le Pen's far-right National Rally. AP & AFP

Nawaz reaches out for peace, Modi says security remains India's priority

Emphasis On Security In Line With Govt Position On Pak's Export Of Terror

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Pakistan has to review its decision to downgrade ties before nursing any thought of forward movement in relationship, officials say

New Delhi: Pakistan PM Shehbaz Sharif congratulated Narendra Modi for taking over as Prime Minister for the third time but more significant was a felicitation message from the elder Sharif — former PM Nawaz Sharif, who spoke about replacing hate with hope.

Modi expressed appreciation for the message, saying the people of India have always stood for peace, security and progressive ideas.

"Advancing the well-being and security of our people shall always remain our priority," said Modi, who did not invite Pakistan for the inauguration of his third term. Modi's emphasis on security is in line with his govt's long held position that Pakistan's continued support to cross-border terrorism is not conducive for dialogue.

Just before the election outcome too, Nawaz had reached out to India's incoming govt by reiterating his position that it was Pakistan through its Kargil offensive that had violated his 1999 peace agreement with India in the form of the Lahore Declaration. However, his remarks now constitute the first direct peace outreach to India since the coalition govt in Pakistan took power earlier this year.

Nawaz said Modi's suc-

cess in elections reflects the confidence of the people in his leadership. "Let us replace hate with hope and seize the opportunity to shape the destiny of the two billion people of South Asia," said Nawaz, who was recently re-elected president of his party, in a post on X.

Coming from the most powerful civilian leader in Pakistan, and one who is known to share a close rapport with Modi himself, the

remarks are particularly significant. Modi also thanked Shehbaz for his message.

It was under Modi and Nawaz — in 2015 when then foreign minister Sushma Swaraj visited Islamabad — that the two sides had their last substantive bilateral engagement. That dialogue saw India and Pakistan relaunching the dialogue process under the new name of comprehensive bilateral dialogue. This was followed by Modi's famous dropby, and only visit to Pakistan as PM, in Lahore on Nawaz's birthday but that initiative also quickly fizzled out because of the Pathankot terror attack and later the Uri attack.

India has refused to have any diplomatic engagement ever since, except for the Indus Waters Treaty talks, and Pakistan itself decided to downgrade ties by recalling its high commissioner in 2019 after India revoked the special status of the erstwhile state of J&K.

The two countries will have an opportunity to attempt a reset in ties next month when both PMs travel to Kazakhstan for the SCO summit. However, it's unlikely India will propose any meeting, given the understanding in govt that Pakistan is yet to act decisively against cross-border terrorism. Official sources also maintain Pakistan has to review its decision to downgrade ties before nursing any thought of forward movement in the relationship.

Nawaz's call for working together also doesn't sit well with Pakistan's official position that India must reverse its "unilateral and illegal" measures in J&K for talks to take place. With the Supreme Court upholding the revocation of the special status, the Indian govt believes Pakistan cannot have any say in how the internal affairs of J&K are run.

Maldives to review 3 India pacts inked by previous govt

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

ANI

New Delhi: While Maldives President Mohamed Muizzu was in India, committing to expanding "close and historic" ties, a parliamentary committee back home announced a review of three agreements, which Muizzu's predecessor and pro-India leader Ibrahim Solih had signed with India, because these allegedly violated the sovereignty of the Maldives.

These include an agreement for hydrographic surveys, another for building the Uthuru Thilafalhu dockyard being built with grant assistance from India and yet another for the Dornier aircraft gifted by India to Maldives defence forces for humanitarian, search and rescue operations.

"Today, the National Security Services Committee of the parliament has decided to conduct a parliamentary inquiry to investigate actions undertaken by President Solih's administration that undermined the sovereignty and independence of the Maldives," said central Hithadhoo constituency's MP Ahmed Azaan, according to reports in Maldivian media.



Muizzu with Modi in Delhi on Sunday. Ties have been choppy ever since Muizzu assumed office in Nov last year

He proposed to commence a parliamentary inquiry alleging that the previous govt's actions affected the country's independence and sovereignty.

Muizzu's govt had last year announced it was not going to renew the agreement with Indian Navy for joint hydrographic surveys in Maldivian waters. He participated in Modi's swearing-in on Sunday and met President Murmu on Monday in which he expressed gratitude for India's continuous assistance to the Maldives. "He conveyed that he looks forward to further strengthening existing relations," said his office.

Army launches 'Vidyut Rakshak'

NEW DELHI, June 10 (PTI)

A TECH-BASED innovation -- an integrated generator monitoring, protection and control system -- developed by the Indian Army was launched on Monday.

'Vidyut Rakshak', developed by the Army Design Bureau (ADB) was launched here by the Army's Vice Chief Lt Gen Upendra Dwivedi.

Army Chief General Manoj Pande, in his message, appreciated the ADB and said, "While the Indian Army is observing the 'Year of Tech Absorption', this milestone success of Vidyut Rakshak from 'innovation to induction' sets precedence and signifies Indian Army's commitment and efforts to leverage technology as a catalyst for transformative change."

Vidyut Rakshak is an Internet of Things-enabled integrated generator monitoring, protection and control system. The Internet of Things (IoT) is a network of inter-related devices that connect and exchange data with other IoT devices and the cloud.

"The innovation is applicable on all existing generators held with the Indian Army, irrespective of their type, make, rating and vintage. Apart from monitoring generator parameters, it enables fault prediction, and prevention and automates manual operation through a user-friendly interface, saving manpower," a senior official said.

The launch event on Monday encompassed the roll-out of the first production units of Vidyut Rakshak.