Weathering The Storm in Ersama

(By Harsh Mander)

About the AUTHOR

Harsh Mander is an Indian author, columnist, researcher, teacher and social activist. He was born on 17 April 1955. He is the Director of the Centre for Equity studies, a research organisation based in New Delhi. He also served as special commissioner to the Supreme Court of India in the Right to Food Campaign and was a member of the National Advisory Council of the Government.

Summary of the CHAPTER

➢ Prashant was a young boy of nineteen years of age. He belonged to Kalikuda, a village in the coastal state of Orissa. He had lost his mother seven years ago.

➢ On 27th Oct, 1999, when he was visiting a friend in Ersama, a super cyclone hit the area. There was large scale devastation. The gusty winds and rains continued for two days. They all remained on the rooftop of the house and survived on the tender coconuts from the coconut trees that had fallen on the roof of their house.

➢ As the rain stopped, Prashant left for his home as he feared the worst for his family. He took a stick to help him find the road. On the way, he met his uncle's friends and the group moved together.

➢ They came across the dead bodies of human beings and animals. His own house was shattered too. He went to the Red Cross shelter in search of his family. There Prashant met his maternal grandmother. She was elated to see him.

➢ Prashant saw a crowd of 2500 people at the shelter. They were all grief-stricken as they had lost their families. Finally he took control of the situation.

➢ Prashant formed a group with some elders and young people. They collected rice. All ate food in the shelter. Then this group cleaned the shelter and tended to the injured people.

➢ Prashant engaged the widows to work in the NGO named 'Food For Work'. He engaged the children by arranging sports matches. The volunteers managed to set up foster families comprising of the widows, orphaned children and lonely men who would form a family and support each other. Like this, Prashant overcame his grief and learnt to smile even in the face of adversities.

Theme of the CHAPTER

The theme of the story is evoked when the storm takes place and due to which people are in a lot of suffering. The story teaches us about the importance of being patient when a cyclone hits us. Teamwork and co-operation are the qualities displayed by the group of young volunteers who led the rescue operations under the leadership of Prashant.

Before You READ

● **The cyclone that hit Orissa in October 1999 killed thousands of people and devastated hundreds of villages. For two dreadful nights Prashant, a young man, was marooned on the roof of a house. On the third day he decided to go to his village. Did he find his family?**

Ans. No, Prashant couldn't meet his family when he reached his village. He went to the Red Cross shelter in search of his family. There Prashant met his maternal grandmother. She was elated to see him alive as she had not expected that he would have survived the storm.

✎ The Text

1. On 27 October, 1999, seven years after his mother's death, Prashant has gone to the block headquarters of Ersama, a small town in **coastal** Orissa, some eighteen kilometres from his village, to spend the day with a friend. In the evening, a dark and **menacing storm** quickly gathered. Winds beat against the houses with a speed and **fury** that Prashant had never witnessed before. Heavy and **incessant** rain filled the darkness, **ancient** trees were uprooted and crashed to the earth. **Screams** rent the air as people and houses were siftly washed away. The angry waters **swirled** into his friend's house, neck deep. The building was of brick and **mortar** and was strong enough to **survive** the **devastation** of the wind's velocity of 350 km per hour. But the cold **terror** of the family grew with the crashing of trees that had got uprooted and fallen on their house, some time in the middle of the night, **damaging** its roof and walls.

हिन्दी अनुवाद—27 अक्टूबर, 1999 को अपनी माँ के देहान्त के सात साल बाद, प्रशान्त तटीय उड़ीसा के एक छोटे कस्बे इरसामा के ब्लॉक हेडक्वार्टर्स में अपने दोस्त के साथ एक दिन बिताने गया था। यह जगह उसके गाँव से करीब 18 किमी. की दूरी पर है। शाम होते-होते गहरा और खतरनाक तूफान अचानक आ गया। तेज हवाएँ अत्यधिक तेजी से घरों को भेद रही थीं ऐसा प्रशान्त ने पहले कभी नहीं देखा था। काफी तेज और लगातार बारिश से अन्धकार छा गया, पुराने पेड़ जड़ों से उखड़ गये और टूट कर जमीन पर धराशायी हो गए। तेज चीखों की आवाजें गूँज उठी, जैसे-जैसे लोग और घर धीरे-धीरे बहने लगे। पानी अपने रौद्र रूप में दोस्त के घर में गले तक भर गया। इमारत ईंट और कंक्रीट की काफी मजबूत थी जो आंधी की 350 किमी प्रति घण्टा चाल को भी इस विनाश लीला के समय झेल रही थी। पर परिवार के लोगों में डर की ठण्डी लहर दौड़ गई जब आधी रात में पेड़ जड़ से उखड़कर घर पर गिरे और घर की छत और दीवारें चटकने लगीं।

