

Seventeenth Loksabha

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Title: Regarding setting up of 100 Automatic Weather Stations in Kerala.

**DR. SHASHI THAROOR (THIRUVANANTHAPURAM):** Sir, I wish to draw the attention of the hon. Minister of Earth Sciences to the lack of Indian Meteorological Department's preparedness for weather forecast and its recent failure to issue red alerts for heavy rain in a timely manner in Kerala.

Having witnessed two successive floods in 2018 and 2019, Kerala again experienced excessive rainfall last year leading to great loss of life and property. The IMD, however, failed to issue a red alert despite extreme weather conditions between 12<sup>th</sup> October and 16<sup>th</sup> October last year. This prevented the State Government from taking appropriate action and severely impacted the support and resources available to the people of Thiruvananthapuram, my constituency, and those residing in surrounding districts. It also posed a serious risk to the lives of traditional fishers who routinely venture out into the sea.

Further, though Kerala requires 256 weather stations as per the BIS standards, there are only 21 Automatic Weather Stations (AWS) of which only 15 are functional in the State.

During such natural disasters, efficient institutional mechanisms must be in place to prevent and mitigate damage. I, therefore, urge the Minister to expedite the setting up of 100 Automatic Weather Stations in Kerala as promised by IMD in the aftermath of the 2018 floods, and implement a protocol to ensure that weather alerts of such sensitive

nature are issued promptly so that critical action may be taken without undue delay.