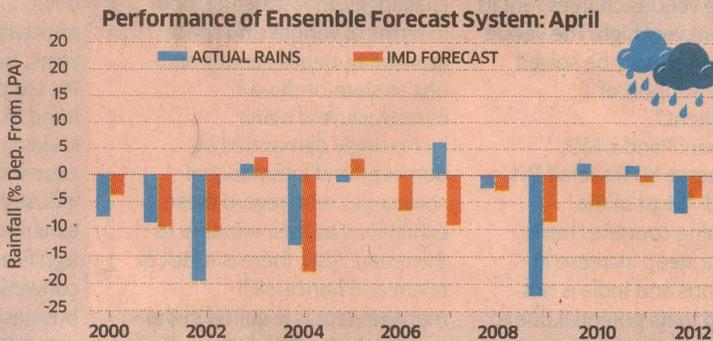


IMD Monsoon Forecast Tomorrow

The India Meteorological Department is due to release its first monsoon forecast of the year on Friday, which will be closely followed by farmers, policymakers and companies. Monsoon rains are considered crucial as more than three-fifths of India's population is directly or indirectly dependent on agriculture, 60% of which is rainfed. Hence, rainfall needs to be adequate and evenly distributed in June, July and August, the key sowing months. Madhvi Sally explains:

1 April Forecast: Factors to Watch



- North Atlantic (Dec-Jan) sea surface temperature
- Equatorial SE Indian Ocean (Feb-Mar) Sea surface temperature
- East Asia mean (Feb-Mar) seas level pressure
- NW Europe's Jan land surface air temperature

El Nino/La Nina:
So far, no indication of the dreaded El Nino. The El Nino effect develops when Pacific temperatures rise, often leading to drought

2 How IMD Prepares the Forecast?

Has a statistical model that predicts rainfall

For day-to-day data collection, it has a network of

400
Manned observation stations

1,000
Automatic rain gauge stations

675
Automated weather stations

16
Doppler weather radars

400
Scientists process data using 14.4 teraflop computing system

3 What's At Stake



60%

OF INDIAN farms depend entirely on rainfall. Even irrigated farms gain a lot from monsoon rains as they save on electricity, diesel and labour cost

AGRICULTURE accounts for only 15% of the GDP, but provides livelihood to two-third of India's population



4 Crops Sown during crucial months of June and July

PADDY

Punjab, Haryana, UP, Bihar, MP, Chattisgarh, Rajasthan, Karnataka, TN, AP, WB, Uttrakhand, J&K

MAIZE

AP, Karanataka, Maharashtra, TN, Punjab, MP, Rajasthan

COTTON

Punjab, Haryana, Rajasthan, Gujarat, Maharashtra, AP

SOYBEAN

MP, Chattisgarh, Rajasthan, Maharashtra

BAJRA

Rajasthan, Haryana, UP, Gujarat, MP

SUGARCANE

Uttar Pradesh, Maharashtra, Gujarat, Karnataka, Punjab, Haryana.

PULSES

Urad (black gram) Maharashtra, tur (pigeon pea) Karnataka, Maharashtra, MP

*Economic Times
25/4/13*