

Behind an early summer is a lack of winter rains

While a similar situation was witnessed in February three years ago, such an early arrival of heat is rare.

Written by: [Anjali Marar](#) 3 min read Bengaluru Mar 10, 2026 07:20 AM IST



A state like Himachal Pradesh has already experienced temperatures above 25 degrees Celsius.

Make us
preferred
source on
Google



In several regions of India, particularly in the north and west, the cool winter days of February were suddenly replaced by **unusually warm days this month.**

Temperatures were 8 to 13 degrees Celsius above normal, which can be classified as heat-wave conditions.

While a similar situation was witnessed in February three years ago, such an early arrival of heat is rare.

A warmer March

In its March forecast, the IMD said that day temperatures over western Himalayan regions and peninsular and central India would remain 'above' normal. It also warned of 'above' normal heatwave days in Gujarat and Andhra Pradesh. Both scenarios were realised within the very first week of March.

A state like Himachal Pradesh has already experienced temperatures above 25 degrees Celsius. "The probability of the maximum temperatures over Shimla rising above 25 degrees Celsius is negligible, and definitely not in March. Summer over Shimla peaks in May and early June, but heatwaves are uncommon," said an IMD official.

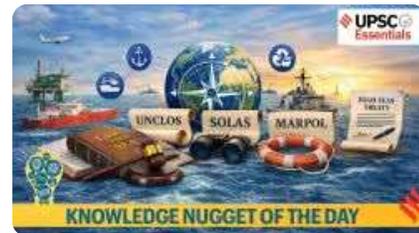
STORIES YOU MAY LIKE



China This Week |
Response to Iran war, Two Sessions meeting, and more heads roll



Chetak Screen Awards:
When Alia Bhatt mimicked Deepika Padukone and Priyanka Chopra, performed Ranveer Singh's 'dandruff step'



Knowledge Nugget |
International Maritime Laws: From UNCLoS, SOLAS to MARPOL and what they mean

A similar situation prevailed in Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh last week. "The temperatures are quite high and will remain for another 2 to 3 days. The incoming western disturbance will bring down these temperatures," said Mrutyunjay Mohapatra, director general, IMD. Western Disturbances are east-moving rain-

bearing wind systems that originate beyond Iran, and pick up moisture from the Mediterranean Sea and other water bodies. They are common in winter months.

● Highest max temperatures (in °C) in March

YEAR	SHIMLA	PAHALGAM	GULMARG	SRINAGAR
2026*	25.3*	22.7*	17.2*	24.7*
2025	24.4	20.4	14.3	23.2
2024	24.8	19.9	13.2	23
2023	20.4	20.4	13.8	23.4
2022	26.3	24.3	17	27.6
2021	24.4	19.2	12	22.2
2020	19.7	17.4	11	20.8

*TEMPERATURE FIGURES ARE THE HIGHEST TILL MARCH 8, 2026; SOURCE : IMD

Dry winter

The unusual weather can be partially attributed to a relatively dry winter. February was the third driest since 1901 — a direct effect of the lack of favourable weather systems. All-India rainfall in January and February was just 16 mm, or 60% below normal. Both snowfall and rainfall were subdued.

This was due to a lack of adequate Western disturbances from November 2025. The wind system had caused the bulk of the winter rains. Additionally, meteorologists observed no wind convergence in the westerly and easterly winds, which bring moisture from the seas to central and north India.

Dry winters are generally associated with an early onset of hot summer days because a lack of rain hastily heats up the soil. When soil is moist, the onset of summer sees some moisture evaporate first, but with little or no rain, the dry land heats faster, raising overall temperatures.

Crops feel the heat

The immediate impact of the sudden spike in temperatures would be on the standing rabi crops.

Mustard, wheat, gram, groundnut, sesame, sorghum, safflower, in addition to vegetables like potato and fruits like apples, will need additional care. Farmers have been advised to deploy frequent irrigation to maintain soil moisture levels.

However, this could further stress local water resources.

CURATED FOR YOU



Air travel update: Air India expands flights to Europe, New York amid West Asia...



War in West Asia: How Iran-Azerbaijan ties moved from managed hostility to the...