

Poll Timing in Bihar Over Heatwave

Why in News?

The Election Commission of India has decided to prolong the voting period by two hours in certain areas of four parliamentary constituencies in Bihar.

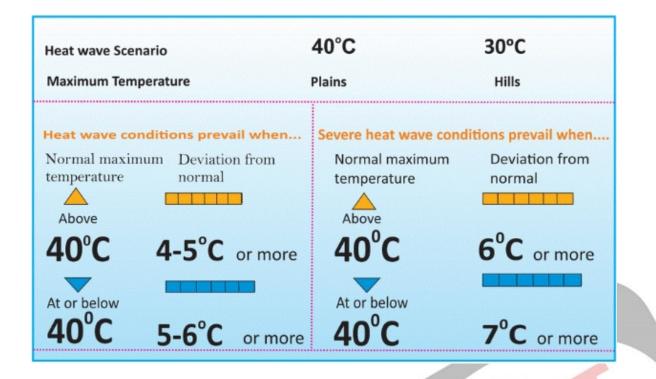
Key Points

- To increase voters' participation the state's chief electoral officer has decided to extend the polling hours due to the ongoing <u>heatwave</u>.
- The decision follows a comparatively lower voter turnout during the initial round of polling on 19th April.

Heatwaves

- These are prolonged periods of excessively hot weather that can cause adverse impacts on human health, the environment, and the economy.
- India, being a tropical country, is particularly vulnerable to heatwaves, which have become more frequent and intense in recent years.
- India Meteorological Department (IMD) Criteria for Declaring Heat Wave in India:
 Heat waves need not be considered till the maximum temperature of a station reaches at least 40°C for Plains and at least 30°C for Hilly regions.
 - If the normal maximum temperature of a station is less than or equal to 40°C, then an increase of 5°C to 6°C from the normal temperature is considered to be heat wave condition.
 - Further, an **increase of 7°C or more from the normal temperature** is considered a severe heat wave condition.
 - If the normal maximum temperature of a station is more than 40°C, then an increase of 4°C to 5°C from the normal temperature is considered to be heat wave condition. Further, an increase of 6°C or more is considered a severe heat wave condition.
 Additionally, if the actual maximum temperature remains 45°C or more irrespective
 - of **normal maximum temperature**, a heat wave is declared.

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