

Retreating Monsoon, About, Features, Impact, Significance

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The **Retreating Monsoon** is the period when the monsoon winds start moving back from India. It generally occurs from **October to November** and brings less rainfall, with clear skies in many places. This season mainly affects the **eastern and southern parts of India**.

About Retreating Monsoon

- When the **Southwest Monsoon ends**, the **Northeast Monsoon** starts around **October**.
- It is also called the **Retreating Monsoon** because the monsoon winds begin to move back from India.
- During this time, the **land cools faster than the sea**, creating high pressure over land and low pressure over the sea.
- Due to this pressure change, **winds change their direction** and start blowing from **land to sea**.
- These winds pass over the **Bay of Bengal**, collect moisture, and bring rain to **Tamil Nadu, south Andhra Pradesh and parts of Sri Lanka**.
- This rainfall is very important because these areas receive **little rain during the Southwest Monsoon** and depend on this season for water and farming.

Retreating Monsoon's Features

- **Time and Season**
 - The Northeast Monsoon occurs from **October to December**.
 - It happens after the Southwest Monsoon and marks the **beginning of winter**.
- **Wind Pattern**
 - During this season, winds blow from the **northeast towards India**.
 - These winds are different from the southwest winds of the earlier monsoon.
- **Areas of Rainfall**
 - Rainfall mainly occurs along the **southeastern coast of India**.
 - **Tamil Nadu** and parts of **Andhra Pradesh** receive most of the rain.
- **Nature of Rainfall**
 - The rainfall is generally **less widespread** than the Southwest Monsoon.
 - However, the rain can be **heavy in some areas**.
- **Effect on Climate**
 - The weather becomes **cooler and more pleasant** after the hot summer.
 - This season helps reduce heat and humidity.
- **Importance for Water and Agriculture**
 - It helps in **refilling lakes, tanks and reservoirs**.
 - It is very important for **farming** in regions that get little rain earlier.
- **Uneven Rainfall**
 - Some regions receive **good rainfall**, while nearby areas may remain dry.
 - The amount of rain can **change from year to year**.

Temperature during Retreating Monsoon

- As the monsoon winds withdraw, **clouds slowly disappear** and the sky becomes clear.
- Because of clear skies, the **day temperature begins to fall** compared to the rainy season.
- Nights become **cooler**, while days can still be warm.
- Due to the absence of the clouds, the **difference between day and night temperature increases**.
- Overall, the weather becomes **dry, pleasant and cooler**, especially in northern and central India.

Pressure and Winds during the Retreating Monsoon

- When the monsoon starts withdrawing, the **monsoon trough becomes weak** and slowly moves towards the south.
- The **difference in air pressure is small**, so strong winds are not formed.
- The beginning of the Northeast Monsoon is **not sudden or very clear**, unlike the Southwest Monsoon.
- During this season, **winds do not follow any fixed pattern** over the whole country.
- In many places, **local pressure conditions decide the wind direction**, making the weather calm and dry in most regions.

Precipitation during the Retreating Monsoon

- After the **Southwest Monsoon ends**, most parts of India become **dry** as the humidity and clouds reduce.
- **Tamil Nadu** and southern parts of **Andhra Pradesh** receive most of their rain during this season, making it their **main rainy period**.
- **Kerala** also gets a **small secondary rainfall** in October-November.
- The **northeast winds** pass over the **Bay of Bengal**, pick up moisture and bring rain to the **southeastern coast**.
- Some parts of **northeastern India** like Assam, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Arunachal Pradesh and Tripura also receive rain.
- Other areas like the **eastern slopes of Western Ghats, northern plains, Odisha, Madhya Pradesh, Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu** get rainfall due to this monsoon.
- Overall, the retreating monsoon **replenishes water** in regions that get little rain during the Southwest Monsoon and is important for **agriculture and water supply**.

Cyclone during the Retreating Monsoon

- During the Retreating Monsoon, **tropical cyclones** are common, especially in the **Bay of Bengal**.
- The **most active months** for cyclones are **October and the first half of November**.
- Usually the cyclones are formed between **8°N and 14°N** in the Bay of Bengal and move **west or northwest** at first, but many later curve **northeast**.
- About **half of these cyclones** hit the eastern coast of India, affecting **Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh, Odisha and West Bengal**.
- Some cyclones move across the southern peninsula into the **Arabian Sea**, where they may **weaken first but then gain strength** again.
- Cyclones from the **Arabian Sea** form slightly northward and mostly move **away from the coast**, but a few strike **Maharashtra or Gujarat**.
- These storms often bring **heavy rainfall** and can cause **serious damage to life, property and agriculture**, especially in **river deltas** like Godavari, Krishna and Kaveri.
- In **northern India**, the retreating monsoon season also sees **Western Disturbances**, which bring **cloudy weather, light rain or snow** in higher areas like **Jammu & Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh and Kumaon Hills**.

Impact of the Retreating Monsoon

- The Retreating Monsoon brings **rainfall to southern and eastern India**, especially **Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh and Kerala**, which is very important for **farming and crops**.
- It helps **fill rivers, lakes, tanks and reservoirs**, providing water for **irrigation, drinking, and daily needs**.
- The rainfall **reduces the heat** left after summer, making the weather **cooler and more comfortable**.
- Farmers can **grow crops** like rice, pulses, and sugarcane because of this season.

- **Cyclones** sometimes hit the eastern and southern coasts, bringing **heavy rain, strong winds and occasional damage** to houses, roads, and crops.
- It helps maintain **soil moisture**, supports **vegetation growth** and is important for the **regional climate balance**.
- In northern India, lighter rains or snow from **Western Disturbances** also improve water availability and prevent dry conditions.

October Heat

- **October and November** mark the transition from the **rainy Southwest Monsoon** to the **dry winter season**.
- During this time, the **monsoon withdraws**, skies become **clear** and **daytime temperatures rise**.
- Nights remain **cool and comfortable**, but the days can feel **hot and humid**.
- Since the **land is still wet from the monsoon**, the combination of heat and moisture makes the weather feel **oppressive** during the day.
- This hot and sticky period in October is commonly called **“October Heat”** and is noticeable especially in **northern and central India**.

Retreating Monsoon Significance

- The Retreating Monsoon **brings rainfall** to regions like **Tamil Nadu and Andhra Pradesh** which get less rain during the Southwest Monsoon.
- It **fills rivers, lakes, tanks and reservoirs**, ensuring **water for drinking, irrigation and farming**.
- The rain supports the **growth of winter crops (rabi crops)** and helps farmers with **agriculture and food production**.
- It **cools down the hot weather** after summer, making the climate **more pleasant**.
- It helps to maintain **soil moisture and vegetation**, keeping the environment healthy.

It is important for **regional climate balance** and also affects **water availability in both southern and eastern India**.

Source: <https://vajiramandravi.com/current-affairs/retreating-monsoon/>

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