

50 Years On, Relic of Dhanushkodi Remains

Express News Service

Ramanathapuram: Fifty years after the massive cyclone in Dhanushkodi Island, the ruined buildings are now a tourist place visited by hundreds on a daily basis.



The midnight of December 22, 1964, saw a massive cyclone killing hundreds of people while devastating the island. The cyclone formed in the Bay of Bengal struck the island at a speed of 120 km/hour resulting in the submersion of the island in sea water. Hundreds of buildings including houses, hospital, railway sta-

tion and government offices were washed away by the mighty tides.

The Chennai Egmore-Rameswaram (Boat Mail) Express Train, which was approaching the harbour at Dhanushkodi from Pamban was washed away, killing hundreds of students and tourists. The ruined remains of the railway station, post office and school still stand testimony to the disaster.

The famous pilgrim centre visited by thousands of Hindus every year was transformed into a trading centre after the British developed it as a harbour in 1914 facilitating shipping

activities to Talaimannar in Sri Lanka.

A strategic point during the World War II, this island in the southern part of the country is about 22 kilometres south east to Rameswaram.

Since there is road facility only till Mukundaraya Chattiram, about 15 km from Rameswaram, the rest of the distance to Dhanushkodi is usually covered in vans and jeeps on a mud road in the sea.

Even though the Central government allocated ₹20 crore for laying roads, the Railways has ruled out the possibility of laying rail lines to Dhanushkodi.



Ruins of the church devastated by 1964 cyclone in Dhanushkodi | EXPRESS

Indian Express - 22.12.2014