

Feeling the heat? Brace for the warmest summer of 2027

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Calcutta: A day after a senior UN official identified climate change as the culprit behind the ongoing punishing summer in India, the World Meteorological Organisation on Thursday confirmed in a report that further heat-linked records were likely to be broken over the next five years.

The report, published in Geneva and a copy of which is with **The Telegraph**, says: "...Global average temperatures are likely to continue at or near record levels in the next five years. Annual global mean near-surface tempera-

tures during 2026-2030 are predicted to range between 1.3°C and 1.9°C above the 1850-1900 (pre-industrial period) average. It is likely (86% chance) that one year between 2026 and 2030 will surpass 2024 as the warmest year on record, according to the update."

The graphics used in the report show that almost half of India — the north and parts of the centre, west and the east — are likely to witness a high average temperature rise during the next five years compared to the pre-industrial benchmark.

"India's baseline is already 25°C compared to the global average of 13°C to 15°C. Hence,

any incremental addition over the higher Indian baseline, which is very likely as per the report, will significantly increase the heat stress within India, particularly within its vulnerable population with high exposure," said K.J. Ramesh, former director-general at the India Meteorological Department.

"There is an El Niño predicted for the end of 2026, which increases the chances of the following year, 2027, being the next record-breaking year," explained Leon Hermanson, the lead author of the report.

In 2024, the global average surface temperature was



A child shields against the heat in Kanpur on May 25. (PTI)

about 1.55°C above the pre-industrial baseline. The 1850-1900 period is considered the global temperature baseline, as human-triggered industrial

activities started to alter the global climate after this period. Countries agreed at the Paris Summit in 2015 that the global average temperature rise, compared to the pre-industrial period, needs to remain within 1.5°C to keep the world safe, especially the crores of people living near sea level. India, with over 11,000km of sealline near which roughly 25 crore people live, is one of the global hotbeds.

"It is likely... that the 2026-2030 five-year mean will exceed 1.5°C above the 1850-1900 average. It is considered exceptionally unlikely (less than 1%) that any single year will

exceed 2°C above the 1850-1900 average in the next five years," the report said.

UN Climate Change executive secretary, Simon Stiell, had said on Wednesday: "Large parts of India are already experiencing a punishing summer of extreme heat, with severe human and economic impacts, and the main culprit is worsening climate change, largely driven by the world burning colossal amounts of coal, oil and gas."

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