

Special State-wise Contingency Plan for West Bengal, Bihar, Assam and Odisha

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भा.कृ.अ.प. -केन्द्रीय पटसन एवं समवर्गीय रेशा अनुसंधान संस्थान
ICAR-Central Research Institute for Jute and Allied Fibers

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Barrackpore, Kolkata-700120, West Bengal

www.icar.crijaf.res.in



Agro-advisory to Farming Community
(September, 2026)

Weather and El Niño consideration

- ❖ The rainfall situation in the eastern and northeastern jute-growing belt during the early kharif season was highly variable. June experienced a substantial rainfall deficit, while July showed considerable recovery with heavy rainfall spells. Nevertheless, cumulative rainfall in the East and Northeast remained about **30% below normal through July**, with localized dry pockets as well as waterlogging/flood risks in low-lying areas.
- ❖ The El Niño situation has strengthened. The latest NOAA assessment indicates a **greater than 90% probability of a very strong El Niño during autumn–winter 2026–27**, with El Niño probability at 100% for the August–October and September–November seasons.
- ❖ For farmers, this should be interpreted as **increased risk of rainfall variability, dry spells and higher temperature, but not necessarily continuous drought**. Heavy rainfall events can still occur

I. WEST BENGAL

Major September concerns

Jute harvesting and retting | Water availability | Heavy-rainfall drainage | Jute seed crop | Succeeding rabi crop

Week-wise action plan

Period	Priority action for farmers	Contingency action under dry/wet spell
1–7 September	• Harvest mature jute at optimum maturity; • arrange retting water and clean retting sites.	Dry: conserve available water and prioritize mature crop for retting. Heavy rain: open drainage channels and prevent harvested bundles from prolonged submergence.
8–14 September	• Continue harvesting and retting. • Prefer ribbon/microbial retting where water is inadequate.	• If pond water is declining, do not wait for conventional retting; shift to ribbon retting. • After heavy rain, use clean water and avoid over-retting.
15–21 September	• Complete harvesting of remaining mature jute/mesta; prepare land for succeeding crops.	• Drain excess water immediately. • Preserve residual moisture after drainage for the succeeding pulse/oilseed crop.
22–30 September	• Complete fibre extraction, washing and drying; prepare fields for rabi crops.	Dry: conserve residual soil moisture and avoid unnecessary tillage. Wet: undertake field preparation only after soil reaches workable condition.



II. BIHAR

Major September concerns

Jute harvesting | Retting-water scarcity | Waterlogging in lowlands | Residual moisture management

Priority districts: Purnea, Katihar, Araria, Kishanganj, Supaul, Saharsa, and Madhepura

Week-wise action plan

Period	Priority action for farmers	Contingency action
1–7 September	Harvest mature jute and arrange clean water for retting.	Dry: conserve pond water and use ribbon retting. Wet: drain standing water before harvesting where possible.
8–14 September	- Continue harvesting and retting in batches; - Avoid accumulation of harvested bundles.	If water becomes scarce, adopt microbial/ribbon retting rather than delaying retting.
15–21 September	Complete harvesting of mature fields and prepare for succeeding crops.	- Preserve residual soil moisture after drainage; - Avoid unnecessary irrigation.
22–30 September	Finish fibre extraction, washing and drying; prepare land for rabi crops.	Heavy rain: delay tillage until field is workable. Dry spell: minimize soil disturbance and conserve moisture.

Contingency Priorities for Bihar

1. Harvest mature jute before prolonged wet spells.
2. Use community ponds/farm ponds for retting.
3. Promote ribbon retting in villages where pond water is inadequate.
4. Use microbial-assisted retting to shorten retting duration.
5. Remove excess water quickly from low-lying fields.
6. Use residual moisture for suitable succeeding rabi crops/pulses/oilseeds.
7. Avoid fertilizer application in saturated soil.

III. ASSAM

Major September concerns

Heavy rainfall/floodwater | Waterlogging | Timely jute harvesting | Fibre retting | Drainage

The rainfall information available up to July indicates that heavy rainfall spells produced localized waterlogging and flood risks in low-lying areas of Assam despite the broader seasonal deficit.

Week-wise action plan

Period	Priority action for farmers	Contingency action
1–7 September	- Harvest mature jute from fields at risk of prolonged waterlogging; - arrange retting sites on elevated locations.	Heavy rain/flood: harvest mature crop as soon as field conditions permit and move bundles to safe locations.
8–14 September	- Continue harvesting and retting; - Maintain drainage around remaining crop.	Avoid keeping harvested bundles submerged for unnecessarily long periods. Use clean water for retting.
15–21 September	Complete harvesting of mature jute/mesta.	In flood-prone areas, prioritize fibre extraction from already harvested crop before another prolonged wet spell.
22–30 September	- Complete retting, washing and fibre drying; - plan succeeding crops according to residual soil moisture and land drainage.	- Where fields remain wet, postpone tillage until workable; - Where water recedes quickly, conserve residual moisture.

Contingency Priorities for Assam

- ❖ High priority: rapid drainage from standing jute fields after heavy rain.
- ❖ Harvest mature jute before prolonged inundation.
- ❖ Keep harvested bundles on raised/elevated locations before retting.
- ❖ Use clean water and avoid polluted floodwater for retting.
- ❖ Where retting water is insufficient after flood recession, use ribbon retting/microbial retting.
- ❖ Monitor crop after alternating wet and dry periods for stem rot, leaf diseases and insect pests.
- ❖ Extension personnel should identify flood-prone villages and elevated community retting sites.