2. The **crazed** destruction **wrought** by the cyclone and the **surge** of the ocean continued for the next thirty-six hours, although wind speeds had reduced somewhat by the next morning. To **escape** the waters rising in the house, Prashant and his friend's family had taken **refuge** on the roof. Prashant will never forget the shock he experienced at his first **glimpse** of the devastation wrought by the super cyclone, in the grey light of the early morning. A raging, deadly, brown sheet of water covered everything as far as the eye could see, only **fractured** cement houses still stood in a few places. **Bloated** animal **carcasses** and human **corpses** floated in every direction. All round even huge old trees had fallen. Two coconut trees had fallen on the roof on their house. This was a blessing in **disguise** because the **tender** coconuts from the trees kept the **trapped** family from **starving** in the several days that followed.

हिन्दी अनुवाद—इस बवंडर के कारण और समुद्र की तेज लहरों के चलने से जो भीषण तबाही हुई वह लगातार 36 घण्टों तक जारी रही, जबकि हवा की गति अगली सुबह तक कुछ कम हो गयी थी। घर के अंदर पानी भरा होने के कारण, प्रशान्त और उसके दोस्त का परिवार छत पर ही आ गए। अगली सुबह के धुंधलके में प्रशान्त ने पहली नजर में, तूफान के कारण आयी तबाही का जो दृश्य देखा, उससे उसे ऐसा आघात लगा कि वह उसे जिन्दगी में नहीं भूल पाएगा। जहाँ तक नजर जा सकती थी, मटमैले पानी की चादर की नीरवता हर जगह फैली थी, कहीं-कहीं टूटे फूटे कुछ घर दिखाई दे रहे थे। फूले हुए जानवरों और, मनुष्यों केशव हर दिशा में तैर रहे थे। चारों तरफ विशाल पेड़ गिरे पड़े थे। दो नारियल के पेड़ टूटकर उनके घर की छत पर पड़े थे। इतनी त्रासदी में लगा ये वरदान है, क्योंकि इन पेड़ों पर लगे नरम नारियलों ने की छत पर परिवार की भूख आने वाले दिनों में मिटायी।

3. For the next two days, Prashant sat **huddled** with his friend's family in the open on the rooftop. They froze in the cold and incessant rain, the rain water washed away Prashant's tears. The only thought that **flashed through his mind** was whether his family had survived the fury of the super cyclone. Was he to be **bereaved** once again?

📖 Word-Meaning

Coastal (कोस्टल) = on the coast तटवर्ती। **menacing** (मेनेसिंग) = dangerous खतरनाक। **storm** (स्टॉर्म) = cyclone तूफान। **fury** (फ्यूरी) = anger गुस्सा/अत्यधिक तेजी से। **witnessed** (विटनेस्ड) = seen देखा। **incessant** (इन्सेसेन्ट) = continuous लगातार। **ancient** (एनिशिएन्ट) = very old प्राचीन। **crashed** (क्रैश्ड) = broken and fell गिरा एवं टूटा। **screams** (स्क्रीम्स) = cries चीखें। **rent** (रेन्ट) = filled गूंज। **swirled** (स्विर्ल्ड) = moved in circle घूमना। **mortar** (मोर्टार) = iron and cement लोहा एवं सीमेंट। **survive** (सर्वाइव) = alive जीवित रहना। **devastation** (डिवासटेशन) = great damage जबरदस्त नुकसान। **terror** (टेरर) = fear भय। **damaging** (डैमेजिंग) = destroying नष्ट करना।

📖 Word-Meaning

Crazed (क्रेज्ड) = excessive भीषण। **wrought** (रॉट) = brought by की वजह से। **surge** (सर्ज) = wave लहर। **escape** (एस्केप) = exit बचने के लिए। **refuge** (रिफ्यूज) = shelter आश्रय। **glimpse** (ग्लिम्प्स) = scene दृश्य। **fractured** (फ्रैक्चर्ड) = broken टूटे हुए। **bloated** (ब्लोटेड) = swollen फूले हुए। **carcasses** (कारकेसेज) = dead bodies शव। **corpses** (कौर्प्स) = dead bodies लाशें। **disguise** (डिसगाइज) = farce भेस में। **tender** (टेन्डर) = soft नरम। **trapped** (ट्रैप्ड) = caught फंसे हुए। **starving** (स्टार्विंग) = dying of hunger भूख से मरना।

Two days later, which seemed to Prashant like two years, the rain **ceased** and the rain waters slowly began to **recede**. Prashant was determined to seek out his family without further delay. But the situation was still dangerous, and his friend's family **pleaded** with Prashant to stay back a little while longer. But Prashant knew he had to go.

