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### 1. Not just Delhi: How temperature records are tumbling across the world

#### Why in News?

The extremely high temperatures recorded in New Delhi in the last two days are extraordinary. But they are in keeping with the global trend in the last couple of years that has seen record-breaking temperatures being reported from several locations across the world.

For example, the United Kingdom crossed 40 degree Celsius for the first time ever in July 2022. A small town in China's northwest recorded 52 degree Celsius last year, the highest ever for that country. In 2021, Sicily in Italy recorded 48.8 degree Celsius, the highest for Europe ever. These are just a few examples.

An analysis by Carbon Brief, a UK-based publication focused on climate change, last year showed that nearly 40% of the Earth had recorded its highest-ever daily temperature between 2013 to 2023. This includes places in Antarctica as well. The highest temperature in India, in Rajasthan's Phalodi, was also recorded during this period.

However, the highest ever temperature recorded anywhere on Earth, 56.7 degree Celsius in a place called Death Valley in the desert of California, United States, was recorded more than 100 years ago, in 1913.

## WHY MUNGESHPUR IS UNDER LENS

➤ If it gets IMD's stamp, Wednesday's reading of 52.9°C at Mungeshpur in northwest Delhi will **break record of 51°C in Phalodi (Raj)** in May 2016

➤ Why the doubt? Maximum temperature in Mungeshpur 3.8°C higher than next highest temp in city – Najafgarh, at 49.1°C. An **automatic weather station, Mungeshpur sometimes prone to errors**



A dust storm & 'trace' rain brought brief respite on Wednesday

➤ 46.8°C logged at base station Safdarjung **2nd highest temp ever** at the station after 47.2 on May 29, 1944

#### Delhi Anomaly

If the 52.9 degree Celsius recorded at one of the stations in Delhi recently is verified, it would be an all-time high for India. But as of now it is suspect. The India Meteorological Department (IMD) said it was checking the authenticity of the reading by an automatic weather station in Mungeshpur, located on the northern outskirts of Delhi, bordering Haryana.

The doubts over the Mungeshpur reading stems mainly from the fact that none of the other stations in Delhi — there are 20 of them — recorded a temperature that was close to 52.9 degree Celsius. The maximum temperature in other stations of Delhi was recorded by the Najafgarh station, which gave a reading of 49.1 degree Celsius. The station that is taken to be representative of Delhi — Safdarjung — showed a maximum temperature of 46.8 degree Celsius. This itself was an 80-year record, the highest since 1944.

Even if the Mungeshpur data was not so overtly suspicious — and IMD officials admit it is — a record-breaking temperature like this would have needed a verification. Met offices across the world do a double-check on any such extreme weather event.

### **Heatwaves in Northern India**

But record-breaking or not, there is no doubt about the fact that Delhi, and indeed most of northern India, is going through one of the worst heatwaves. In most places, maximum temperatures are 5 to 10 degree Celsius above normal.

### **Global Warming**

The year 2024 was predicted to be extremely warm. Last year had emerged as the warmest year on record, globally, and the effect was expected to continue this year as well. And so far, it has.

April 2024 was the 11th consecutive month when the global average monthly temperature for that month touched a new record, according to the Copernicus Climate Change Service, an agency of the European Commission. The one year period between May 2023 to April 2024 was warmer than any previous 12-month period, about 1.61 degree Celsius higher than the pre-industrial (1850-1900) average.

The warming over India is not as pronounced as the world taken as a whole. Annual mean temperatures over India have risen by about 0.7 degree Celsius compared to 1900 levels. This is significantly lower than the 1.59 degree Celsius rise for average land temperatures across the world. If oceans too are included, global temperatures right now are at least 1.1 degree Celsius higher than pre-industrial averages.

### **Stronger Heatwaves**

However, heatwaves over India are noticeably more severe. In 2023, heatwave conditions prevailed even in February, technically a winter month for which heatwave thresholds are not even defined because they are not expected.

The current spell of high temperatures in Delhi, and most of north India, looks anomalous mainly because it is being compared to normal temperatures that are based on averages of 1981-2010 period. Going forward, 45 degree Celsius plus temperatures are likely to very

quickly become the new normal, and a 50 degree Celsius reading will no longer look suspicious.

