

Intense weather over North-West India seen spilling over to the East

VINSON KURIAN

Thiruvananthapuram, February 21

The relentless march of western disturbances across North-West India, at times dipping into Central, East and North-East India, could continue till the first week of March, according to a top official of the India Met Department (IMD).

These disturbances have already brought heavy snow, rainfall, lightning, gusty winds and hailstorms over many parts, even as the latest one is active and generates a lot of weather across this geography.

Avalanche warning

Additional District Magistrate, Kargil, has issued an order saying that the Kargil-Drass, Kargil-Leh national highways and other major roads in the neighbourhood are closed for movement of vehicles till further orders.

This is in view of the warning of heavy snowfall and likely avalanches from the Met Department, Jammu & Kashmir, and endorsed by the State Disaster Response Force. The police shall ensure that no vehicle plies on these roads, the order said.

An IMD outlook said on Thursday that the intense weather activity could continue into Friday before letting off some steam. Isolated heavy rain/snow was forecast for the whole of Thursday.

The causative western disturbance lay anchored over East Afghanistan but it has flung in an offspring cyclonic circulation downstream over North-West Rajasthan and adjoining Punjab and Haryana, which is responsible for the violent weather.

The circulation is mopping up a lot of moisture from the North Arabian Sea (off Gujarat-Konkan) and blowing it into the hills and adjoining plains of North-West India to pour down as snow/rain or hail.

Flare up in East

The rainfall activity should get amplified over East and North-East India from Sunday, in line with the eastward movement of the circulation, and helped by the moisture incursion from the Bay of Bengal.

Scattered to fairly widespread rainfall with isolated thundersqualls and lightning are forecast over Jharkhand, West Bengal, North Odisha, Assam, Meghalaya, Arunachal Pradesh and Nagaland, Manipur, Mizoram and Tripura from Sunday to Wednesday.

This could well be the precursor to the annual 'Kal Baisakhi' season over East and North-East India, which is notoriously associated with intense storms, thunder and lightning and large-sized hail. This weather morphs later into pre-monsoon weather.

Meanwhile, the IMD has set up a watch for a fresh western disturbance to chug into the hills of North-West India from Sunday, likely bringing to bear yet again associated snow/rainfall over the hills and thundershowers over the plains.

An extended outlook from Tuesday to Thursday (also the month-end) said that isolated to scattered rain/snow is likely over the hills rain/thundershowers over the plains.

Fairly widespread to widespread rain/thundershowers is forecast for the East and North-East.

