News: Worsening heatwaves are taking a heavier toll on rich as well as poor countries, according to an annual ranking, the Global Climate Risk Index, published by environmental thinktank Germanwatch.

Prelims and Mains focus: about the report and its key findings on impact of climate change

Key findings of the report

- The index rated Japan as the most affected country in 2018, while Germany was in third position.

- Both of the industrialised nations were hit hard by heatwaves and drought that year, as was India — in fifth position — which suffered water shortages, crop failures and worst flooding, Germanwatch said in a report.

- “Recent science has confirmed the long established link between climate change and the frequency and severity of extreme heat,” it added in a statement.

- Across Europe, extreme heat spells are now up to 100 times more likely than a century ago, says the report. It noted that the impact of heatwaves on African countries may be underrepresented due to a lack of data.

- Powerful storms also left a trail of destruction in 2018, with the Philippines second in the climate risk index due to large losses when it was battered by top strength Typhoon Mangkhut.

- Madagascar was the fourth most weather affected country as two cyclones killed about 70 people and forced 70,000 to seek refuge.

- The index results showed that the “signs of climate crisis”, on all continents, could no longer be ignored.