Rain, storm won’t hit wheat target

By Debabrata Mohanty in New Delhi

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“The rain may have caused damage to the crops, but it’s not a matter of concern yet,” said agriculture secretary P.K. Mishra at the current meeting of the high-level board of the Indian Agro Industries Forum to begin on Tuesday, Monday. Mishra said the official wheat estimate remained unchanged at 74.81 million tonnes.

However, the government had projected the 2008 wheat output to be around 57.5 million tonnes. Sources predicted that if the rain continues, damage to crops may occur in places where the crop was sown early.

The recent rains have also damaged crops of cumin, chillies, mango, maize and potato in Gujarat and Andhra Pradesh.

Sources said the Centre had asked states to inform about the extent of crop damages, adding that weather conditions and temperatures are conducive as of now, specially for wheat. “In some places, 40-45 cm of rain has been recorded which would benefit the rain,” Mishra said.

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