हिन्दी अनुवाद— अगले दो दिन प्रशान्त ने अपने दोस्त के परिवार के साथ खुले में, घर की छत पर बैठकर बिताए। वे ठण्ड और लगातार हो रही बारिश में जम से गए इसी बारिश ने प्रशान्त के आँसू ऍ गो दिए। केवल यही विचार उसके मन में आ रहा था कि क्या उसका परिवार इस चक्रवती तूफान में बचा होगा। क्या उसे फिर अपनों को खोने का गम सहना होगा ?

दो दिन बाद, जो प्रशान्त को दो साल के बराबर लगे ये, बारिश कम हुई और पानी धीरे-धीरे कम होने लगा। प्रशान्त ने निर्णय कर लिया था कि अब बिना देर किए वह अपने परिवार को खोजेगा। पर स्थिति अभी भी खतरनाक थी और उसके दोस्त के परिवार ने उससे विनती की कि वह कुछ समय और रूक जाए। पर प्रशान्त जानता था कि उसे जाना तो था ही।

4. He **equipped** himself with a long **sturdy** stick, and then started on his eighteen-kilometre **expedition** back to his village through the swollen flood waters. It was a journey he would never forget. He **constantly** had to use his stick to **locate** the road, to determine where the water was most **shallow**. At places it was waist deep, and progress was slow. At several points, he lost the road and had to swim. After some distance, he was **relieved to** find two friends of his uncle who were also returning to their village. They decided to move ahead together.

हिन्दी अनुवाद— उसने अपने आप को एक लम्बी, मजबूत छड़ी से लैस किया और अपनी 18 किमी. की यात्रा अपने गाँव की तरफ, बाढ़ के पानी में ही शुरू की। ये एक ऐसी यात्रा थी जिसे वह कभी नहीं भूल पाएगा। उसे रास्ता ढूँढ़ने के लिए लगातार छड़ी का इस्तेमाल करना पड़ रहा था, यह जानने के लिए कि कहाँ पानी कम गहरा है। कहीं-कहीं पानी कमर जितना गहरा था तो उसकी चाल धीमी पड़ जाती। कहीं-कहीं जमीन न मिलती तो उसे तैरना पड़ता। कुछ दूरी पर उसे अपने चाचा के दोस्तों को देखकर तसल्ली मिली वे भी गाँव वापस जा रहे थे। उन्होंने साथ जाने का निर्णय लिया।

5. As they **waded** through the waters, the scenes they **witnessed** grew more and more **macabre**. They had to push away many human bodies– men, women, children–and carcasses of dogs, goats and cattle that the **current** swept against them as they moved ahead. In every village that they passed, they could barely see a house standing. Prashant now wept out loud and long. He was sure that his family could not have **survived** this **catastrophe**.

Eventually, Prashant reached his village, Kalikuda. His heart went cold. Where their home once stood, there were only **remnants of** its roof. Some of their belongings were caught, **mangled** and **twisted** in the branches of trees just visible above the dark waters. Young Prashant decided to go to the Red Cross **shelter** to look for his family.

हिन्दी अनुवाद— जैसे-जैसे वे पानी में तैरकर आगे बढ़ रहे थे, जो दृश्य उन्हें दिखा वह और भी भयानक था। उन्हें बहुत से मानव शवों–आदमी, महिलाओं, बच्चों–और कुत्ते, बकरी और मवेशियों की लाशों को आगे की तरफ ढकेलना पड़ रहा था, वे जैसे बढ़ रहे थे पानी के तेज बहाव से ये शव इन लोगों की तरफ बढ़ रहे थे। वे जिस भी गाँव से निकल कर जा रहे थे, उन्हें शायद ही कोई घर खड़ा मिल रहा था। प्रशान्त अब जोर-जोर से और देर तक रोता रहा। अब उसे पूरा विश्वास हो गया कि उसका परिवार इस प्राकृतिक विपदा में नहीं बचा होगा।

अंततः प्रशान्त अपने गाँव कालीकुडा पहुँच गया। वह ठण्डा पड़ गया। जहाँ कभी उनके घर हुआ करते थे वहाँ सिर्फ थोड़ा-सा छत का हिस्सा दिख रहा था। उन लोगों की कुछ वस्तुएँ कटी-फटी, मुड़ी-तुड़ी पेड़ों की शाखाओं में उलझी, काले पानी के ऊपर दिखायी दे रही थीं। किशोर प्रशान्त ने निश्चय किया कि वह रेड क्रास आश्रय स्थल में जाकर अपने परिवार की खोज करेगा।

6. Among the first people he saw in the crowd was his maternal grandmother. Weak with hunger, she rushed to him, her hands **outstretched**

