53.4% rain deficit: 21 of Andhra Pradesh's 26 districts declared drought-hit

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News

With a rainfall deficit of about 53.4% during the south-west monsoon (June–August) of the 2026 kharif season, the Andhra Pradesh government declared 388 mandals in 21 districts drought-hit (7 Oct 2026): 283 severely and 105 moderately affected.

Key facts

Districts	21 of 26
Mandals	388 (283 severe, 105 moderate)
Rain deficit	About 53.4% (June–Aug 2026)
Season	Kharif 2026 – south-west monsoon
Declared by	Andhra Pradesh government

Background

- Drought declaration uses the criteria of the Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare's 'Manual for Drought Management' (2016, revised 2020) – rain deficit, crop condition, soil moisture, reservoir levels; the State government declares it.

- IMD scale: −20% to −59% of normal is 'deficient'; −60% or worse is 'large deficient'. 53.4% falls in 'deficient'.
- Geography: Andhra's Rayalaseema (Anantapur, Kurnool, Kadapa, Chittoor) lies in the rain shadow of the Western Ghats; Anantapur is among India's driest districts.
- Administration: Andhra Pradesh was reorganised from 13 to 26 districts in April 2022. The Disaster Management Act 2005 provides the SDRF and NDRF.
- Economy: a drought declaration opens input subsidy, loan restructuring, extra MGNREGA workdays (up to 150) and PM crop-insurance claims.

Tamil Nadu link: Tamil Nadu depends mainly on the north-east monsoon (Oct–Dec). After the 2016 north-east monsoon failed, the State declared all its districts drought-hit in January 2017. Krishna water from Andhra reaches Chennai through the 'Telugu Ganga' project.

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