

that the Government of India plans to do this under the Agricultural Meteorology Mission Plan. Any reliable rainfall prediction more than 5–10 days in advance is not practicable. It is desirable to carry out a statistical study of the past district wise rainfall and drought data, for determining the earliest point of time that is possible to provide early warning of the impending drought in that district. Another recommendation called for ground monitoring of all drought related data at the taluk level and not at the district as a unit, as in vogue in the Centre level monitoring. The office of the Relief Commissioner should be merged in the Agricultural Department, after delinking it from the Revenue Department, since in many States, the revenue department hierarchy up to the village level has been upset due to decentralization. Drought monitoring in many States is highly subjective and qualitative in nature, and should be quantified and made objective by improving ground data collection mechanism as well as through intergration of remotely sensed data. Computerization and effective linking of agricultural data base at taluks/districts to State headquarters and to Centre are urgently called for. The workshop

recommended urgent operationalization of periodic (say weekly) vegetation index maps from NOAA satellite data to provide information on vegetation status all over the country. This data should be distributed to the state departments and agricultural universities for interpretation and validation of drought information. Thermal and microwave sensing of soil moisture is another area requiring intensive investigation and near future operationalization. Satellite estimation of rainfall, shelter and canopy temperatures and insolation were identified to be the other thrust areas for rapid operationalization and utilization in the integrated agricultural drought monitoring systems.

The workshop proceedings, consisting of invited and contributed papers, the record of discussion during the sessions and the recommendations of the various working groups will be published shortly.

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NEWS

VII ANNUAL CONFERENCE OF THE SOCIETY OF TOXICOLOGY

VII Annual Conference of the Society of Toxicology, India, will be held at the Jiwaji University, Gwalior from November 4–6, 1988. For detailed

information write to Dr R. Mathur, Department of Zoology, Jiwaji University, Gwalior 474 002.