📖 Word-Meaning

Huddled (हडल्ड) = together/sat closely साथ में दुबक कर बैठना। **flashed through his mind** (फ्लैश्ड थ्रू हिज़ माइन्ड) = came to mind दिमाग में आना। **bereaved** (बिरीव्ड) = suffering from loss of someone किसी की मृत्यु या गम से पीड़ित। **ceased** (सीज़्ड) = stopped रुकना। **recede** (रिसीड) = to reduce कम होना। **pleaded** (प्लीडेड) = requested प्रार्थना की।

📖 Word-Meaning

Equipped (इक्विप्ड) = armed लैस। **sturdy** (स्टर्डी) = strong मजबूत। **expedition** (एक्सपोडिशन) = difficult journey कठिन यात्रा। **constantly** (कांसटेन्टली) = continuously लगातार। **locate** (लोकेट) = to find out पता लगाना। **shallow** (शैलो) = less deep उथला। **relieved** (रिलीव्ड) = give a hand तसल्ली मिलना।

📖 Word-Meaning

Waded (वेडेड) = went through लाँघना।
witnessed (विटनेस्ड) = to see देखना। **macabre** (मैकेबर) = horrifying भयानक। **current** (करेंट) = flow of water बहाव। **survived** (सरवाइव्ड) = alive जीवित रहना/बचना। **catastrophe** (कैटेस्ट्रेफी) = natural tragedy प्राकृतिक विपदा। **eventually** (इनेवचुएली) = finally अंततः। **remnants** (रेमनेन्ट्स) = remaining parts बचा हुआ। **mangled** (मैंगल्ड) = broken टूटे। **twisted** (ट्विसटेड) = bent मुड़े। **shelter** (शेल्टर) = refuge आश्रय।

her eyes **brimming**. It was a **miracle**. They had long given him up for dead. Quickly word spread and his **extended** family **gathered** around him, and **hugged** him tight in relief. Prashant **anxiously scanned** the **motley, battered** group. His brother and sister, his uncles and aunts, they all seemed to be there.

हिन्दी अनुवाद—भीड़ में जो पहला इंसान दिखा वह उसकी नानी थीं। भूख से बेहाल, वह उसकी तरफ तेजी से आयीं, उन्होंने उसकी तरफ अपने हाथ फैलाए, उनकी आँखें खुशी से चमक रहीं थीं। ये चमत्कार था। उन सबने उसे अब तक मरा ही समझ लिया था।

जल्दी ही यह समाचार सब तरफ फैल गया और उसका विस्तृत परिवार उसके चारों ओर जमा हो गया। उन्होंने उसे कसकर चिपटा लिया और चैन की सांस ली। प्रशान्त ने उत्सुक्ता से अलग तरीके से परेशान हाल लोगों को देखा। उसके भाई-बहन, चाचा-चाची, सब वहीं-कहीं ही थे।

7. By the next morning, as he took in the **desperate** situation in the shelter, he decided to get a **grip** over himself. He sensed a deathly grief settling upon the 2500 strong crowed in the shelter. Eighty-six lives were lost in the village. All the ninety-six houses had been washed away. It was their fourth day at the shelter. So far they had survived on green coconuts, but there were too few to go around such **a tumult of** people.

हिन्दी अनुवाद—अगली सुबह तक आश्रय स्थल की इतनी बदहाल स्थिति को देखते हुए उसने खुद ही इसे नियंत्रण करने का निश्चय किया। उसने भांप लिया कि इस आश्रय में 2500 लोगों की भीड़ का दुख कैसे कम हो पायेगा। गाँव में 86 लोगों की जान पहले ही जा चुकी है। सारे के सारे 96 घर बाढ़ में बह गये। आश्रय में ये उन सबका चौथा दिन था। अब तक वे सब हरे नारियल खाकर ही जिन्दा थे पर इतनी सारी भीड़ के हिसाब से वे भी कम थे, वे कितने दिन चलते।

8. Prashant, all of nineteen years, decided to step in as leader of his village, if no one did. He **organised a** group of youths and elders to jointly **pressurise the** merchant once again to part with his rice. This time the **delegation** succeeded and returned **triumphantly**, wading through the **receding** waters with food for the entire shelter. No one cared that the rice was already rotting. Branches from fallen trees were gathered to light a **reluctant** and slow fire, on which to cook the rice. For the first time in four days, the **survivors** at the cyclone shelter were able to fill their **bellies**. His next task was to organise a team of youth **volunteers** to clean the shelter of **filth,** urine, **vomit,** and floating carcasses, and to **tend** to the wounds and fractures of the many who had been injured.

