

(b) Studies carried out so far indicate an increasing but statistically insignificant trend (at 95% confidence level) in winter precipitation in the Northwestern Himalayas including Jammu and Kashmir and statistically significant (95% level of confidence) decreasing trend in monsoon and overall annual precipitation during 1866-2006. Temperature data show significant increasing trends especially in winter and monsoon except over the Karakoram region.

(c) The areal extent of 1317 glaciers were monitored using satellite data shows overall 16% deglaciation till 2004 in Himalayas. Kumdan glaciers, of the Upper Shyok valley, have been the only exception which shows advancement in the glacial extent. The retreat during the nineties, began to slow down in respect of Siachen glacier, Machoi glacier, Darung Drung glacier, Gangotri glacier, Satopanth-Bhagirath Kharak glaciers and the Zemu glacier. These glaciers have not shown any retreat during the period 2007-09. In one study on the Gangotri glacier, it has been shown that there is no significant change in discharge during 1999-2003.

National Action Plan on Climate Change has formulated a Mission for Sustaining Himalayan Ecosystem primarily to seek and understand to what extent the glaciers are in recession and how the problem can be addressed.

Schemes and study programme in Assam

1458. SHRIMATI NAZNIN FARUQUE: Will the Minister of EARTH SCIENCES be pleased to state:

(a) the number of schemes and study programme initiated/conducted by the Ministry in Assam during the last three years;

(b) the details of funds allocated in this regard; and

(c) whether the Ministry has approached or going to approach the State Government for joint research work in the State?

THE MINISTER OF EARTH SCIENCES (SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY): (a) No state specific schemes are operated by this Ministry Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) No, Sir.

Monsoon forecasts

1459. SHRI BAISHNAB PARIDA: Will the Minister of EARTH SCIENCES be pleased to state:

- (a) whether it is a fact that Indian Meteorological Department has not been giving correct forecast of monsoon rains;
- (b) whether there are such complaints from farmers community and others;
- (c) if so, the details thereof *inter-alia* indicating the action plan to address such issues;
- (d) what is the status of long range forecasts;
- (e) whether the system is facing problems for long-range rainfalls; and
- (f) if so, the details thereof, *inter-alia* indicating the action plan to put it on the right footing?

THE MINISTER OF EARTH SCIENCES (SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY): (a) No, Sir. The accuracy of short range (up to 3-days in advance) monsoon forecasts is found to be of the order of 70-95%. The skill of district level medium range rainfall forecast (up to 5-7 days in advance) is 75-85% in monsoon season and more than 85% in non-monsoon seasons. By duly considering the difficulties involved in monsoon prediction, the above success rate may be considered as very encouraging.

The operational monsoon onset forecast over Kerala has been found to be correct (within the forecast limits) during all the 8 years (2005-2012).

(b) No, Sir.

(c) Does not arise.

(d) The present long range forecasting system based on the statistical models has shown some useful skill in predicting the all India season rainfall and the method has performed better than the earlier models that were updated in 2003. Details of the forecast errors are presented below:

Period	No. of years during Which Errors were Within $\pm 4\%$	No. of years during Which Errors were Within $\pm 4-8\%$	No. of years during Which Errors were higher than $\pm 8\%$
2003-12	5 (2003; 2005; 2008; 2010; 2012)	2 (2006; 2011)	3 (2004; 2007; 2009)
1993-02	2 (1993; 1995)	4 (1996; 1998; 2000; 2001)	4 (1994; 1997; 1999; 2002)

(e) No Sir.

(f) However, in order to overcome the limitations of the statistical models used so far for long-range monsoon rainfall forecasts, dynamical model framework is currently put under experimentation and performance evaluation under the National Monsoon Mission.

Digital volunteers for use in social media

†1460. DR. YOGENDRA P. TRIVEDI: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has started looking for 'Digital Volunteers' for aggressive use of social media in the present scenario;

(b) if so, the details regarding this scheme; and

(c) the nature of work of these volunteers and the process through which they would be appointed?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI MANISH TEWARI): (a) to (c) The Ministry of Information and Broadcasting has initiated the Digital Volunteer Programme with the objective of facilitating real time engagement with the pro-active internet user segment in this country. The registered volunteers will help disseminating initiatives of the Government across the social media platforms. The details of the programme are given in the Statement.

Statement

Digital Volunteer Programme

Digital Volunteer Programme Details :

The Concept: The Digital Volunteer Programme is aimed at people who are keen to use their personal social presence on different social media platforms to talk about Government schemes and programmes. Deeply rooted in the ideals of Participative Governance, the programme aims at helping the Government of India achieve a real time engagement with people leading to a personalized interaction with the target groups.

One may associate with this Initiative if:

1. One has an active Twitter and Facebook account.

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.