

## IMD - Monsoon Forecast

### Why in news?

\n\n

The Indian Meteorological Department has recently released the monsoon forecast for this year.

\n\n

### What are the key findings?

\n\n

\n

- The country would experience a normal monsoon for the third successive year.

\n

- South-west monsoon at 97% of the long period average (LPA) is expected.

\n

- Long Period Average (LPA) is the average annual rainfall for the period 1951-2000.

\n

- The LPA comes to about 89 cm of rain.

\n

- Monsoon is considered normal if average rainfall is between 96% and 104% of the LPA.

\n

- Anything less than 90% of the LPA is considered a deficient monsoon.

\n

\n\n

### What does it imply?

\n\n

\n

- The forecast of a normal monsoon enhanced the economic outlook.

\n

- For farmers especially, this has given fresh expectations.

\n

- This is the third year in a row to look forward to a high output for a variety of

crops.

\n

- However, it is not to be forgotten that fiscal realities have come in the way of realising higher farm incomes.

\n

- The Centre has been supportive of higher returns through the Minimum Support Price mechanism.

\n

- Moreover, additional bonuses have been announced by States such as Madhya Pradesh for procurement.

\n

\n\n

### **What is the need for caution?**

\n\n

\n

- Government efforts have mainly helped only rice and wheat.

\n

- This trend has led to a skew towards these crops.

\n

- This is especially worrying from a water management perspective.

\n

- As the above crops are heavily dependent on groundwater.

\n

- With a normal monsoon, another year of good cropping is expected.

\n

- But unremunerative prices will depress public sentiment.

\n

- So it is vital for the Centre to arrive at a policy.

\n

- Farmers should be given constructive advice on the ideal cropping mix.

\n

- They should be helped to get the cost-plus-50% margin that the Centre has promised them.

\n

\n\n

### **Why is water management crucial for India?**

\n\n

\n

- Rainfall ranges from a few hundred millimetres or less in the northwest to more than a few thousand millimetres elsewhere.

- \n
- The long-term challenge for India is to make the most of the rainfall it receives.
- \n
- India notably uses more water to grow crops comparing to, say, China.
- \n
- Combined with distortions in procurement subsidies, water stress due to exorbitant use is inevitable.
- \n

\n\n

### **What should be done?**

\n\n

- \n
- The Master Plan for Artificial Recharge to Ground Water drawn up by the Centre should be pursued scientifically.
- \n
- This is to help States (with the most water-stressed blocks) get adequate funds to build artificial recharge structures.
- \n
- Moreover, for farmers choosing to continue with wheat and rice, transfer of expertise is crucial.
- \n
- Also, provision of equipment that enables efficient utilisation of water is vital.
- \n
- A good monsoon raises agriculture's contribution to GDP growth.
- \n
- So it is essential that the governments invest consistently to harvest the monsoon.
- \n

\n\n

\n\n

**Source: The Hindu, Indian Express**

\n