हिन्दी अनुवाद—प्रशान्त जो कि सिर्फ उन्नीस साल का था, ने निश्चत किया कि अगर कोई राजी न हुआ तो वही गाँव का नेता बन जाएगा। उसने कुछ नौजवानों और कुछ बुजुर्गों को मिलाकर एक दल बनाया और उसने कहा कि वे व्यापारी से जोर देकर कहें और सबके लिए चावल लेकर आए। इस बार दल सफल हुआ और खुशी-खुशी कम होते पानी में होते हुए सब लोगों के लिए चावल लेकर आए। किसी ने देखने की भी परवाह नहीं की कि चावल पहले से ही सड़े हुए थे। टूटे हुए पेड़ों की शाखाओं को तोड़कर धीमी आँच लगाई गयी जिस पर चावल पके। चार दिनों में पहली बार तूफान के बाद जिन्दा बचे लोगों ने पेट भरकर खाना खाया। अब उसका दूसरा काम था कि नौजवान स्वयं सेवकों की टीम बनाए जो गन्दगी, मलमूत्र, उल्टी व तैरते हुए शवों को हटाएँ और घायलों की सेवा करें जो तूफान में जख्मी हो गये थे या जिनकी हड्डियाँ टूट गयी थीं।

9. On the fifth day, a military helicopter flew over the shelter and dropped some food parcels. It then did not return. The youth task force gathered empty **utensils** from the shelter. Then they **deputed the** children to lie in the sand left by the waters around the shelter with these utensils on their stomachs to **communicate** to the passing helicopters that they were hungry. The message got through, and after that the helicopter made regular rounds of the shelter, **airdropping** food and other basic needs.

हिन्दी अनुवाद—पाँचवे दिन सेना का एक हेलिकॉप्टर आश्रय स्थल के ऊपर उड़ा और खाने के पैकेट गिराए। वह फिर वापस नहीं आया। नौजवानों की टोली ने आश्रय से खाली बर्तन जमा किए।

Word-Meaning

Outstretched (आउटस्ट्रेच्ड) = spread out फैले हुए। **brimming** (ब्रिमिंग) = full of happiness खुशी से भरपूर। **miracle** (मिरैकल) = marvel चमत्कार। **extended** (एक्सटेन्डेड) = विस्तृत/फैली हुई। **gathered** (गैदर्ड) = come close इकट्ठे होना। **hugged** (हग्ड) = embraced आलिंगन किया। **relief** (रिलीफ) = satisfied तसल्ली से। **anxiously** (एंकशियसली) = excitedly उत्सुकता से। **scanned** (स्कैन्ड) = examined निरीक्षण किया। **motley** (मोटले) = of different kind अलग तरह के। **battered** (बैटर्ड) = suffering पीड़ित।

Word-Meaning

Desperate (डेस्परेट) = hopeless निराश। **grip** (ग्रिप) = catch/hold पकड़ना। **tumult** (ट्यूमल्ट) = cluster भीड़।

Word-Meaning

Organised (ऑरगेनाइज्ड) = arranged संयोजित करना। **pressurise** (प्रेशराइज) = forcibly दबाव बनाना। **delegation** (डेलीगेशन) = group समूह/दल। **triumphantly** (ट्रायम्फैन्टली) = victoriously जीत। **receding** (रिसीडिंग) = decrease कम होना। **Seluctant** (रिलक्टेन्ट) = slow धीमा। **survivors** (सरवाइवर्स) = remnant जीवित बचे लोग। **bellies** (बेलीज) = abdomens पेट। **volunteers** (वौलन्टीयर्स) = willing workers स्वयं सेवक। **filth** (फिल्थ) = dirt गंदगी। **vomit** (वौमिट) = puke वमन। **tend** (टेन्ड) = take care of देखभाल करना।

Word-Meaning

Utensils (यूटेन्सिल) = pots बर्तन। **deputed** (डेप्यूटेड) = posted नियुक्त। **communicate** (कम्यूनिकेट) = get across the message संदेश पहुँचाना। **air dropping** (एयरड्रॉपिंग) = dropping from air हवा में गिराना।

फिर उन्होंने पानी कम होने के बाद जो रेत रह गयी थी, वहाँ बच्चों को लिटाया और उनके पेटों पर वे बर्तन रख दिए, ये उन्होंने हेलिकॉप्टर को संदेश दिया था कि वे भूखे हैं। यह संदेश काम कर गया और उसके बाद हेलिकॉप्टर ने नियमित रूप से चक्कर लगाए और हवा में खाना और दूसरी जरूरत की सामग्री गिराता रहा।

10. Prashant found that a large number of children had been **orphaned**. He brought them together and put up a polythene sheet shelter for them. Women were **mobilised** to look after them, while the men **secured** food and materials for the shelter.

