

Weather and Climate Outlook

Pre South-West Monsoon

29 April 2020

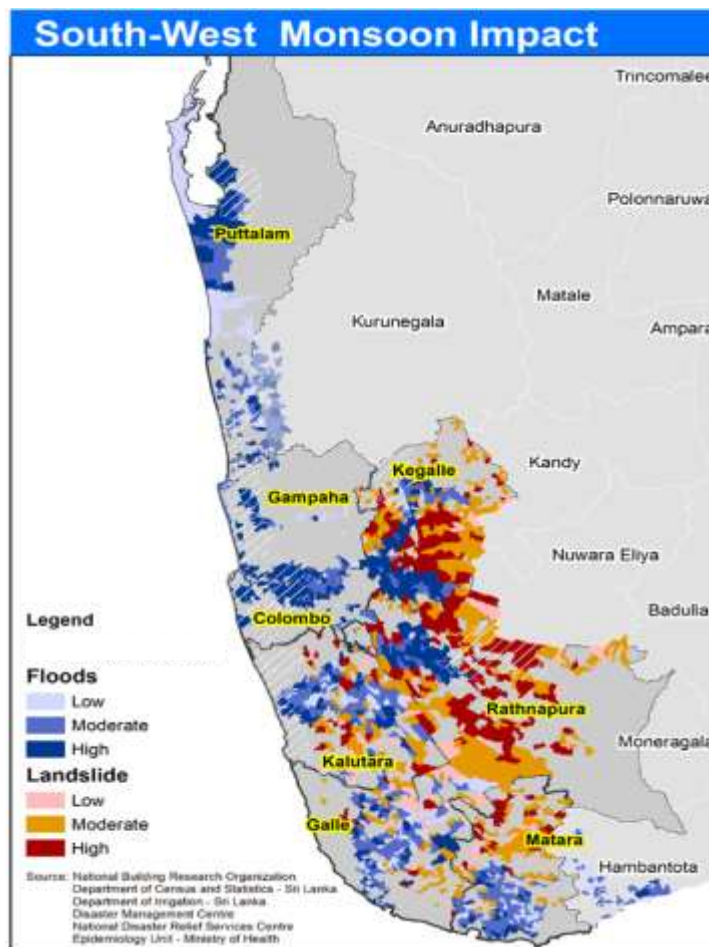
Seasonal outlook for impacts of the South-West Monsoon and response plans within the context of COVID-19.

Highlights

- The South West-Monsoon is expected to establish over Sri Lanka during mid to late May 2020. Colombo, Kalutara, Gampaha, Galle, Matara, Ratnapura and Kegalle districts are at very high risk of the monsoon impact.
- In general, a normal rainfall outlook for South Asia from June to September is predicted, considering all phenomenal climatological parameters.
- The southern territories of South Asia including Sri Lanka may however receive slightly above-normal rainfall during the four-month season. Single extreme events in Sri Lanka are possible, especially at the onset of the monsoon, as revealed at the Monsoon Forum held on 29 April.
- The above-normal temperature observed in all parts of the country during the past two months may continue till early May.
- Based on the most likely scenario, an estimated 35,000 to 50,000 families may be affected in 3 to 4 Districts at the onset of the monsoon, based on analysis of historical floods and landslides.
- Special guidelines at central and district level have been issued for response and relief management, planning for early evacuations and camp management under health regulations etc, in the context of COVID-19.

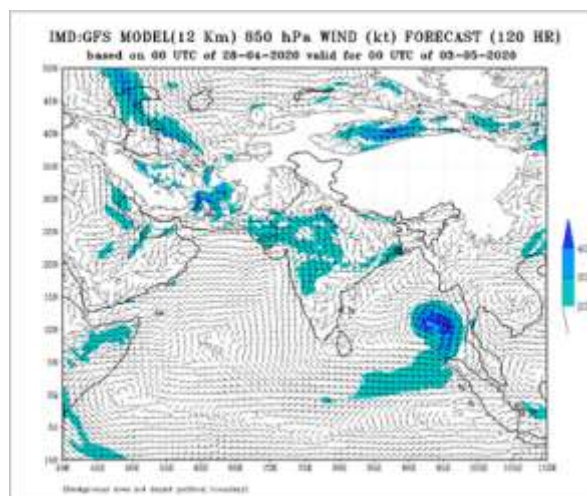
Current weather and water storage

- The inter-monsoon (mid-March to April) has brought considerable rainfall to the wet-zone i.e: western and south-western districts.
- In the dry zone (northern and eastern districts), water stress is observed due to relatively low rainfall.
- Nevertheless, the water level of major rivers remain at normal levels and in major and minor reservoirs, it remains above the **60 percent** mark, conducive for a good Yala cropping season.



