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## **CYCLONE HAVOC ALONG SAURASHTRA COAST**

A severe cyclone with gales of 100-120 km lashed the Saurashtra coast of Gujarat on 1/11/81 causing heavy damages. Cyclone warning centre in Bombay precisely predicted the course and intensity of the cyclone and warned the Gujarat Government. The State Government alerted the public and the administrative machinery was geared up to meet the eventuality. The cyclone crossed the land between Veraval and Porbandar in the early hours of 2/11/81. Throughout 1/11/81 heavy gales were experienced in these localities.

In spite of all the precautionary measures the cyclone inflicted heavy damage to the region. The total loss was estimated between 50-70 crores of rupees. About 14 people were killed at different places either due to drowning or house collapses. Junagadh district was the worst affected. Although preliminary estimates of loss of life, boats, crops and other properties were staggering, it turned out to be not so damaging when full details were available.

The harbour towns of Veraval, Mangrol and

Table 1. The damages at different fishing villages of Gujarat due to cyclone on 1/11/1981

Fishing village	Total loss of boats		Damage to boats		Loss of nets		Damage to houses	Total damage in Rs.
	Nos.	in Rs.	Nos.	in Rs.	Nos.	in Rs.	etc., in Rs.	
Rajpara	-	-	10	2,000	-	-	1,50,000	1,52,000
Madhwad	1	15,000	8	3,900	-	-	1,00,000	1,18,900
Mul-Dwarka	1	20,000	18	66,400	1,573	2,44,150	1,00,000	4,30,550
Dhamlej	5	85,000	6	24,000	95	17,250	-	1,26,250
Sutrapada	1	20,000	16	29,800	317	51,075	50,000	1,50,875
Hirakot	1	8,000	3	7,000	2,293	5,24,300	20,000	5,59,300
Vadodara Bara	-	-	-	-	60	9,000	-	9,000
Jaleshwar	2	40,000	4	11,000	2,136	5,75,000	1,00,000	7,26,000
Mangrol	1	2,50,000	60	1,86,600	-	-	2,50,000	6,86,600
Shil	-	-	-	-	219	44,600	50,000	94,600
Madhavpur	-	-	2	22,000	1,367	4,10,100	-	4,32,100
Veraval	-	-	83	3,38,400	53	21,600	15,000	3,75,000
Porbandar	-	-	124	1,89,850	463	3,07,800	2,02,654	6,99,304
<b>Total</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>4,38,000</b>	<b>334</b>	<b>8,80,950</b>	<b>8,576</b>	<b>22,04,875</b>	<b>10,37,654</b>	<b>45,61,479</b>

Porbandar suffered maximum. Electricity, tele-communication, water supply were disrupted completely and could be restored fully after a week only. The damage to crops like ground nut, cotton, Bajara was very extensive. A number of houses collapsed or were damaged in the coastal towns and villages, particularly fishing villages.

Loss to the fisheries sector of Junagadh district is given in table 1, from which it could be observed that the maximum number of boats were damaged at Veraval and Porbandar. But for the alertness of coast guard the damage would have been much more. Expecting the seriousness of the situation the coast guard guided all the boats moored in the open harbour into the sheltered pockets of the harbour. At Veraval 83 boats, mostly mechanised, were damaged and 53 nets were lost. The loss here to the fishing industry was estimated at Rs. 3.75 lakhs. Apart from this there was an extensive damage to the fishing harbour under construction with world bank aid. Due to high waves the breakwater wall under construction was wiped out about 80 m length on the eastern and western side of the fisheries harbour. The damage was estimated to Rs. 25 lakhs. Barges of the port department (5 in number) sank in the harbour and a dredger was damaged costing the port department an estimated 12.6 lakhs of rupees to float and then repair. About 8 people died in a house collapse and one cargo

vessel ran aground in the harbour and another sank off shore. The crew of the vessel swam ashore except one, whose body was later washed ashore.

At Mangrol 60 boats were damaged and 1 trawler was missing. Loss to boats and nets was estimated at Rs. 6.86 lakhs. Damage to fishing harbour was also extensive and the loss was estimated at Rs. 25 lakhs. There was an extensive damage of houses at this place.

At Porbandar the maximum of 124 boats were damaged and 463 nets lost with an estimated loss of Rs. 7 lakhs. Apart from this the all-weather port at Porbandar suffered a damage costing Rs. 10 lakhs.

From Rupan 348 boats left for fishing on 1/11/81 and drifted to different ports. Navy was asked to search for these boats. 6 Naval ships combed the Arabian sea and found that most of the vessels reached different ports along the coast. Still 3 fishing vessels with a total crew of 20 are reported missing.

The fishing industry of Junagadh district on the whole is estimated to have suffered a damage of about Rs. 45.6 lakhs. Measures are being taken by the State Government for the relief and rehabilitation of those affected, particularly the fishermen who lost their property.

Reported by G. Sudhakara Rao.