हिन्दी अनुवाद—प्रशान्त को मालूम हुआ कि काफी सारे बच्चे अनाथ हो गए हैं। उसने उन सबको इकट्ठा किया और पोलीथिन शीट से उनके लिए आश्रय बनाया। महिलाओं को उनकी देखभाल के लिए संगठित किया जबकि आदमियों को खाने का सामान व आश्रय में जिस भी सामान की जरूरत थी, उसके इन्तजाम का काम दिया गया।

11. As the weeks passed, Prashant was quick to recognise that the women and children were sinking deeper and deeper in their grief. He **persuaded** the women to start working in the food-for work programme started by an NGO, and for the children he organised sports events. He himself loved to play cricket, and so he organised cricket matches for children. Prashant engaged, with other volunteers, in helping the widows and children to pick up the broken pieces of their lives. The **initial** government plan was to set up institutions for orphans and widows. However, this step was successfully **resisted,** as it was felt that in such institutions, children would grow up without love, and widows would suffer from **stigma** and loneliness. Prashant's group believed orphans should be resettled in their own community itself, possibly in new **foster** families made up of children widows and children without adult care.

हिन्दी अनुवाद—जैसे–जैसे हफ्ते गुजर रहे थे, प्रशान्त को शीघ्र ही महसूस हुआ कि महिलाएँ और बच्चे दिन पर दिन दुख में गुमसुम होते जा रहे हैं। उसने महिलाओं को एक एन. जी. ओ. द्वारा चलाए गए कार्यक्रम 'फूड और वर्क' में काम करने को मनाया और बच्चों के लिए खेलकूद का आयोजन किया। उसे खुद क्रिकेट खेलने का शौक था तो उसने बच्चों के लिए क्रिकेट मैच का आयोजन किया। प्रशान्त ने अन्य स्वयंसेवकों के साथ महिलाओं और बच्चों को मिलाकर उनमें ही परिवार बनाने की कोशिश की। सरकार ऐसे अनाथ बच्चों व विधवाओं के लिए संस्थान खोलने का विचार कर रही थी। पर इस विचार पर विरोध किया गया क्योंकि इन लोगों को लगा कि अगर इन संस्थानों में ये रहेंगे तो बच्चे बिना प्यार पाये बड़े होंगे और विधवाएँ कलंक और अकेलेपन का शिकार हो जाएगीं। प्रशान्त और उसके साथियों का मानना था कि अनाथ बच्चों को उनके ही समुदाय में विस्थापित कर दिया जाए अगर हो सके तो बिना बच्चों वाली विधवाओं व अनाथ बच्चों को जोड़कर नये परिवार बना दिए जाएं।

12. It is six months after the devastation of the super cyclone. This time Prashant's **wounded** spirit has **healed** simply because he had no time to bother about his own pain. His handsome, youthful face is what the widows and orphaned children of his village **seek out** most in darkest hour of grief.

हिन्दी अनुवाद—अब चक्रवाती तूफान की विनाश लीला को छह महिने बीत चुके हैं। अब तक प्रशान्त का जो घायल, दुख से भरा मन था वह भी दुखों से उबर चुका है क्योंकि वह ये सब करने में इतना व्यस्त है कि उसे अपने दुख के लिए वक्त नहीं है। अब जब वह विधवाओं और अनाथ बच्चों को दुख भरे दिनों से निकाल कर वापस से गाँव में अपनी दिनचर्या में देखता है तो वह नौजवान खिल उठता है वह संतुष्ट हो जाता है।

📖 Word-Meaning

Orphaned (ऑरफन्ड) = having lost parents अनाथ। **mobilised** (मोबिलाइज्ड) = organised संगठित किया। **secured** (सिक्योर्ड) = arranged इन्तजाम किया।

📖 Word-Meaning

Persuaded (परसुएडेड) = made to agree मनाया। **initial** (इनिशियल) = preliminary प्रारम्भिक। **resisted** (रेजिस्टेड) = to stop रोकना। **stigma** (स्टिग्मा) = social bad mark सामाजिक कलंक। **foster** (फॉस्टर) = to adopt अपनाना।

📖 Word-Meaning

Wounded (वून्डेड) = hurt घायल। **healed** (हील्ड) = cured ठीक हो गए। **seek out** (सीक आउट) = search तलाश करना।

📝 Character Sketch

➢ **Prashant**
1. Prashant was a nineteen year old boy of Kolikuda village in Orissa. He suffered a personal tragedy when he lost his mother. At that time he was only twelve. Seven years later on 27th October 1999, he encountered another tragedy when he got trapped by the cyclone devastation that hit his state.
2. Prashant's strong and courageous character came to fore at this time of crisis. He had immense love for his family. He spent two days at his friend's

house like two years. He sat out for his village to look for his family although the flood water was yet to recede fully in Ersama. He was wise, he did not start his journey without preparation. He carried a strong slick to wade his way through the muddy water that covered the entire area. This journey shows that he was brave as he had to make his way through floating dead bodies and debris.

