

**GOVERNMENT ACTION IN THE PRE AND POST THANE
CYCLONE IN CUDDALORE DISTRICT, TAMIL NADU**

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Abstract

The present study makes an attempt to analyse the Government action in the pre and post thane cyclone in Panruti block, Cuddalore district. The cyclone has resulted in extensive damage with the loss being estimated at over Rs 2,000 crores. Essential commodities/utensils/electric appliances/household materials have been damaged. Health and wellbeing of the people in the costal and interior villages in Cuddalre district have been deteriorated. The farmers are not happy with the government's action in the pre and post thane cyclone. The government authorities have to realize the duty in assisting the poor farmers when they suffer due to natural disaster. The farmers expect additional relief funds, free saplings, free manure, no land tax for ten years and agriculture loan for lands. Irrespective of farm size, majority of the farmers expect the above demands from the government.

Keywords: cyclone, damage, tax exemption, relief funds

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Introduction

The present study makes an attempt to analyse the Government action in the pre and post thane cyclone in Panruti block, Cuddalore district. The cyclone has resulted in extensive damage with the loss being estimated at over Rs 2,000 crore. The rainfall continued for more than 48 hours in Cuddalore and Puducherry. The speed of the wind was in between 125 to 140 kmph that causes tidal waves is inundating the low lying coastal villages. More than 50 per cent of the electric poles uprooted resulting in disruption of mobile networks. Normal life of the people living in Cuddalore district mostly affected and disturbed. Train and Bus services from southern Tamil Nadu were hit as many of them ran very late or were stopped in the nearby station/bus station. Cuddalore is the most affected with damaged roads rendering difficult for rescue Team including those from National Disaster Response Force/Fire and Rescue Services. More than 40 people died in Cuddalore due to incidents of wall collapse and electrocution. More than 60,000 trees were uprooted. Electric poles were also uprooted cutting of vehicular traffic/power supply suspended since last night as a precautionary measure. More than 20,000 Houses were damaged /destroyed. Drinking water supply in most part of Cuddalore district has been affected. Fishing Boats have been damaged in the Coastal villages of Cuddalore District. Essential commodities/utensils/electric appliances/household materials have been damaged. Health and wellbeing of the people in the costal and interior villages in Cuddalre district have been deteriorated. The continuous rainfall inundated the low lying areas/and many part of the coastal villages that may be resulted in the outbreak of infectious diseases. Given this backdrop, the present study analyses the role of the Governemnt in the pre and post thane cyclone in Panruti block of Cuddalore district, Tamil Nadu.

Methodology

In order to measure the cashew crop loss due to thane cyclone, Panruti block is selected from the Cuddlaore district. Since cashew cultivation is high in the Panruti block of the surveyed district, the villages are selected from the block where cashew cultivation is high. For selecting the villages, the researcher has approached the Block Development Office and villages viz., Kadampuliyar and Marangur where cashew cultivation is high are selected as per the instructions given by the officials. From each village, 60 households are selected and 120 respondents are

chosen for the study. Since the productivity of cashew crop varies between the farm sizes, the loss may be also in the same pattern. Thus, the researcher has chosen the sample farmers from four categories, viz., Marginal, Small, Medium and Large farmers. Secondary data is collected from the records of the village Panchyat, Block Development Office and District website. The primary data is collected in month of January 2013.

Tools of Data Collection

A structured household interview schedule was employed to collect primary data from the sample households. The schedule was prepared after conducting an intensive pilot study in the study villages. The structured interview schedule was pretested and finalised. The pilot study helped the researcher to understand the various losses incurred due to Thane cyclone in the study villages. The schedule was administered through personal interviews with most knowledgeable person of the household chosen. The primary data were collected through field survey with structured interview schedule. Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) was used in addition to Ms Excel for data processing, analysis and tabulation. Multiple Linear Regression model is used to analyse the cashew crop loss and rehabilitation costs. Besides, simple statistical measures such as averages and percentages are also used extensively for analysis.

Government Precautionary Measures in the Pre Thane Cyclone

The metrological department has announced about the thane cyclone well in advance. The researcher has analysed the measures taken by the Government in the pre Thane cyclone (see table 1). From the perception of the farmers, the Government has given news, warnings and announced holidays in the pre Thane cyclone. But, the respondents report that the Government did not assist in providing basic needs to the commons. It is also the duty of the government where it has to be taken into consideration.

Table 1 Measures Taken by the Government before Thane Cyclone

Details	Farm Size				Total (N=120)
	Marginal (n=30)	Small (n=30)	Medium (n=30)	Large (n=30)	
News about the cyclone	30 (100)	30 (100)	30 (100)	30 (100)	120 (100)
Warnings to the people	30 (100)	30 (100)	30 (100)	30 (100)	120 (100)
Announcement of Holiday	30 (100)	30 (100)	30 (100)	30 (100)	120 (100)

Provision of Basic needs	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)
Assistance in Safeguarding House, Land and Trees	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)

Source: Computed Note: Figures in parentheses denotes percentages to Sample

Government Measures in the Post Thane Cyclone

Government has a huge role in the post cyclone and the table 2 gives the details of the Government measures taken in the post Thane Cyclone. The roads and electric wires are disconnected; food, water and medicines are requirements of the people. From the surveyed respondents, 50 per cent of the respondents report that Government took measures to repair road and give electivity and other are not satisfied with the Government. Few of them opine that water and medicine are provided while none report about the distribution of food. As a whole, the Government action in the pre and post Thane cyclone is not satisfactory.

