

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
EARTH SCIENCES  
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:2733

ANSWERED ON:05.08.2015

Cyclone Ashobaa

Pradhan Shri Nagendra Kumar

**Will the Minister of EARTH SCIENCES be pleased to state:**

- (a) whether there has been a false alarm on social networking sites about Cyclone Ashobaa over Arabian Sea in the recent past;
- (b) if so, the details in this regard;
- (c) whether the government has analysed the possible consequences of such false alarms on social networking sites and if so, the details thereof; and
- (d) the remedial steps taken by the Government to check recurrence of such false alarm in future?

**Answer**

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR MINISTRY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY AND  
MINISTRY OF EARTH SCIENCES  
(SHRI Y. S. CHOWDARY)

(a) Yes Madam.

(b) E-Mail communications were received from Mr. Suresh Shah of Surat, Gujarat on 15th May 2015 to the Cyclone Warning Division of Earth System Science Organization (ESSO) - India Meteorological Department (IMD), New Delhi and from District Collector, South Goa on 20th May 2015 to the Director, Goa office of the ESSO-IMD about the spread of false alarm message of Cyclone Ashobaa over the Arabian Sea over the WHATSAPP social media network and its associated landfall across the Gujarat coast and impacting coastal regions of the Konkan and the Maharashtra coasts.

(c) No Madam. As in the instant case itself demonstrated against such effort, since both the individual from Surat, Gujarat and the District Collector of South Goa made efforts to first authenticate the information under circulation across the social media network only after reviewing the cyclone web pages of ESSO-IMD. Moreover, first responders, disaster managers, civil society groups etc. of coastal districts across the states and union territories are very well conversant with the operational 5-day lead time cyclone warning protocol of ESSO-IMD and its widely circulated standard operation procedures (SOPs) integrated fully with the emergency response systems of National/State/District Disaster Management through the Ministry of Home Affairs, Crisis Management Group of the Cabinet Secretariat of the Government of India. Further, panic among the coastal communities shall not takes place as all stakeholders are aware that such warnings along with due public evacuation announcements and relocation to identified safe locations are taken up well before such eventuality as lead time for cyclone landfall has been increased to 5-days in advance now in view of the commissioned state-of-the-art Cyclone Monitoring, Detection and Warning Systems by the Government.

(d) As and when any false alarm is noted at the ESSO-IMD end, the following steps are taken as it was done in the instant case

- 1) The press release will be issued to the concerned states Govt. & Central Govt. agencies and to various print and visual media agencies in coordination with Press Information Bureau (PIB).
- 2) Oral briefing to the media.
- 3) FAQs and Do's & Don't are also put up on ESSO-IMDs website for the public.