3. Prashant had a sensitive soul. He did not brood long over his own sorrow and took note of the suffering of the other people in the Red Cross shelter. He had great leadership qualities. He organised the elders and youth in a group and took the initiative to lead the people in finding solutions to their problems.

4. Prashant had ample foresight. He was quick to notice the depression of widows and children. He arranged to settle them in their own communities. Prashant stands as a role model for everyone.

NCERT Folder

Think About it

1. **What havoc has the super cyclone wreaked in the life of the people of Orissa?**

   Ans. The storm caused wide spread destruction. Most of the houses were destroyed. Many people and cattle lost their lives. Their dead bodies were floating in flood water. When water receded, the dead bodies were scattered all around. Those who survived had no shelter or home. They did not have food to eat. This continued for 26 hours. Children became orphan and many women became widows. Survival was very difficult in such condition. People were fully depended on aid programmes run by several institutions. Overall the situation was very bad and frightening.

2. **How has Prashant, a teenager, been able to help the people of his village?**

   Ans. Prashant organized a group of youth and elderly people to pressurize the merchant to part with rice. He organized a team of young volunteers to clean filth, urine, vomit and carcasses from the area of shelter. They took care of wounds and fractures of people who were injured.

   He persuaded people to take care of each other. Foster families were formed of orphans and widows. He organized sports events for children and asked the people to participate in 'food for work' programmes. This way, Prashant became a ray of hope for all.

3. **How have the people of the community helped one aother? What role do the women of Kalikuda play during these days?**

   Ans. Prashant took the initiative and mobilised all the people of the community to help one another. One group arranged for food, another group cleaned the premises of the shelter. Volunteers took care of wounds and fractures of injured people.

   Women adopted orphaned children to form foster families. They started working in 'food for work' programmes.

4. **Why do Prashant and other volunteers resist the plan to set up institutions for orphans and widows? What alternatives do they consider?**

   Ans. People resisted the plan as they thought that orphaned children living in such institutions would grow without love. Widows living there would be suffering from social stigma and loneliness.

   The people made foster families wherein childless widows adopted orphaned children. Now they had a family and were able to settle within community itself.

5. **Do you think Prashant is a good leader? Do you think young people can get together to help people during natural calamities?**

   Ans. Prashant was definitely a good leader. He took initiative to organize people for the benefit of themselves and the society. He ensured that immediate needs of people were met. The area was kept clean to avoid outbreak of any disease. He then persuaded people to form foster families for rehabilitation of orphaned children and widows.

   Natural calamity affects all classes of people. Their situation becomes grim. Young people can organize themselves in various groups to perform various tasks. This way all are benefited.

   Youth is always full of energy and brimming with confidence. Channelizing their power in right direction can benefit the society.

Talk About it

I. **Talk about it:**

   Talk about the preparedness of the community for a natural disaster. (You can talk about evacuation plans and rehabilitation, permanent safe shelters, warning systems, relief efforts, building materials to withstand cyclone/flood/earthquake, ie, safe housing, peoples' organisation of their own rescue, the survival instinct etc.)

   Ans. We are the part of community. Natural calamities may occur anytime. We have read and witnessed many such natural disasters which caused devastation all around. Occurrence of such calamities is not under our control but to prepare ourselves to face such devastation is under our control. It precautions are taken timely, the effects of such calamities may be reduced.

Important Questions

Extract Based Questions

Read the following extracts carefully and answer the questions that follow—

I. A raging, deadly, brown sheet of water covered everything as far the eye could see; only fractured cement houses still stood in a few places. Bloated animal carcasses and human corpses floated in every direction. All round even huge old trees had fallen. Two coconut trees had fallen on the roof of their house. This was a blessing in disguise, because the tender coconuts from the trees kept the trapped family from starving in the several days that followed.

1. What does the word 'fractured' imply in this extract?
   (a) cemented   (b) broken
   (c) followed   (d) floated
   Ans. (b) broken

2. What helped the family from starving?
   (a) tender coconuts   (b) hard sugarcanes
   (c) tender sugarcanes (d) hard coconuts
   Ans. (a) tender coconuts

3. What all things were floating in the water?
   (a) animal carcasses (b) broken houses
   (c) human corpses   (d) both (a) and (c)
   Ans. (d) both (a) and (c)

4. What is the antonym of 'tender'?
   (a) soft   (b) feeble
   (c) hard   (d) weak
   Ans. (c) hard

II. I. As the weeks passed. Prashant was quick to recognise that the women and children were sinking deeper and deeper in their grief. He persuaded the women to start working in the food-for work programme started by an NGO, and for the children he organised sports events. He himself loved to play cricket, and so he organised cricket matches for children. Prashant engaged, with other volunteers, in helping the widows and children to pick up the broken pieces of their lives.

