

Coastal erosion hits Eden Beach at Chinna Veerampattinam yet again

The impact of the erosion this time was so high that the basement of a concrete structure constructed at the beach to hoist the Blue Flag, following the certification by Denmark-based non-profit organisation Foundation for Environmental Education, caved in, resulting in the removal of the flag

Rajesh B Nair
PUDUCHERRY

Eden Beach, one of the few Blue Flag-certified beaches in the country, located at Chinna Veerampattinam, is once again facing the problem of coastal erosion after the sea began inching closer to the shore in the first week of April.

The impact of the erosion this time was so high that the basement of a concrete structure constructed at the beach to hoist the Blue Flag, following the certification by Denmark-based non-profit organisation Foundation for Environmental Education (FEE), caved in, leading to the removal of the flag itself.

Ecofriendliness, safety
The FEE accords the status to beaches across the world based on certain parameters, including ecofriendliness and safety.

“The sea water began entering the beach in the



Disaster-prone: Sea erosion has become a threat to the Eden beach at Chinna Veerampattinam, one of the few Blue Flag-certified beaches in the country. S.S. KUMAR

first week of April, and as days passed, the intensity of water entering the coast increased rapidly, leading to the collapse of the basement of the concrete structure. A similar situation occurred in the year 2022. “The sea water began entering the beach in the

of Chinna Veerampattinam.

Seasonal reversal

According to former director of National Centre for Coastal Research (NCCR) M.V. Ramana Murthy, the erosion in the area was due to seasonal changes in lit-

toral current. Whenever there is a seasonal change, localised erosion would occur at Eden Beach.

“The observed erosion at Eden Beach is due to seasonal reversal of littoral currents in the month of April, which is localised, and it has happened ear-

lier too. It is always recommended to keep away facilities from the zone of seasonal changes, and the same has been intimated to the Puducherry government in previous instances,” he added.

The erosion at Eden Beach has found a reference in a report titled ‘Management of Coastal Erosion along the Union Territory of Puducherry: Shoreline Management Plan,’ prepared jointly by the Ministry of Earth Sciences and the NCCR, last year.

The shoreline change analysis, carried out using satellite data from 1990 to 2022, has indicated the beach to be in “a low erosion to stable transmission region.” A small erosion was also reported in 2017, the report said.

“A proper understanding of the coast and its influencing factors is necessary before developing coastal infrastructure. Generally, the construction of coastal infrastruc-

ture for tourism and other activities is to be avoided in stretches prone to erosion,” the report said.

However, the report noted that if development has to be carried out in that specific location, a proper estimation of the long and short-term erosion rate has to be understood.

And based on the erosion rate, effective coastal protection measures could be provided, the report further said.

Mitigation measures

Minister for Public Works and Tourism K. Lakshminarayanan told *The Hindu* that the government was aware of the situation at Eden Beach, and mitigation measures are being worked out.

“We will immediately take up measures after taking into consideration coastal regulation rules. The mitigation measures are also being taken up in other hamlets where coastal erosion was reported,” he said.