

Monsoon onset likely by the end of May

The first half of monsoon appears safer as El Nino impact may be stronger in August, says expert

SHAINU MOHAN@TPuram

EVEN as Kerala reels under scorching sun with heatwave warnings issued in several districts, many international weather models indicate an early arrival of the southwest monsoon in the state.

casts have not yet specified the exact date of monsoon onset. "We can only comment on whether the monsoon will arrive early or late, usually by the first or second week of May," he said.

In response to the ECMWF forecast suggesting an early onset this year, he said clearer signals on monsoon are expected only around mid-May. "Typically, the monsoon sets in over Kerala around June 1, with a variation of about a week on either side. There is no strict requirement that it must begin only in June," he said.

He said Kerala and parts of the west coast are expected to be in a relatively better position. "The distribution is likely to be hetero-

geneous. It does not mean all regions will receive uniformly deficient rainfall. Compared to central India, the west coast, including Kerala, may see comparatively better rainfall during the southwest monsoon," the official said.

Unlike earlier fears that El Nino would impact southwest monsoon, weather experts are hopeful as current models suggest that the early phase from May to June could be relatively good.

Weather expert Rajeevan Erikkulam said most weather models suggest positive signals. "Westerly winds are expected to become active after mid-May, which could support rainfall. The

uncertainty is more in August, when the El Nino impact may become stronger. The first half of the southwest monsoon season appears safer," said Rajeevan.

Meanwhile, IMD director Neetha K Gopal told TNIE that the met department's official forecast on southwest monsoon will come out by mid-May. "We are expecting above normal pre-monsoon showers in May. We are closely monitoring the situation," she said.

Heatwave conditions prevail

The heatwave situation continued in Kerala on Friday, with Palakkad recording 39.7 degrees Celsius followed by Punalur (38.6), Kozhikode (38), Vellankara (37.7) and Kochi airport (36.8). IMD has predicted a rise in temperatures till Sunday.

B'luru college staff force 3 students to remove 'janivara'

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @Bengaluru

DESPITE training college authorities frequently about dos and don'ts, warning them and issuing guidelines about frisking students during the Common Entrance Test (CET) 2026, three students were forced to remove their janivara (sacred thread) by the staff of a college in Koramangala on Thursday, the first day of CET.

The college has suspended three staffers in connection with the incident.

The parents of the three students filed a complaint at the Madivala police station on April 24 morning.

RTC driver's funeral held amid tension

U MAHESH @ Warangal

TENSION prevailed for over an hour in Narsampet town and Muthojpet village on Friday after police stopped RTC employees and supporters from taking the body of driver K Shankar Goud to the Narsampet bus depot, leading to protests and a road blockade.

Hundreds of TGSRTC employees gathered in support of the family of Shankar Goud, who died of burn injuries in the wee hours of Friday. Police and special police forces were deployed in large numbers in Narsampet and Muthojpet to prevent any untoward incidents.

Shankar Goud, 55, had set himself ablaze during the ongoing TGSRTC employees' strike on



TGSRTC employees observing silence over the death of RTC driver Shankar Goud at Narsampet bus depot | VINAY MADAPU

Thursday. He suffered 60% to 80% burn injuries and was shifted through an emergency green channel from Warangal to a private hospital in Hyderabad, where he succumbed to his injuries early on Friday. Chief Minister A Revanth

Reddy expressed shock and grief over the death. He conveyed condolences to the family and said the government would extend all possible assistance in their time of distress.

He said the government was committed to holding talks with RTC employees and resolving their issues. After the postmortem, the body was handed over to the family and brought to Muthojpet village in Narsampet mandal in the early hours of Friday.

Fresh tensions arose when RTC employees attempted to take Shankar Goud's body to the Narsampet bus depot as part of their agitation. Opposition leaders joined the rally, while police erected barricades to stop the procession.

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