Pre-monsoon predictions

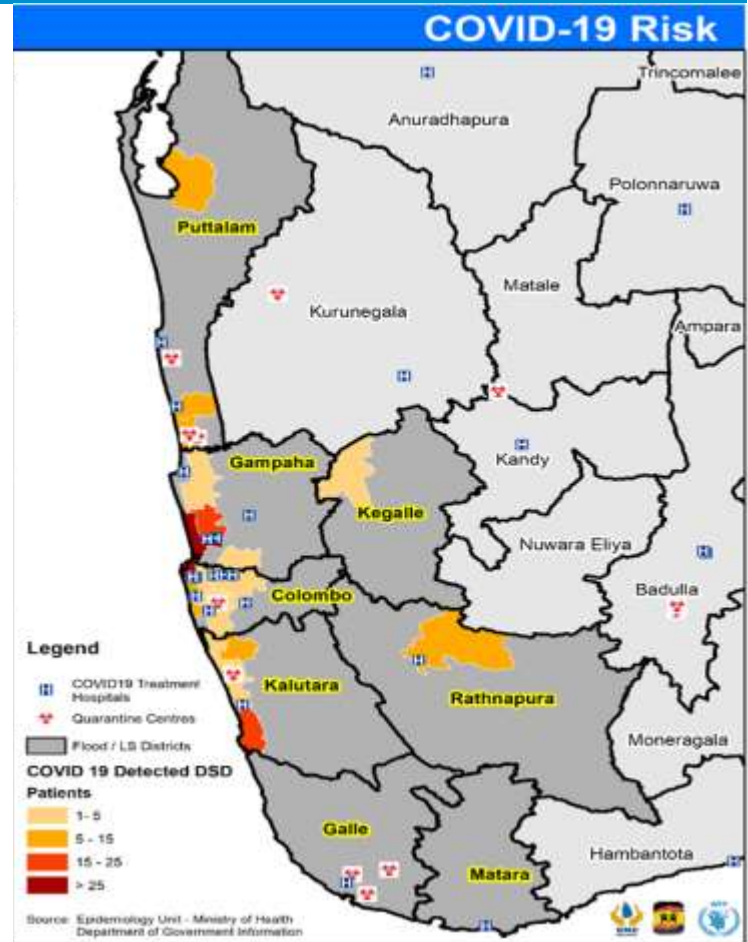
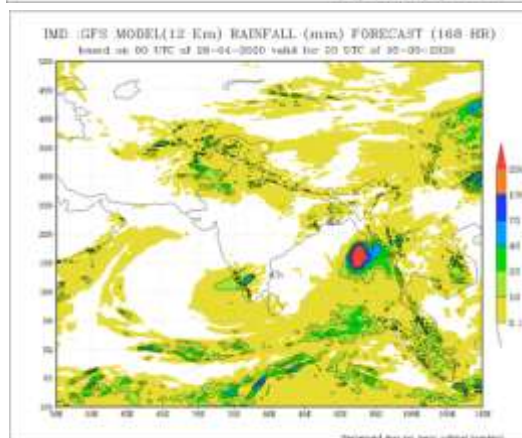
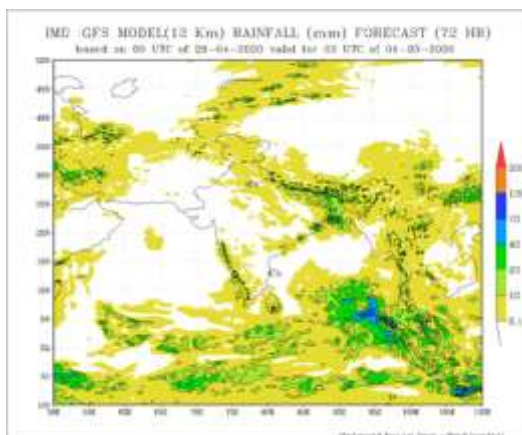
- Cyclonic activity is foreseen from 1 to 6 May, moving towards the north-east of the Bay of Bengal towards Myanmar.
- Rain and wind conditions may slightly increase over the south-west of Sri Lanka during 30 April to 4 May however, no major impact is predicted for Sri Lanka.



The Inter-tropical Convergence Zone (ITCZ) could generate excess rainfall as was seen in 2016 & 2017 followed by cyclonic activity, due to the cloud mass closer to Sri Lanka. However, as per current predictions, ITCZ may form off the southern coast which may reduce the risk of severe floods and landslides during the early stages of the South-West monsoon this year.

Prediction of Rainfall

- Intermonsoon thunderstorms will continue until mid May, with localized high winds around the country (Source: Department of Meteorology).
- Rainfall is expected to increase in Uva and Eastern Provinces with above-normal rainfall levels forecasted in these areas including in Polonnaruwa and Matale until 5 May.
- No major weather events are predicted for the country until mid-May, however, a sudden change of weather cannot be ruled out, due to quick changes in wind and other meteorological parameters.
- In the first two weeks of May, predictions show increased rainfall in the dry zone districts, which will benefit farmers engaged in the Yala cultivation season.



As at 27 April 2020.

Preparedness for COVID-19

- Colombo and Kalutara Districts are identified as high-risk areas for COVID-19 outbreak, whilst Gampaha and Puttalam are at moderate risk.
- Challenge of COVID-19 infections in the military, who will be in the forefront of monsoon disaster response.
- Special guidelines at central and district level have been issued for response & relief management, planning for early evacuations to pre-identified safe centres, camp management under health regulations, food supply etc.
- A separate quarantine centre, will be established in each district that is exposed to the south-west monsoon.
- A special media campaign through electronic and social media, will be launched to heighten public awareness on preparedness measures and to garner compliance.

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