

STORM WARNINGS: THE HINDU EDITORIAL ON WEATHER FORECAST

Relevant for: Environment | Topic: Disaster and disaster management

[Cyclone Nivar](#) raised fears of another epic disaster for millions of coastal residents in the south, but its [passage overland near Puducherry](#) early on November 26 was less destructive than anticipated. The reported [loss of at least three lives](#) is a relatively low toll for such a large-scale weather system, although property and agriculture have suffered considerable damage from the fierce winds and massive volume of rain it dumped in Tamil Nadu and Puducherry. Citizens and the government were fearful of a deluge that could be a repeat of the [2015 flood](#) — which killed a few hundred people — and they overcame COVID-19 fatigue to prepare for the worst. There was also a welcome emphasis on periodic alerts and warnings. The [IMD has been getting better at forecasting](#) slow-moving, linear tropical cyclones in the Bay of Bengal, and multiple satellites now provide cyclone data. The [deployment of over two dozen NDRF teams](#) and disaster management equipment along the coast reassured civic agencies. Not everyone escaped Nivar with a minor penalty, however, and for suburban Chennai, the peak one-day rainfall of 31 cm in Tambaram wrought destruction mirroring what happened five years ago; smaller inland towns have also suffered inundation and severe losses. The aftermath now presents an opportunity to make a full assessment not just for distribution of relief but also to understand the impacts of extreme monsoon weather.

The Tamil Nadu government has shown alacrity in handling the acute challenge of a severe weather event, which has occurred in the run-up to the Assembly election due early next year. Chief Minister Edappadi K. Palaniswami made field visits, and in parallel, the DMK, as the lead Opposition, mounted its own relief operations. What must worry the two major parties is that periodic papering of the cracks does not offer a sustainable solution to Chennai's evident civic decay. There is extensive documentation on the [loss of its floodplains, lakes and peri-urban wetlands](#) to encroachment, a key factor that is exacerbating monsoon flooding. This land grab is made possible by the benign indulgence of successive governments. What is more, governments have not shown the rigour to collect and publish data on annual flooding patterns, and measure the peak flows in the neglected rivers and canals to plan remedies. Appalling indifference to land use norms has spawned an amorphous housing sector characterised by inflated, speculative prices but no foundation of civic infrastructure. To keep Tamil Nadu competitive, governments and local bodies should hardwire urban planning and invest heavily for a future of frequent disruptive weather.

You have reached your limit for free articles this month.

To get full access, please subscribe.

Already have an account ? [Sign in](#)

Start your 14 days free trial. [Sign Up](#)

Dear reader,

We have been keeping you up-to-date with information on the developments in India and the world that have a bearing on our health and wellbeing, our lives and livelihoods, during these difficult times. To enable wide dissemination of news that is in public interest, we have increased the number of articles that can be read free, and extended free trial periods. However, we have

a request for those who can afford to subscribe: please do. As we fight disinformation and misinformation, and keep pace with the happenings, we need to commit greater resources to news gathering operations. We promise to deliver quality journalism that stays away from vested interest and political propaganda.

Dear subscriber,

Thank you!

Your support for our journalism is invaluable. It's a support for truth and fairness in journalism. It has helped us keep pace with events and happenings.

The Hindu has always stood for journalism that is in the public interest. At this difficult time, it becomes even more important that we have access to information that has a bearing on our health and well-being, our lives, and livelihoods. As a subscriber, you are not only a beneficiary of our work but also its enabler.

We also reiterate here the promise that our team of reporters, copy editors, fact-checkers, designers, and photographers will deliver quality journalism that stays away from vested interest and political propaganda.

Suresh Nambath

Please enter a valid email address.

From the abrogation of the special status of Jammu and Kashmir, to the landmark Ayodhya verdict, 2019 proved to be an eventful year.

Subscribe to The Hindu now and get unlimited access.

Already have an account? [Sign In](#)

Start your 14 days free trial [Sign Up](#)

END

Downloaded from **crackIAS.com**

© **Zuccess App** by crackIAS.com

