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IMD issues 'red alert' for rains in Assam



Many rivers flowing above danger level in State

STAFF REPORTER

GUWAHATI, May 17: The Indian Meteorological Department today upgraded its rainfall warning in Assam from 'orange' (be prepared) to 'red' (take action) in the next two days, even as several rivers were flowing above danger levels and their trends stated to be rising.

Due to moisture incursion from Bay of Bengal, moderate rain is very likely to occur at most places over Assam during the next five days. Thunderstorm, lightning and heavy rain are also likely to occur at isolated places over the State in the next few days,

an IMD forecast said.

According to the Central Water Commission, river Kopili at Kampur in Nagaon district continues to flow in 'extreme flood situation'. It was flowing at a level of 62.03 m with a 'rising trend' which is 1.53 m above its 'danger level' of 60.5 m and 0.24 m above its previous 'high flood level' of 61.79 m.

The Barak river in Cachar, Kushiara in Karimganj, Burhi Dehing in Dibrugarh, Jia Bharali in Sonitpur, Desang in Sivasagar and Brahmaputra in Jorhat and Sonitpur were also flowing above the danger level. The water level trends of most of the rivers were rising.

Colour- Coded Weather Warning

- It is issued by the IMD whose objective is to alert people ahead of severe or hazardous weather which has the potential to cause damage, widespread disruption or danger to life.
- Warnings are updated daily.
- The IMD uses 4 colour codes are:
 - **Green (All is well):** No advisory is issued.
 - **Yellow (Be Aware):** Yellow indicates severely bad weather spanning across several days. It also suggests that the weather could change for the worse, causing disruption in day-to-day activities.
 - **Orange/Amber (Be prepared):** The orange alert is issued as a warning of extremely bad weather with the potential of disruption in commute with road and rail closures, and interruption of power supply.
 - **Red (Take Action):** When the extremely bad weather conditions are certainly going to disrupt travel and power and have significant risk to life, the red alert is issued.

WPI inflation hits record 15.08% in April on costlier food, fuel

NEW DELHI, May 17: Wholesale price-based inflation shot up to a record high of 15.08 per cent in April after the heatwave led to a spike in prices of perishables such as fruits and vegetables, bolstering the possibility of RBI raising the interest rate next month.

The Wholesale Price Index (WPI)-based inflation at 15.08 per cent is the highest print on record in the current (2011-12) series.

This is the 13th month of double-digit inflation and arguments of a low base no longer hold.

Considering the old series as well, the last time WPI inflation was higher than this was in August 1991, when it was at 16.06 per cent.

All sub-heads (food, fuel, and manufacturing) registered an acceleration in inflation in April with fuel and power inflation noting the sharpest increase.

"The high rate of inflation in April 2022 was primarily due to rise in prices of mineral oils, basic metals, crude petroleum and natural gas, food articles, non-food articles, food products and chemicals and chemical products,



etc., as compared to the corresponding month of the previous year," the commerce and industry ministry said in a statement.

Inflation in food articles was 8.35 per cent as prices of vegetables, wheat, fruits and potato witnessed a sharp spike over the year-ago period. The rate of price rise in vegetables was 23.24 per cent, while in potato it was 19.84 per cent, fruits (10.89 per cent), wheat (10.70 per cent).

Core inflation accelerated for the third consecutive month to 11.1 per cent from 10.9 per cent in March 2022. Manufactured products inflation was also up at 10.9 per cent in April from 10.7 per

cent in March.

Inflation in food articles was 8.35 per cent as prices of vegetables, wheat, fruits and potato witnessed a sharp spike over the year-ago period.

In the fuel and power basket, inflation was 38.66 per cent, while in manufactured products and oil seeds, it was 10.85 per cent and 16.10 per cent, respectively.

Inflation in crude petroleum and natural gas was 69.07 per cent in April.

Data released last week showed that retail inflation rose to a near eight-year high of 7.79 per cent in April, remaining above the Reserve Bank's inflation target for the fourth straight month. - PTI

Wholesale Price Index?

