

USDA Foreign Agricultural Service

GAIN Report

Global Agricultural Information Network

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2015 Monsoon Forecast

Report Categories:

Agricultural Situation

Climate Change/Global Warming/Food Security

Oilseeds and Products

Grain and Feed

Cotton and Products

Approved By:

Jonn Slette

Prepared By:

Amit Aradhey

Report Highlights:

On April 22, 2015, the Indian Meteorological Department (IMD) issued a ‘below normal monsoon’ forecast for the upcoming 2015 southwest monsoon season (June-September). IMD further predicted that the seasonal rainfall will be 93-percent of its long-term average (LTA). The forecast specifies that *El Niño* weather pattern (which triggers drought) is likely to persist during 2015 monsoon season. IMD will issue an updated forecast in June 2015.

General Information:

Forecast

On April 22, 2015, IMD released its initial [long-range forecast](#) for the 2015 southwest monsoon season (June-September). The seasonal rainfall is predicted at 93-percent of its LTA (margin of error at \pm five percent). LTA is an aggregate average of seasonal precipitation from years spanning 1950 to 2000, with a mean of 89 cm. The most recent forecast notes that the *El Niño* weather pattern (which triggers drought) is likely to persist during 2015 monsoon season.

IMD forecast below-average levels of precipitation during the 2015 monsoon season, predicting a 33-percent chance for deficit rainfall (below 90 percent of LTA), a 35-percent chance for below average rainfall (90-96 percent of LTA), a 28-percent chance for average rainfall (96-104 percent of LTA), and a four-percent chance for above average to excessive rainfall (above 104 percent of LTA).

Typically, poor monsoon rains negatively impact agricultural production and create inflationary pressure, particularly on food crops. A well-distributed monsoon is crucial for production of rice, oilseeds, sugarcane, cotton, corn, and pulses, which are harvested in fall. Even for irrigated agricultural lands, strong monsoon precipitation can boost yields and reduce the cost of production. Typically, a normal southwest monsoon brings 70-percent of India's total rainfall and irrigates about 55 percent of agricultural land.

IMD will update its monsoon forecast in June 2015, and will issue monthly rainfall reports in July and August, as well as a seasonal rainfall report (June-September) for the four main Indian geographical regions (East and Northeast, Northwest, Central, Southern Peninsular).