Relevance: GS Prelims & Mains Paper III; Environment

Source: Indian Express

## 2. ICJ orders Israel to halt military assault in Rafah: The case and the ruling

### Why in News?

The International Court of Justice (ICJ) at The Hague, Netherlands, recently ordered Israel to halt its military assault in the city of Rafah, located in the southernmost part of Gaza. The 15-judge Bench, however, stopped short of ordering a full ceasefire throughout the enclave.

In its ruling, the court also directed Israel to open the Rafah crossing between Egypt and Gaza to allow the flow of humanitarian aid. It asked the Jewish state to provide access for any fact-finding or investigative missions sent by the UN to investigate the genocide allegations in Gaza. Israel was ordered to report back on its progress to the ICJ within a month.

Rulings by ICJ are legally binding but it has no way of enforcing them. However, experts believe the latest order can deepen Israel's isolation from the rest of the world.

The ICJ ruling that Israel must act to stop genocide in Gaza and allow more humanitarian aid is legally binding.

But it stops short of a demand for a ceasefire, and the ICJ has no power of enforcement.



### What was the case?

The ruling is the latest pronouncement by the court in a case brought by South Africa against Israel in December 2023, accusing the latter of a genocide in the Gaza Strip.

Since the case has begun, the court has given a series of rulings. For instance, in January, it ordered Israel to take action to prevent acts of genocide against Palestinians. Two months later, the ICJ ruled that Israel must ensure that basic food supplies arrive without delay to Palestinians in Gaza.

The new order has come in regard to a fresh request made by South Africa on May 10.

The country approached ICJ, asking for an urgent order to protect the Palestinians in Gaza from "grave and irreparable violation of their rights", owing to Israel's ongoing military assault on Rafah.

The country accused Israel of conducting a "brutal military attack on the sole remaining refuge" of the Palestinian people in Gaza, who were simultaneously being subjected to a "humanitarian aid blockage". South Africa called for an urgent ceasefire "for the sake of humanity" and "to prevent further violations of the Genocide Convention".

### What did the ICJ rule?

The ICJ, in a 13:2 majority, ruled that Israel must “immediately halt its military offensive and any other action in the Rafah Governorate that may inflict on the Palestinian group in Gaza conditions of life that could bring about its physical destruction in whole or in part.” The two dissenting votes came from Uganda and Israel.

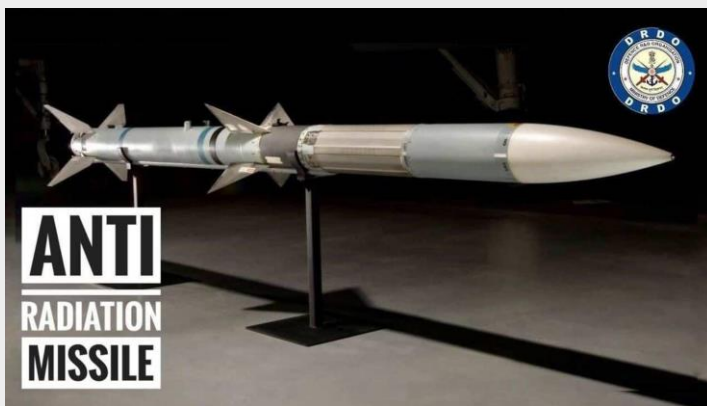
Relevance: GS Prelims & Mains Paper II; International Organisations

Source: Indian Express

### 3. RudraM-II air-to-surface missile successfully flight-tested

#### Why in News?

Defence Research & Development Organisation (DRDO) successfully flight-tested the RudraM-II air-to-surface missile from Su-30 MK-I fighter aircraft off the coast of Odisha.



#### About Rudram – II

RudraM-II is an indigenously-developed solid-propelled air-launched missile system meant for Air-to-Surface role to neutralise many types of enemy assets including source of electromagnetic radiations. A number of state-of-the-art indigenous technologies developed by various DRDO laboratories have been incorporated

in the missile system.

It will be manufactured jointly by Bharat Dynamics Limited and Bharat Electronics Limited after trials and introduction. DRDO also involved Adani Defence and Aerospace under Development cum Production Partner programme for mass production.

Relevance: GS Prelims; Science & Technology

Source: PIB