

'Rain-chasing' aircraft predicts good rainfall in UP after July 15

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LUCKNOW: Uttar Pradesh will have widespread rainfall after July 15. Even the parched land of the Bundelkhand region, which has been facing drought for consecutive years, will also be adequately drenched, says the ongoing Indo-UK joint research using British BAe 146-301 Atmospheric Research Aircraft.

This special aircraft took off for its 10th and final sortie from the Lucknow airport on Monday to collect important weather-related data. Harsh Vardhan, Union minister for earth sciences, was also onboard the "rain-chasing" research aircraft along with British Deputy High Commissioner to India, Alexander Evans, and British

scientists associated with the project.

"Uttar Pradesh will have widespread rainfall after July 15. The rain-deficit seven districts of Bundelkhand region of the state will also receive sufficient rainfall," Harsh Vardhan told newsmen here on Monday adding, "Monsoon this year will make up for the dry spell of the last two monsoon seasons in Uttar Pradesh and rest of the country," said the union minister.

Commenting on the efficacy of the joint research "Predicting the variability of the South Asian monsoon", a £ 8-million British project, on making rainfall prediction in India more accurate, Vardhan said: "The ongoing research will enable us to predict rainfall accurately, even at the block



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level in the districts. This prediction will be of immense use of the farmers."

The Natural Environment Research Council (NERC), UK, and the Earth System Science

Organization, ministry of earth science (ESSO-MoES), India, had signed an MoU on March 1, 2013, for carrying out research and collection of data.

Though the Lucknow phase

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of the project came to an end on Monday, research work would continue in the rest of the country including all centres of the IMD and IIT-Kanpur, which is the 'super site' of the ongoing research work.

"India, which at present is using British BAe 146-301 atmospheric research aircraft, will have its own atmospheric research aircraft to chase rain-clouds. For this, the union government has earmarked ₹ 400 crore," informed Vardhan.

ONGOING PROJECTS

Three research projects involving the Indian and UK scientists would study different aspects of physical processes affecting the monsoon. Project 'South West Asian Aerosol - Monsoon Interactions' involves measurements of aerosols across northern India and the Bay of Bengal during the pre-monsoon, which would then be synthesized with long term measurements from ground based networks and data from previous intensive campaigns. The study is expected to characterise the mechanisms by which aerosols influence the Indian monsoon.

Project 'Interaction of Convective Organization and Monsoon Precipitation, Atmosphere, Surface and Sea' aims to capture the key surface-atmosphere feedback processes in models. The understand-

ing gained from this study will improve the skill of rainfall prediction in operational weather maps models by way of better understanding and representation of interactions between the surface, boundary layer, convection, the large-scale environment and monsoon variability on various scales.

Project 'Bay of Bengal Bound Layer Experiment' (BoBBLE) determine, quantify and model ocean-atmosphere interactions that drive variability in the South Asian monsoon. The study will improve the understanding of the role of thermodynamic and mixed layer processes in monsoon as well as the role of large-scale ocean structure, dynamics and ocean biogeochemistry in the monsoon.