1. Which word in the extract implies 'understand'?
   (a) sinking   (b) recognise
   (c) engaged   (d) organised
   Ans. (b) recognise

2. Who loved to play cricket?
   (a) women   (b) men
   (c) Prashant   (d) Prashant's uncle
   Ans. (c) Prashant

3. In which programme women started working?
   (a) Food-for work   (b) food-for water
   (c) food and water   (d) work and play
   Ans. (a) food-for work

4. Write the synonym of 'persuade'?
   (a) dissuade   (b) discourage
   (c) advice   (d) turn off
   Ans. (c) advice

Multiple Choice Questions

Choose the correct options to answer the following questions :

1. Prashant went to Ersama to spend a day with:
   (a) friend   (b) brother
   (c) father   (d) sister
   Ans. (a) friend

2. What was the duration of crazy cyclone?
   (a) 48 hours   (b) 24 hours
   (c) 36 hours   (d) 72 hours
   Ans. (c) 36 hours

3. After how many years of his mother's death did Prashant go to Ersama?
   (a) 4   (b) 5
   (c) 6   (d) 7
   Ans. (d) 7

4. When did the storm hit the town Ersama?
   (a) 1989   (b) 1979
   (c) 1969   (d) 1999
   Ans. (d) 1999

5. How old was Prashant?
   (a) 18 years   (b) 19 years
   (c) 17 years   (d) 20 years
   Ans. (b) 19 years

6. How many coconut trees fell on the rooftop?
   (a) One   (b) Two
   (c) Three   (d) Four
   Ans. (b) Two

7. What was the name of Prashant's village?
   (a) Maligudi   (b) Ersama
   (c) Kalahandi   (d) Kalikuda
   Ans. (d) Kalikuda

8. Whom did Prashant meet on the way back home after the storm?
   (a) his father's friends (b) his cousins
   (c) his uncle's friends   (d) his father
   Ans. (c) his uncle's friends

9. How many houses washed away at Prashant's village due to the cyclone?
   (a) 90   (b) 99
   (c) 96   (d) 79
   Ans. (c) 96

10. **What did Prashant love to play?**
    (a) badminton   (b) football
    (c) chess   (d) cricket
    Ans. (d) cricket

11. **Who was the first person Prashant saw in the crowd at Red Cross?**
    (a) His father
    (b) His maternal grandmother
    (c) His paternal grandmother
    (d) His mother
    Ans. (b) His maternal grandmother

12. **Whom did the flood victims send signals to for food help?**
    (a) Military helicopter   (b) Strangers
    (c) Government   (d) Prashant
    Ans. (a) Military helicopter

13. **How did Prashant clean the filth?**
    (a) with the help of volunteers
    (b) with machines
    (c) with sweepers
    (d) with children
    Ans. (a) with the help of volunteers

14. **Who helped the orphans?**
    (a) military   (b) widow women
    (c) men   (d) all
    Ans. (b) widow women

15. **What could be used by youngsters to help overcome any adversity?**
    (a) strength   (b) courage
    (c) energy   (d) all
    Ans. (d) all

Very Short Answer Type Questions

1. When did the cyclone hit Orissa?
2. Where was Prashant when the cyclone hit Orissa?
3. Why had Prashant gone to Ersama?
4. What was the name of Prashant's village?
5. Who met Prashant on his way back to the village?
6. What had Prashant to push away on his way back to the village?
7. What did Prashant find about children in the relief camp?
8. How did Prashant feel when he reached his village?
9. How did Prashant travel back to his village from Ersama?
10. How did people receive food in Prashant's village?

Short Answer Type Questions

1. Where were Prashant and his friends during the two days of the super cyclone?
2. What did Prashant and his friend's family live on? Where did they get their food from?
3. Why was it difficult for Prashant to travel back to his village?
4. How long did the cyclone last? How did Prashant and his friend's family spend the stormy night?
5. 'This heart went cold' when he reached his village. Why?
6. How did Prashant manage food for village people?

Long Answer Type Questions

1. Describe the destruction caused by the super cyclone as narrated in the story 'Weathering the storm in Ersama'?
2. Describe how Prashant helped himself and others at the time of natural calamity?

Match the Following (Vocabulary)

S.No.	Column-A	Column-B
1.	Fury	moved in circle
2.	Disguise	swollen
3.	Carcasses	wave
4.	Pleaded	natural tragedy
5.	Catastrophe	cluster
6.	Swirled	anger
7.	Tumult	strong
8.	Bloated	farce
9.	Sturdy	requested
10.	Surge	dead bodies

Answers

S.No.	Column-A	Column-B
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