

## **Monsoon rains 2% below average**

Monsoon rains were 2% below average in the week to August 22, the weather office said on Thursday, reflecting a revival of rainfall in rice, cane and oilseeds growing areas of one of the world's leading food consumers and producers. In the previous week, the shortfall was at the same level with the drought still affecting western oilseeds and cotton growing areas of the country. The crucial monsoon rains, vital for 55% of India's farmland which doesn't have irrigation, is 14% short of average so far and threatens cereal and pulses production. Rains below 90% of long-term averages in the entire season are considered deficient, or a drought.