IV. ODISHA

Major September concerns

Variable rainfall | Waterlogging in coastal areas | Jute harvesting | Water conservation for dry spells | Succeeding crop

Priority areas: Balasore, Bhadrak, Jajpur, Kendrapara, Jagatsinghpur, Cuttack and adjoining jute-growing areas.

Week-wise action plan

Period	Priority action for farmers	Contingency action
1–7 September	Harvest mature jute; inspect drainage channels and retting water sources.	Dry: conserve rainwater. Heavy rain: drain fields quickly and protect harvested jute.
8–14 September	Continue harvesting and retting. Use water-saving retting where necessary.	Do not allow harvested bundles to remain in uncontrolled stagnant water.
15–21 September	Complete harvesting of mature jute/mesta and prepare fields for succeeding crops.	Use residual soil moisture after drainage; avoid unnecessary irrigation.
22–30 September	Complete fibre extraction and drying; establish/prepare succeeding crop according to land condition.	Heavy rain: postpone tillage until soil is workable; dry spell: retain surface residues/moisture.

Contingency Priorities for Odisha

- ❖ Clean and deepen existing farm ponds/water-harvesting structures wherever feasible.
- ❖ Use stored rainwater for supplementary irrigation and retting.
- ❖ Promote ribbon retting in drought-prone locations.
- ❖ In sisal-based systems, maintain rainwater harvesting structures and use stored water for critical irrigation and fibre washing. CRIJAF has specifically demonstrated rainwater harvesting in sisal-based systems for areas with irregular/scanty rainfall.
- ❖ Drain excess water rapidly from coastal/low-lying fields.
- ❖ Prepare suitable succeeding rice/pulse/oilseed/vegetable sequences according to land type and residual moisture.

COMMON RETTING CONTINGENCY PLAN FOR ALL FOUR STATES

Situation	Immediate action
Adequate retting water	Retting with clean water; monitor regularly and remove fibre at optimum retting stage
Low pond/canal water	Shift to ribbon retting
Very limited water	Use microbial-assisted/ribbon retting and community retting facilities
Heavy rainfall	Protect harvested bundles; avoid uncontrolled prolonged submergence
Dry spell after harvesting	Prioritize available water for mature harvested crop; do not leave bundles exposed for prolonged periods
Water polluted by flood runoff	Avoid direct use; use clean stored water wherever possible
Fibre ready after retting	Extract, wash and dry during the first suitable sunny period

WATER MANAGEMENT ADVISORY

Construction of in situ pond : Keeping in view the erratic distribution of rainfall, non-availability of community tank, declined availability of water resources, high cost of cultivation and labour and dryness of rivers, ponds/canals, farmers face problems of proper retting of jute and mesta. In-situ pond can be constructed to harvest the rain water for irrigation as well as retting of jute and mesta

Dimension of the Pond developed for water harvesting.

- The pond dimension of 40 ft × 30 ft × 5 ft was sufficient for irrigation and retting of jute harvested from half acre of land at a time.
- Provision should be made for appropriate lining of water harvesting pond with LDPE agri-film of 150-300 microns to minimize the seepage and percolation loss.
- Jute harvested from one acre can be facilitated for retting in two cycles. Three jaks should be prepared at a time and each jak should consist of three layers. Gap of 20- 30 cm from jak to the soil bottom and 20-30 cm water above the jak should be maintained.
- The pond bund have sufficient width (1.5-1.8 m) to grow other crops - papaya and banana for extra earning



SPECIAL RETTING ADVISORY

Impact of El Niño on Retting: Low rainfall may reduce pond water depth resulting in delayed retting, dark fibre, poor fibre strength, reduced market price. To overcome these following retting practices can be **recommended**

- ❖ **Ribbon Retting:** Requires 60–70% less water, produces brighter fibre, faster retting, suitable during drought years
- ❖ **Microbial-Assisted Retting:** Use microbial retting formulations (CRIJAF Sona) which shortens retting period by 8–10 days; improves fibre colour; enhances fibre strength and reduces water requirement
- ❖ **Community Retting Structures:** Farmers are advised to: Renovate village ponds before retting season; Use community retting tanks; Store rainwater for retting purposes.





COMMON PEST AND DISEASE CONTINGENCY

After a dry spell

- Intensify monitoring for **yellow mite and other sucking pests**.
- Avoid spraying during the hottest part of the day.
- Use need-based plant protection only.

After heavy rainfall

- Inspect fields for **stem/foot rot and leaf diseases**.
- Remove severely affected plants where appropriate.
- Improve drainage immediately.
- Monitor **hairy caterpillar and semilooper**.

CRIJAF's regular advisory recommends field inspection **twice weekly after rainfall**, use of light/pheromone traps for monitoring and avoidance of indiscriminate pesticide use.

EL NIÑO RULE

Dry spell: *Save every drop.*

Heavy rain: *Drain quickly.*

Mature jute: *Harvest promptly.*

Low retting water: *Use ribbon/microbial retting.*

Next crop: *Use residual moisture*

Conceptualized & Published by

Director, ICAR-CRIJAF

Nilganj, Barrackpore, Kolkata-700120, West Bengal

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