

Heavy rainfall, high tides forecast in Orissa

The very severe cyclonic storm Sidr over the Bay of Bengal is expected to trigger heavy rainfall and cause high tides late Thursday in Orissa's four coastal districts, meteorological officials said.

'The system moved further northwards Thursday and lay centred over east central and adjoining west central and north Bay of Bengal at about 350 km south east of Paradeep,' S.N. Gouda of the Bhubaneswar Meteorological Office told IANS.

The cyclone is expected to intensify further and move in a northerly direction.

'The system with maximum sustained wind speed of 200 kmph is likely to cross the West Bengal-Bangladesh coast east of Sagar Island by Thursday midnight,' Gouda said.

Rain or thundershower is likely to occur in most coastal areas with isolated extremely heavy rainfall in north Orissa causing floods in low lying areas.

Under the cyclonic influence, five to six metres high tidal waves are likely in coastal areas of Orissa's Balasore, Bhadrak, Kendrapara and Jagatsinghpur districts. Gale winds speeds reaching of 90-120 kmph are also likely to blow over the coastal areas from late Thursday, the meteorological official said.

Fishermen have been warned not to venture into the sea because it will remain rough. The wind and rain may cause extensive damage to kutchha (mud) houses, disruption of power and communication lines. It may also disrupt rail and road traffic.

Cautionary Signal number Three (LC-III) has been hoisted at Paradeep, Gopalpur, Chandbali and Puri ports, Gouda said.

Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik has instructed the district administration of the eight coastal districts to remain alert, a state revenue official said.

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