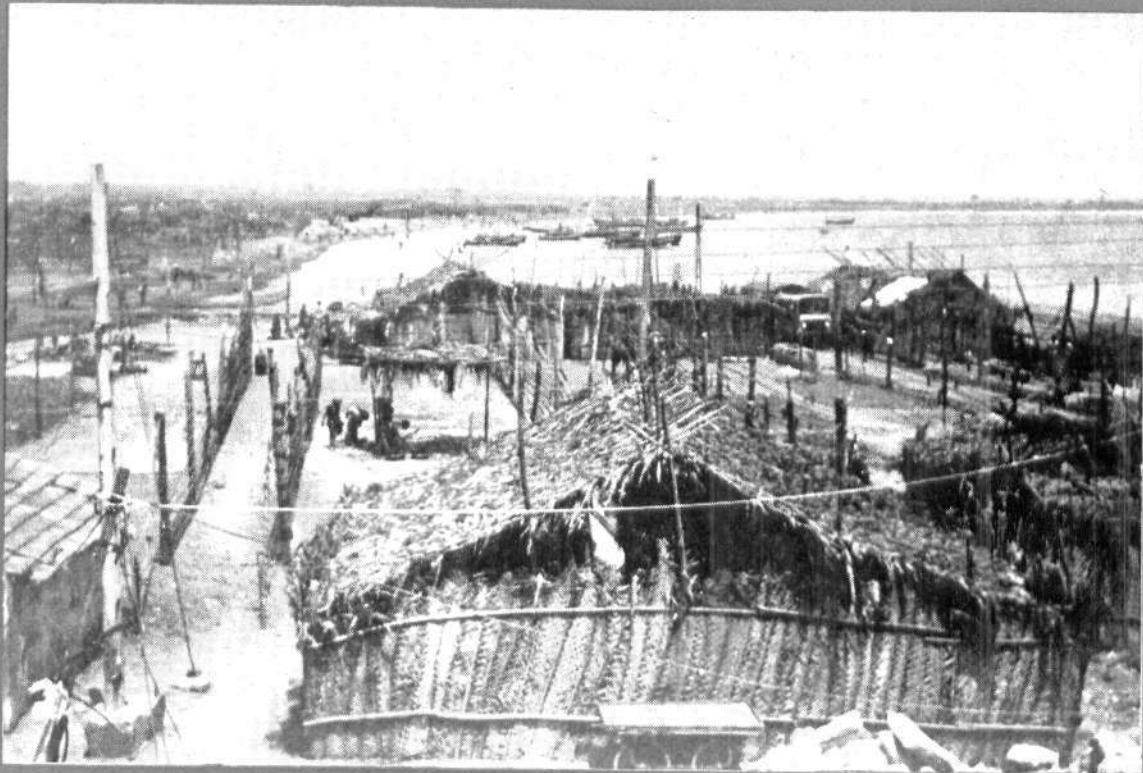




MARINE FISHERIES INFORMATION SERVICE



No. 69

AUGUST, SEPTEMBER
OCTOBER
1986

Technical and Extension Series

CENTRAL MARINE FISHERIES RESEARCH INSTITUTE
COCHIN, INDIA

INDIAN COUNCIL OF AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH

SEA EROSION AT BAITKHOL (KARWAR) AND ITS EFFECT ON INDIGENOUS FISHING*

In the wee hours of 4th June 1984, the sleepy town of Karwar was experiencing light showers, and the Karwar Bay was slightly rough as to be expected during the pre-monsoon period. As the hours passed by, menacing waves started furiously lashing against the Baitkhol and Karwar shores. By 0900 hrs waves as high as 2 m started pounding the NH 17 subjecting it to a severe test. However, the anger of the sea was centred between the Karwar Research Centre of CMFRI in the south and the Marine Engineer's Office in the north, a stretch of length extending about 0.3 km. Within no time the waves not only smashed the parapet wall bordering the western side of the road but also inundated the area which caused breaches in small patches at several points. In this process, many small huts of fishermen on the other side of the road were destroyed. There

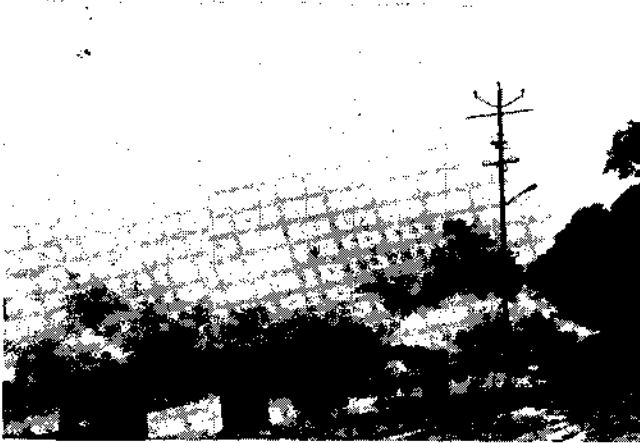


Fig. 1. The Karwar Bay in fury.

was an imminent danger of Karwar being cut off from the southern part of the country. This situation prevailed for the next four days during which period the northern part of the Baitkhol shore from where the

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indigenous crafts used to operate during the monsoon period was completely eroded. However, the local authorities took immediate steps in dumping boulders along the shore to prevent further erosion and damage to the NH. The situation was brought under control



Fig. 2. Nothing forms an obstacle for a furious sea.

by middle of the month. The unprecedented roughness of sea might have been due to the non-construction of breakwater walls before taking up the dredging operations in the Karwar Bay as a part of the developmental work of Karwar port.

In this connection it may be mentioned that the Baitkhol shore was famous for *rampan* operations in the yester years. Of late, this area was used for operations of *yendi* (small shore-seine) and dragnets, especially during the monsoon season. Because of the erosion of the fish landing area, the fishing operations were completely stopped thus affecting the earnings of fishermen. However, by the middle of August, a good stretch of sand dune of about 200 m long was emerged to south of the former shore.

