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Predicted near normal monsoon delayed by five days

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Report Highlights:
The Indian Meteorological Department (IMD) forecasts a near normal Southwest Monsoon for 2019 suggesting that June to September rainfall is likely to be 96 percent of the Long Period Average (LPA). The onset date of the Southwest Monsoon is forecast for June 6, which is a delay of five days. Central India has been receiving normal to excess rainfall during the pre-monsoon period, while most of the other regions have received deficit rainfall from the previous year. These trends are reflected in their corresponding reservoir storage levels.

General Information:

IMD predicts near normal monsoon

On April 15, the Indian Meteorological Department (IMD) forecast a near normal Southwest Monsoon for 2019 suggesting that June to September rainfall would likely be 96 percent of the long period average (LPA) with a model error of plus/minus 5 percent. The fifty-year (1951-2000) LPA for the Southwest Monsoon rainfall is 89 cm. The forecast suggests a maximum probability (39 percent) for normal rainfall during the upcoming season. However, there is less probability for the monsoon rainfall to be above normal or excess. Overall, the country is expected to have well-distributed rainfall during the monsoon season. However, Indian private weather forecasting agencies are forecasting a below normal monsoon. IMD's second forecast is scheduled for release in the first week of June. For more details, please refer to IMD Press Release - Long Range Forecast of 2019 Southwest Monsoon.

Southwest Monsoon onset on June 6, 2019

On May 15, IMD issued a press release stating that Southwest Monsoon onset is likely to start over Kerala on June 6 with a model error of plus/minus 4 days. Typically, the start of the Southwest Monsoon is marked by an onset over the southern state of Kerala on June 1 with a standard deviation of about 7 days. After that, it takes approximately 45 days to cover the entire country. The event marks the start of the rainy season over the region and as the monsoon progresses northward, relief from high summer temperatures is experienced over the areas. For more details, please refer to IMD Press Release - Forecast of Onset Date of Southwest Monsoon

Table 1. Probability Forecast for Southwest Monsoon 2019

Category	Rainfall Range (% of LPA)	Forecast Probability (%)
Deficient	Less than 90	17
Below Normal	Between 90-96	32
Normal	**Between 96-104**	**39**
Above Normal	Between 104-110	10
Excess	Greater than 110	02

Source**:** Indian Meteorological Department

Table 2. IMD Southwest Monsoon Onset date (actual vs forecast)

Year	Actual Onset Date	Forecast Onset Date	Actual Rainfall (% of LPA)
2014	6th June	5th June	88
2015	5th June	30th May	86
2016	8th June	7th June	97
2017	30th May	30th May	95
2018	29th May	29th May	91
2019	-	6th June	-

Source**:** Indian Meteorological Department

Table 3. India: Pre-Monsoon Regional Rainfall Distribution from March 1- May 8, 2019

Regions	2019 Actual (mm)	Normal (mm)*	2019 Percentage Departure from Normal
Northwest India	53.7	85.6	-37%
Central India	26.7	23.3	15%
Southern Peninsula	37.1	61.1	-39%
East and Northeast India	205.2	226.8	-10%
All India	**65.5**	**82.5**	**-21%**

* Normal rainfall is the fifty-year average of rainfall from 1951-2000

Source: Indian Meteorological Department

Table 4. India: Storage Status at 91 Major Reservoirs in Billion Cubic Meters (BCM)

Region	Volume on May 9, 2019 (in BCM)	Total Capacity (in BCM)	Percentage of Capacity on May 9, 2019	Percentage of Capacity on May 9, 2018	10-Year Average Capacity Level on May 9
Northern Region	8.80	18.01	49%	18%	26%
Eastern Region	5.87	18.83	31%	33%	28%
Western Region	4.74	31.26	15%	21%	24%
Central Region	11.95	42.30	28%	26%	25%
Southern Region	7.38	51.59	14%	13%	16%
All India	38.74	161.99	24%	21%	23%

Source: Ministry of Water Resources