



WFP Bangladesh Report on

**EARLY WARNING and
MONITORING**

Issue 7

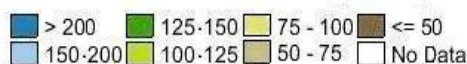
3 August 2006

HIGHLIGHTS

- § Rainfall was below average for much of the country during the period 21st thru 31st July.
- § Monsoon rains have been relatively light during June-July, as compared to historical norms.
- § The rainfall forecast for the coming week (2nd August thru 8th August) shows normal or below normal rains expected for most of the country. Similar conditions are forecast outside of Bangladesh, in the up stream catchment region.
- § A recent seasonal climate forecast for the August-September-October period, shows normal, or below normal precipitation expected.



Dekadal Percent of Normal Rainfall (21-31 July 2006)



RAINFALL DISTRIBUTION/
MONSOON SEASON

Rainfall during the 21-31 July was below average for much of the country. Relatively dry conditions prevailed over large areas in the East and Southeast. Precipitation during the month of June was 24% below the long-term norm, while July was 20% below according to the Bangladesh Meteorological Department (BMD).

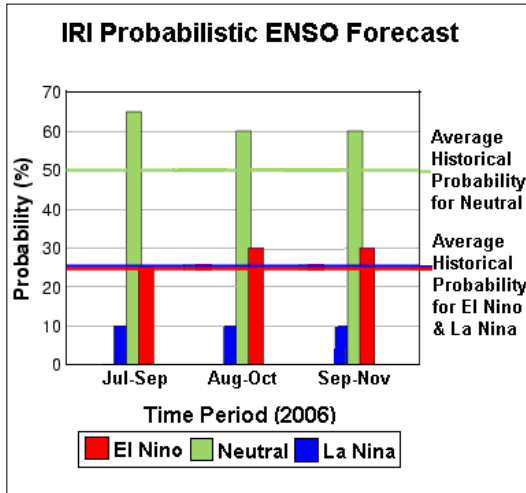
Despite the general trend described above, heavy rainfall has occurred in some locations. For example in the Northeast of the country Sunamganj received 220 mms of rain on the 22nd of July. Nearby Sylhet received 230 mms. on the 25th July (source: FFWC). Above average rains in mid July contributed to localized flooding and water-logging in low-lying areas of the Southwest. The districts of Jessore, Khulna, and Satkhira were particularly affected. Long existing structural problems such as inadequate flood control infrastructure and heavily silted rivers are underlying causal factors. Close monitoring during the coming period is warranted.

Note: The map on the left is from the United States Department of Agriculture Foreign Agricultural Service website, where related and more detailed information is available:

<http://www.pecad.fas.usda.gov/cropexplorer/imageview.cfm?regionid=sasia>.

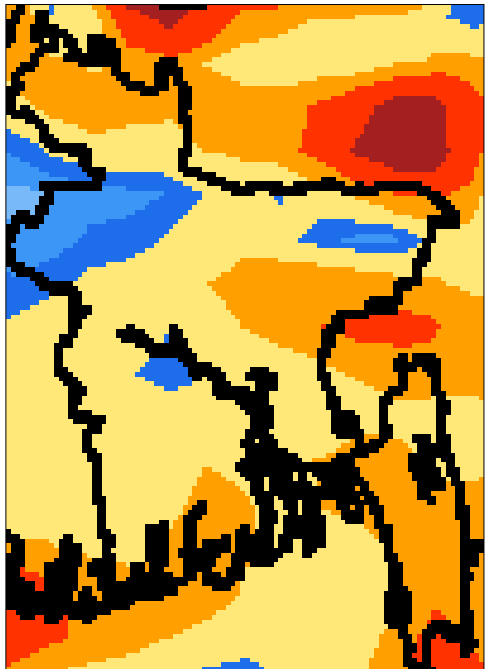
Disclaimer: The data and views expressed in this report do not represent the official position of the United Nations, the World Food Programme, nor any other United Nations member state.

MOONSOON OUTLOOK/FORECAST



Global and regional climate phenomenon can significantly influence monsoon precipitation for Bangladesh and the surrounding region. Sea surface temperatures (SSTs) and atmospheric conditions over the equatorial eastern and central Pacific region determine phenomenon such as El Niño, La Niña, and the Southern Oscillation (SO). El Niño refers to warmer than normal SSTs, while La Niña refers to cooler than normal SSTs. When average sea surface temperatures prevail conditions are said to be “neutral”; favoring neither El Niño nor La Niña. SO refers to atmospheric pressure conditions that change across the tropical Pacific. These changes in pressure and winds, are associated or “coupled” with sea surface temperature conditions. Together, the coupled system is referred to as ENSO (El Niño and Southern Oscillation). There is a significant probability that the current ENSO neutral conditions will continue during the August-September-October period. This forecast suggests that Bangladesh should expect a normal monsoon with normal flooding.

Note: Much of the source material for this section was derived from a recent Daily Star article written by Dr. M. Rashed Chowdhury. The article provides a more in depth understanding of the relevance of El Niño, La Niña, and ENSO with regards to flood forecasting in Bangladesh.
<http://www.thedailystar.net/2006/07/21/d607211801121.htm>



Cumulative Rainfall Forecast (2-8 August 2006) in mm

1 5 10 15 20 30 40 50 75 100 150

RAINFALL FORECAST

The cumulative rainfall forecast for the period 2nd August thru 8th August, as observed on the map on the left, is expected to be 75 mms or less for most of the country. Exception areas where heavier rains are expected, include a) the Northwest region stretching from Kurigram to Thakurgaon, b) the Northeast near Sylhet, c) the Chittagong Hill Tracts region in the Southeast, and d) the East-central region near Gazipur.

The Bangladesh Meteorological Department (BMD) has recently forecast that August rainfall is expected to be less than normal, unless there is a significant depression in the Bay-of-Bengal.

Note: The data used to generate the rainfall map originates from the US based NOAA (National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration) Climate Prediction Center (CPC). More detailed information is available from the CPC website at:
<http://www.cpc.ncep.noaa.gov>

Comments on this report can be sent to john.mcharris@wfp.org with a cc: to malik.kabir@wfp.org