

Deccan Chronicle - Chennai 31.07.2009

Sat images show Marina growing

July 31st, 2009 By Our Correspondent

Chennai

July 30: If keen-eyed visitors to Marina beach feel that the sea seems to be retreating a bit, they are right. Experts have said that Marina beach is expanding by 40 square metres every year, while the beach in North Chennai is losing 77 square metres of land annually.

This was detected in a study using remote sensing and geographic information systems by Dr R. R. Krishnamurthy of the applied geology department in the University of Madras. Dr S. Ramachandran, vice-chancellor of the university and an oceanographer, was also part of the research team. "The establishment of an artificial port in the 1880s hastened erosion on its northern part and accretion on its southern part," said Mr Ramachandran.

Mr Krishnamurthy added that the closure of the Adyar river mouth was behind the popular perception of the sea coming closer near Srinivasapuram in Pattinapakkam. Though the expansion of the Marina beach will delight fishing communities in Nochikuppam and other hamlets, the erosion in North Chennai coast is worrisome since it continues despite construction of groynes in 2004.

"It is true that groynes have helped develop a 10 metre-long beach

along a 3 km stretch in North Chennai,” said Mr Krishnamurthy. “But groynes have come late after over 749 metre of land was eroded.”

Mr Krishnamurthy’s study also shows that there is impending danger of Pulicat lake merging with the sea if enough precautionary measures are not taken.