- It measures the changes in the prices of goods sold and traded in bulk by wholesale businesses to other businesses.
- Published by the Office of Economic Adviser, Ministry of Commerce and Industry.
- It is the most widely used inflation indicator in India.
- Major criticism for this index is that the general public does not buy products at wholesale price.
- The base year of All-India WPI has been revised from 2004-05 to 2011-12 in 2017.

Consumer Price Index or CPI is the measure of changes in the price level of a basket of consumer goods and services bought by households. CPI is a numerical estimation calculated using the rates of a sample of representative objects the prices of which are gathered periodically.

- The CPI captures changes in price level at the consumer level.
- Changes in prices at the producer level are tracked by the Wholesale Price Index (WPI).
- CPI can capture the change in the prices of services which the WPI cannot.

Importance of quality fish seed



■ Dr Dhruba Jyoti Sharma, Dr Sanjay Sarma

India has made remarkable progress in the development of its fishery sector in the last 70 years. In 1950-51, India's fish production was 7.5 lakh metric tonnes only. At present it produces about 13 million metric tonnes every year in which the inland sector growth rate of about 6.5 per cent, contributes around 55 per cent of it. This sector occupies an important place in the national economy. It provides valuable foreign exchange and employment to millions of people. It is also instrumental in providing sources of livelihood for a large section of the economically backward and resource poor population of the country; India is the second largest producer of farmed fish after China. According to the recent livestock census, the country has a population of around 15 million fishers. This sector contributes 1.04 per cent to the total GDP and 5.34 per cent to the GDP from agriculture and allied activities.

Known as the sunrise sector, fishery has recorded faster growth as compared to the crop and livestock sectors. Carps account for as much as 87 per cent of the total aquaculture production in India. This is achieved by combining mainly culture practices with strong traditional knowledge and by applying scientific strategies in management.

From all its water resources, Assam has achieved a fish production level of about 393 million kilograms (2020-21) which is about 6 per cent more than in the previous year. The State is the third highest producer of fish seed in the country produc-

ing on an average 9700 million fish fry annually for the last three years. However, standardised fish seed of quality fingerlings at the right time is yet to be achieved uniformly throughout the State.

Quality fish seed is the main input for fish farming practices which determines the overall production scenario of fish. The term quality fish seed refers to prescribed species, standard size, healthy, able to grow fast in pond environment and disease resistant. The progress of inland fishery, particularly the culture sector, is attributed to the success of induced breeding technique. The success of induced breeding technique, hatchery production of major carps seed, has come to replace the earlier practice of collecting spawn from rivers and rearing the same to stocking size.

It is generally difficult for fish farmers to know the quality of fish seed from outer appearance. Seed producers take the advantage of this and sell poor quality fish seed to the farmers. This results in less production of table fish after farming 8-10 months in the farmer's pond. The serious issues associated with quality fish seed production and causing deterioration in the seed quality is mainly inbreeding, such as breeding of related fish species which causes deterioration in the seed of offspring. Again, if mixed spawning of fish practised by most seed producers continues, conservation of the native fish species shall be extremely difficult as the practice results in production of undesirable hybrids. Induced breeding of undersized mature fish is a very

common practice in most of the hatcheries which needs to be stopped. Another important reason for poor quality fish seed is the poor brood stock management which should be developed and unplanned cross breeding of different species should be stopped. Seed produced from brood stock collected from natural sources such as rivers, tributaries and beels is reported to show more than 20 per cent survival and more than 30 per cent growth chances than seed produced from pond-reared fish.

The quality of fish seed depends on the scientific rearing practices followed in preparation and management of brood stock pond. To ensure availability of quality fish seed in the State, the rearing infrastructure is being developed under several projects of the fishery department and other agencies. However, the new concept of development of quality fish seed through fish farmers producers companies (FFPC) and empanelled cooperative societies of FISHFED has been adopted under World Bank-funded project Assam Agri-business and Rural Transformation Project (APART). Under this project a group of trained fish farmers are involved in production of quality fish seed of various cultivable fish species and catering to their own needs, fellow farmers of the village and farmers of neighbouring villages in appropriate time and at affordable cost. The fish seed village concept is improving the fish seed production system in an organised manner and in a compact area, replacing poor quality seed with new high yielding varieties, increasing the quantity of fish