Table 2 Measures Taken by the Government after Thane Cyclone in the Surveyed Villages

Details	Farm Size				
	Marginal (n=30)	Small (n=30)	Medium (n=30)	Large (n=30)	Total (N=120)
Clearing Transportation	16 (53.3)	11 (36.7)	19 (63.3)	21 (70.0)	67 (55.8)
Providing Electricity	11 (36.7)	15 (50.0)	20 (66.7)	17 (56.7)	63 (52.5)
Medicines	7 (23.3)	4 (13.3)	0 (0)	0 (0)	11 (9.2)
Food	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)
Water	11 (36.7)	7 (23.3)	3 (10.0)	7 (23.3)	28 (23.3)
Assessment of Loss	15 (50.0)	8 (26.7)	10 (33.3)	9 (30.0)	42 (35.0)

Source: Computed Note: Figures in parentheses denotes percentages to Sample

Unresolved Issues of the People

The table 3 gives the details of the issues reported by the surveyed farmers. The farmers report that the loss for house and land is not given properly. Besides, the famer's registers that Government action is slow, there is problem in loss estimation and officials expect bribe for relief funds. Irrespective of farm groups, most of the respondents report all the above issues. This

situation infers the Government failure in providing the needs particularly in the time of natural disasters.

Table 3 Issues Reported by the People against the Government

Details	Farm Size				
	Marginal (n=30)	Small (n=30)	Medium (n=30)	Large (n=30)	Total (N=120)
Loss for House is given Properly	19 (63.3)	23 (76.7)	21 (70.0)	20 (66.7)	83 (69.2)
Loss for Land is given Properly	26 (86.7)	30 (100)	30 (100)	30 (100)	116 (96.7)
Delay in Government Action	30 (100)	30 (100)	30 (100)	30 (100)	120 (100)
Problems in Loss Estimation	21 (70.0)	27 (90.0)	30 (100)	30 (100)	108 (90.0)
Bribe in Relief Funds	13 (43.3)	9 (30.0)	17 (56.7)	21 (70.0)	60 (50.0)

Source: Computed

Note: Figures in parentheses denotes percentages to Sample

Expectations of the People

The table 4 gives the details of the people's expectation from the government. They expect additional relief funds, free saplings, free manure, no land tax for ten years and agriculture loan for lands. Irrespective of farm size, majority of the farmers expect the above demands from the government. Therefore, the government has to take care of the problems of the farmers particularly the marginal and small farmers since they are economically backward.

Table 4 Expectations of the People to Recover from the Thane Cyclone

Details	Farm Size				
	Marginal (n=30)	Small (n=30)	Medium (n=30)	Large (n=30)	Total (N=120)
Additional Relief funds	30 (100)	30 (100)	30 (100)	30 (100)	120 (100)
Free Saplings	21 (70.0)	27 (90.0)	30 (100)	25 (83.3)	103 (85.8)
Free Manure	30 (100)	30 (100)	30 (100)	21 (70.0)	111 (92.5)
No Land Tax for Ten Years	30 (100)	30 (100)	25 (83.3)	26 (86.7)	111 (92.5)
Agri. Loan for lands	27 (90.0)	25 (83.3)	29 (96.7)	21 (70.0)	102 (85.0)

Source: Computed

Note: Figures in parentheses denotes percentages to Sample

Conclusion and Policy Suggestions

The measures taken by the Government in the pre Thane cyclone are giving news about the cyclone, warnings and announcement of holidays. But, the respondents report that the Government did not assist in providing basic needs to the commons. However, it is also the duty of the government where it has to be taken into consideration. In the post Thane Cyclone only few respondents report that Government took measures to repair road and give electricity and other are not satisfied with the Government. Few of them opine that water and medicine are provided while none report about the distribution of food. The Government action in the pre and post Thane cyclone is not satisfactory. The farmers report that the loss for house and land is not given properly. Besides, the farmer's registers that Government action is slow, there is problem in loss estimation and officials expect bribe for relief funds. Irrespective of farm groups, most of the respondents report all the above issues. This situation infers the Government failure in providing the needs particularly in the time of natural disasters. But, the government's action towards the problem is not up to the expectations of the farmers. The farmers are not happy with the government's action in the pre and post thane cyclone. The government authorities have to realize the duty in assisting the poor farmers when they suffer due to natural disaster. The farmers expect additional relief funds, free saplings, free manure, no land tax for ten years and agriculture loan for lands. Irrespective of farm size, majority of the farmers expect the above demands from the government.

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