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THE IMPACT OF CYCLONE ALONG THE TUTICORIN COASTS*

A severe cyclonic storm with a wind velocity of 100 - 130 km per hour swept through the coastal villages of Chidambaranar district of Tamilnadu on the afternoon of 13 th November 1992 leaving behind a trail of destruction along its path. The state weather warning body had precisely predicted the course and intensity of cyclone along with monsoon rain and alerted the public accordingly.

The cyclone lashed the coast for a period of 3-4 hours accompanied by ghastly winds, heavy rains and huge tidal waves thereby causing untold havoc to life and property involving an overall loss of Rs. 35.54 crores due to damage to crops, live stock, fishing boats, private and public properties (Table 1).

In the fisheries sector the worst affected were the traditional fishermen. Altogether nineteen villages were affected by this cyclone (Table 2). Among them only 3 villages such as Therespuram (Tuticorin North), Punnakkayal and Tharuvaikulam were the worst affected. The loss suffered by the fisherfolk was estimated at Rs. 1.17 crores.

Punnakkayal fishing village was totally cut off from the rest of the places with flood water of Tambaraparani river and tidal waves rising to a height of 2-3 m. Fisherfolk took shelter in the

TABLE 1. Damages due to cyclone in Chidambaranar District

Items	Number	Damage (Rs. in Crores)
Buildings (houses & huts)	11,001	5.98
Fishing crafts	919	1.17
Cattle and poultry	13,000	0.04
Agricultural land (acres)	9839	21.90
Trees	10,000	0.24
Tanks	5	0.08
Electric installations	200	0.80
Roads (N H) (km)	655.5	4.77
Bridges (N H)	66	0.49
Panchayath Union Buildings	46	0.07
Total	—	35.54

local high school campus and church hall. Timely relief measures were done by the state administration authorities.

At Therespuram (Tuticorin North landing centre) victims were accommodated in the relief camps arranged by the local revenue authorities and offered free food and shelter. Loss incurred were due to damages caused to *vallms*, *catamarans* and nets. Relief measures were provided in accordance with the depth of damages suffered. About 350 victims incurred loss. Damages of the magnitude of about Rs. 11 lakhs were caused to *vallms*, Rs. 20,000 to *Cattamarans*

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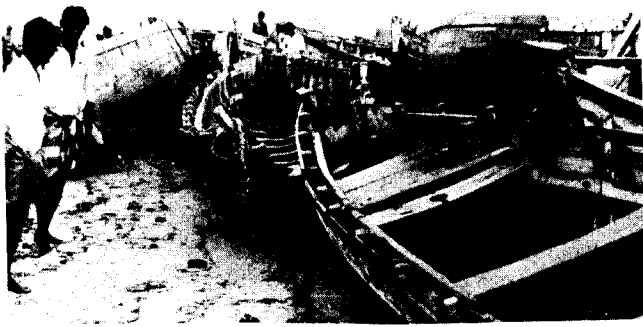


Fig. 1. Partly damaged boats

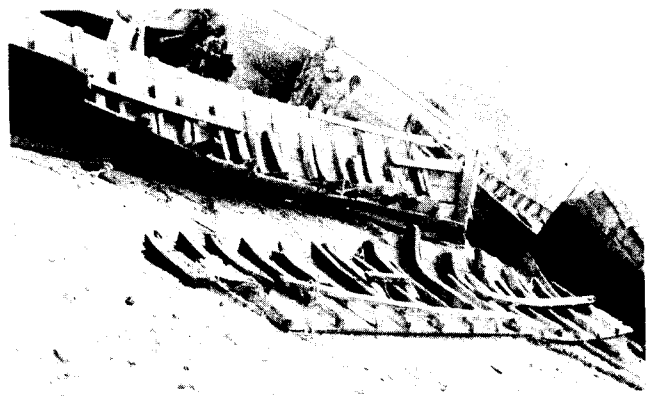


Fig. 2. A Fully damaged boat



Fig. 3. A fully damaged and submerged boat



Fig. 4. Damaged boat and net

and Rs. 3 lakhs to nets (*Podivalai, paruvai* and *valavai*).

Nearly 50% of the total assessed value of damage was given as subsidy and the balance

amount as soft bank loan. The money was initialised for the repair/ construction of boats/ catamarans and purchase/ repair of net/ net materials.