

One-third of India sees deficit rainfall over a month after monsoon arrival

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ONE-and-a-half months after the arrival of the Southwest monsoon, around 40% of districts covering the country's one-third area have received deficient rainfall, as per the latest data of the India Meteorological Department (IMD).

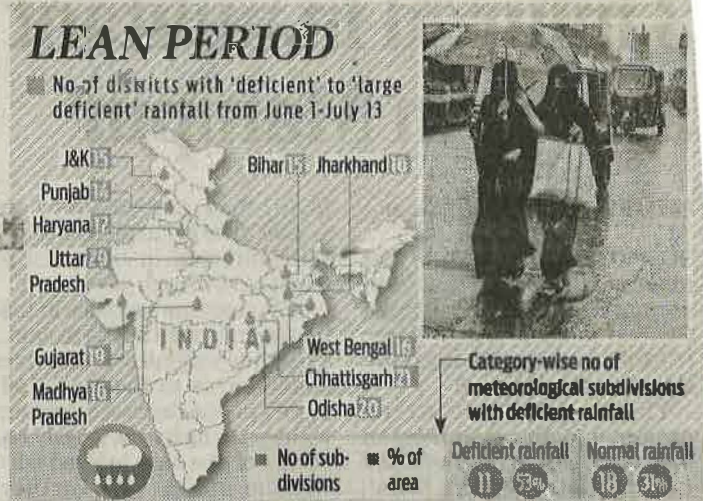
The weaker monsoon has left the agrarian region of North-west, Central, and East Indian states high and dry.

As per the IMD, agriculturally crucial states such as Haryana, Punjab, Odisha, Uttar Pradesh, West Bengal, Madhya Pradesh, Gujarat and Chhattisgarh registered deficit rainfalls in a large number of districts.

Uttar Pradesh saw deficient monsoon in 29 districts; Chhattisgarh in 21; Odisha 20; Gujarat 19; Madhya Pradesh, West Bengal and Jharkhand 16; Bihar 15, and Punjab 14.

About 33% of the total 729 districts registered deficient monsoon (when deficient rainfall is in a category -59% to -20% of the long-period average), while 5% of districts recorded large deficient rainfall (-99% to -60% category).

Currently, the deficient rainfall districts fall in 11 sub-meteorological divisions constituting 31% of the country's area.



However, 18 sub-meteorological divisions covering 53% of the country are under average category rainfall.

Ajeet Pandey, 34, a paddy farmer from Bihar's Patna district, is dejected over the monsoon's poor performance so far. In June, Patna recorded 77% rainfall deficit, whereas in Bihar, the overall deficit was 50%. In July, monsoon wind gained strength and minimised the overall huge gap to -31%. Yet, Bihar's 15 districts registered deficient rainfall.

"Unlike in June, we saw good monsoon over the first week of

July. But then after it started waning, denting our hope to grow paddy timely," he said.

Scientists at the IMD said the monsoon will regain strength after July 16. However, it will be primarily active in the Southern Peninsula, Central India and Western India.

The impact of deficient monsoon is also visible on the water storage level of the country's 150 major reservoirs. The overall storage position is less than the corresponding period of last year in the country and also less than the normal storage (10 years average).

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