

## WEATHER, OCTOBER—DECEMBER, 1949.

The outstanding feature of the weather during this quarter was a severe cyclone in the Bay of Bengal in October which caused great devastation in Andhra Desa. Other important features were (i) the failure of the northeast monsoon rains in the Madras Province and (ii) scanty rainfall in northwest India.

The southwest monsoon withdrew completely from the country after the 3rd of October. However, during the second week, a deep depression formed off the Orissa—Circars coast which moved into the Deccan and caused widespread rain in West Bengal, Orissa and the C. P. between the 9th and 11th. This was followed by a week of well-marked thunderstorm activity in the central parts of the country, the Deccan, Mysore and northeast India.

Weather became unsettled in the Andaman Sea on the 20th and a deep depression formed on the morning of the 23rd centred about 100 miles south of Port Blair. Moving in a northwesterly direction and intensifying rapidly, it became a severe cyclone by the 26th morning when it was centred about 350 miles southeast of Masulipatam. The severe cyclone struck the coast 25 miles eastnortheast of Masulipatam at about 2 a. m. on the 28th near about the time of high tide. After passing inland, it weakened rapidly and lay as a deep depression centred near Khammameth on that evening. Thereafter, it moved north-northeastwards and became unimportant over Bihar by the 1st of November.

The strong winds and heavy rains that accompanied the cyclone caused appalling destruction of life and property and indescribable sufferings to the people in Andhra Desa. Winds exceeding 50 m.p.h. raged continuously for over 12 hours along the Masulipatam—Kakinada strip of the coast and blew away most of the houses, uprooted all trees and laid the ground bare. The torrential rains resulted in heavy breaches along the roads and railway lines and the breakdown of telegraph and telephone communications in the Kistna, Guntur, the west Godavari and east Godavari districts. The losses in property, crops and livestock in these districts were estimated at several crores of rupees. The cyclone was also responsible for widespread and locally very heavy rain along the Orissa coast and along and near its track during its movement in the interior of the country as a depression.

The following are some of the essential features of this cyclone :—

- (i) maximum deficiency of pressure at its centre was 33.0 mbs. (1" approx.) just when the storm was crossing the coast,
- (ii) heaviest rainfall was 20" at Masulipatam in 24 hours ending 0830 hours on 28th, and
- (iii) maximum windspeed recorded at the Observatory at Masulipatam was 83 m. p. h. at 0230 hours of 28th.

Little or no rain fell over the rest of the country during October.

November was a month of unusually dry weather over the country owing to the northeast monsoon being extremely weak except for a short spell and the western disturbances being few and feeble. Practically dry weather prevailed during the first two weeks of the month. The northeast monsoon set in along the Coromandel coast on the 16th, extended over the whole of the Madras Presidency by the 17th and remained active for three days giving widespread and locally heavy rain. Thereafter the monsoon weakened gradually and dry weather again prevailed over the whole country till the end of the month.

Of the three western disturbances that moved across the country during the month, only one was moderately active and caused local thunder-showers in southeast Rajputana, Madhya Bharat and Gujarat on the 22nd.

Night temperatures were markedly below normal in the central parts of the country and the Deccan during the first half of November.

December also was a month of scanty rainfall. The northeast monsoon continued to be weak throughout the month with the result that there was very little rain in the Madras Province. Of the five western disturbances of the month, only two were moderately active and even these caused local or widespread showers only in and near the hills of the East Punjab and of the West United Provinces on the 10th and 13th respectively.