seed production to meet the local demand, timely supply with reasonable cost and the village's self-reliance in quality fish seed. Another important feature of fish seed village is that it may unite the farmers of the village for a common cause and enhance confidence in marketing and understanding the concept of quality fish seed among the farmers as per norms laid down under the Assam Fish Seed Rule, 2010. Because of known sources of fish seed, the producers will be able to grow big fish within a specific time period and at the same time consumers will be benefited. The FFPCs as well as cooperative societies are actively involved in bringing the high-yielding varieties from the National Fresh Water Brood Bank, Odisha particularly *amur carp*, *jayanti rohu* and improved *catla*. Already several crore high-yielding fish seed are being marketed by these groups which will have a positive impact on fish production in the State.

To address some of the constraints attributed to inadequate fish production in the State, the government had recently taken up several measures with a holistic approach. One of the important measures is enactment of the Assam Fish Seed Act, 2005 and Fish Seed Rule 2010, the first of its kind in the country for production of quality fish seed under the Assam Fishery Rule 1953. As per the Act, it is mandatory for all those people who are seed producers, growers, importers, exporters, etc., to register their names and obtain licence from the district fisheries development officer concerned. To ensure availability of fish

seed and for conservation purposes, there are some restrictions on fishery rules for catching the gravid fish from the proclaimed fisheries and for using some kinds of fishing nets in the proclaimed fisheries. For example, catching of brood fish (fish carrying eggs and sperm) is prohibited during the season beginning from the first day of the month of April and ending on the fifteen day of the month of July, both days inclusive, in any proclaimed fishery. Again, catching and killing, by any method, of fish for any purpose whatsoever including consumption and selling of undersize fish is prohibited between the first day of August and the last day of October.


A massive awareness programme needs to be organised extensively among fish seed producers, growers and distributors to highlight the importance of quality fish seed for higher fish production and to accelerate the Blue Revolution process in the State. Without availability of quality seed at the farmer's doorstep at the right time and without eco-friendly methods adopted in fish farming, the Blue Revolution will remain a far cry. To sustain the drive the seed producers should plan to raise the brood fish in their farms and replenish the old brood stock periodically as per existing norms. Genetic awareness and introduction of new fish variety campaign which has already been started should be accelerated in a massive way. The fish seed producers and growers should be educated and trained in planned breeding in such a way that they can constantly supply quality seed to the farmers engaged in this avenue.

- Fisheries are the **primary source of livelihood** for several communities.
- India is the **world's second-largest fish producer** with exports worth more than Rs 47,000 crore.
- Fisheries are the **country's single-largest agriculture export**, with a growth rate of 6 to 10 per cent in the past five years.
- Its significance is underscored by the fact that the growth rate of the farm sector in the same period is around 2.5 per cent.
- It has a marine fisher population of 3.5 million; 10.5 million people are engaged in inland fishery and fish farming.

National Fisheries Policy r 2020

The National Fisheries Policy 2020 has been drafted merging three existing policies, namely:

- 1 National Policy on Marine Fisheries, 2017 (NPMF)
- 2 Draft National Inland Fisheries and Aquaculture Policy (NIFAP)
- 3 Draft National Mariculture Policy (NMP)



BrahMos Missile

- Recently, The **Indian Air Force** has successfully test-fired an extended-range version of **BrahMos supersonic cruise** missile in the **Bay of Bengal**.
- It is a joint venture between the Defence Research and Development Organisation of India (**DRDO**) and the **NPOM of Russia**.
- It is named after two important rivers; **Brahmaputra and Moskva** of India and Russia respectively.
- It can be **launched from land, air and sea**.
- Brahmos is the **fastest cruise missile** in the world currently with the speed of Mach 2.8



SARAS Mark 2

- The National Aerospace Laboratories has successfully validated the digital anti-skid brake management system developed for SARAS Mark2 - 19 seat Light Transport aircraft.
- It is the first Indian **multi-purpose civilian aircraft** in the light transport aircraft.
- It is designed by the **National Aerospace Laboratories (NAL)**.
- **Digital Anti-Skid Braking System** integration on SARAS Mark 2 will benefit operation from airfields **with short runways to boost regional air connectivity**.