

Chennai airport reopens after cyclone Fengal passes

- A Monitor Desk Report

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Chennai: Flight operations at the Chennai International Airport resumed early on Sunday (Dec 1) morning after Cyclone Fengal crossed the North Tamil Nadu and Puducherry coasts.

Speaking to news agency, Shiva, a passenger travelling to Abu Dhabi via Air Arabia flight, said, "We have been waiting here since 8 PM last night. I am from Cuddalore district, Tamil Nadu. The airline we booked with is not responding to us, and we haven't even received a water bottle or food from them.

"I request the airline to respond and ensure the comfort of passengers. They should have arranged a place for us to wait, but in this weather, we are waiting in an open area. Honestly, I have suffered a lot this time. I have been travelling and working abroad for the past 25 years, but I have never faced such treatment from any airline. Yes, it's a natural calamity, but the airline should have at least responded to the

passengers. They should either arrange an alternate flight or refund the amount to us as soon as possible," he added.

The airport had temporarily suspended operations on Saturday due to strong winds and heavy rainfall caused by cyclones. Airlines had issued travel advisories and updated their flight schedules in response to the continuous downpours in Tamil Nadu. Several passengers experienced delays, with many stranded at the airport for 8 to 10 hours due to the sudden cancellation of flights.

According to the India Meteorological Department (IMD), Cyclone Fengal, which had been stationary over north coastal Tamil Nadu and Puducherry, was classified as a cyclonic storm with wind speeds of 65-75 km/h, gusting up to 85 km/h.

The IMD stated that the cyclone would gradually weaken into a deep depression within the next three hours and continue to move west-southwestward.

"The Cyclonic Storm "FENGAL" [pronounced as FEINJAL] over north coastal Tamilnadu & Puducherry remained practically stationary during the past 1 hour and lay centred at 0030 hrs IST of today, the 01st December over the same region near latitude 12.0°N and longitude 79.8°E, close to Puducherry, as a cyclonic storm with a wind speed of 65-75 kmph gusting to 85 kmph. The cyclonic storm "FENGAL" will move west-southwestwards slowly and weaken gradually into a deep depression during the next 3 hours. The system is being continuously monitored by the Doppler Weather Radar at Chennai & Karaikal," IMD posted on X.

Cyclone Fengal made landfall on Saturday night between 10:30 pm and 11:30 pm IST, near Puducherry, with wind speeds of 70-80 km/h, gusting up to 90 km/h. As a precautionary measure, people in affected areas have been relocated to relief camps near Kalpakkam in the Chengalpattu district.

The cyclone's impact led to heavy rainfall and gusty winds, disrupting road and air services and affecting normal life in Puducherry and various parts of Tamil Nadu.

