

**Title:** Statement regarding damage caused by cyclone in coastal districts of Orissa.

21.35 hrs.

THE MINISTER OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI L.K. ADVANI): Sir, I would like to know whether I should speak about the Orissa Cyclone first or reply to this debate first.

SEVERAL HON. MEMBERS: Cyclone first.

SHRI L.K. ADVANI: Sir, what the overall information that I have received is from the Cabinet Secretariat. A very severe cyclone characterised as super-cyclonic storm hit the coast of Orissa from 10.30 a.m. to 12.30 p.m. today causing vast devastation. The eye of this cyclone of highest severity hit the coast at Paradeep. The diameter of the cyclone was very large and wind speed went up to 260 kms. per hour at some place.

All the nine coastal districts of Orissa and three adjoining districts have been gravely affected. As per preliminary reports received from the State Government, the devastation caused is enormous. Heavy loss of life is expected to have taken place. About one-and-a-half crore people have been affected. Damage to houses is expected to run into lakhs. Damaged buildings and fallen trees have made movement inside and between the cities and villages almost impossible. The communication with districts of Puri, Jagatsinghpura and Kendrapada has got broken down. All the coastal towns starting from North, down to Puri, including Cuttack and Bhubaneswar have been plunged into darkness. Power supply and water supply, road services and telecommunication services have been disrupted.

As strong winds in all the coastal districts have heavy rains in some of them are still continuing, proper assessment of damage would be possible only after surveys which would start from tomorrow. Right from the receipt of first information from India Meteorological Department regarding formation of the cyclonic storm on the 26th of October, a regular and close contact has been maintained with the State authorities at the highest level of the Cabinet Secretary and the Agricultural Secretary. Army and Air Force have been on the alert to render all essential help to the State Government. AIR and Doordarshan have been informing the people through news bulletins, special bulletins and hourly bulletins during the last four days. Helicopters have been kept ready and would start air-dropping of food stuffs and other essential items from tomorrow morning.

The State Government took action during the last three days to warn the people and for arranging evacuation to safer places and stocking essential supplies at selected places. Dry ration packets have been under preparation. Community kitchens and distribution of dry ration have commenced at many places. The Government of India has decided that the Department of Agriculture would arrange and indent supplies of food stuffs, essential medicines, polythene rolls, diesel generating sets, etc. as per requirements projected by the State authorities.

Help is also being mobilised from neighbouring States. The Union Department of Power has been asked to rush as many ERS teams as possible for restoring electricity without awaiting request from the State Government. Indian Railways will carry free of charge the food stuffs and relief materials to the affected areas.

Airlifting of essential medicines to the affected areas would start from tomorrow morning. The concerned Central Government Departments and the Ministries have been directed to rush all necessary help to the State without waiting for a formal request from Delhi. The Cabinet Secretary is reviewing the situation regularly and closely in consultation with the State authorities. The Union Cabinet will also meet tomorrow to take stock of the situation so as to render all help in meeting the challenge thrown by this unprecedented calamity.

Besides this overall report, I have specific reports from the Army, from the Air Force and from the Navy given to me by the Ministry of Defence. Operation 'Sahayata' is the name given by the Army to the entire operation. If the House wants, I can read out all the details. But broadly speaking, the Armed Forces have been mobilised. The Air Force including their helicopters, etc. have been mobilised. Many helicopters have been kept on alert and besides, the Navy has indicated that it has given assistance to fishermen both for Andhra Pradesh as well as for Orissa. Several ships, several vessels, two Dorniers, four Cheetahs, INS Ghariyals have been deployed for cyclone relief activity.

This is briefly the action taken by the Central Government in this regard till now.

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SHRI SOMNATH CHATTERJEE : Sir, West Bengal is also somewhat affected due to this cyclone ... (Interruptions)

SHRI L.K. ADVANI: The Cabinet will be meeting tomorrow. ... (Interruptions)

SHRI SOMNATH CHATTERJEE : We are appreciative of the Government's immediate response. I wish to thank the Government. ... (Interruptions)

SHRI L.K. ADVANI: The West Bengal State Government has said that presently they do not need it. When they need it, we will send. ... (Interruptions)

SHRI SOMNATH CHATTERJEE : Sir, we heard on the television in the evening that the Midnapore district and 24 Parganas have been affected. But fortunately and comparatively, West Bengal has not been affected as severely as Orissa. Sir, we sympathise with the affected people of Orissa. I am sure that the Government will make all efforts that they have indicated and we appreciate it.

SHRI K. YERRANNAIDU : Mr. Speaker, Sir, I would like to make a submission. Andhra Pradesh is the neighbouring State. The Chief

Minister, Shri Chandrabhabu Naidu has taken a decision to send all the essential commodities, medicines and other things to Orissa. Like that, this House should request all the State Governments to render their help to Orissa because the efforts of State and even the Centre are not sufficient to meet this situation. Through this House, we request the other State Governments to give immense help to the State of Orissa. That is my submission.