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NAVAL DIVERS RESCUE MAROONED PASSENGERS
ARMY BOATS AND AIR FORCE HELICOPTERS ALSO PRESSED INTO ACTION

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Naval divers evacuated to safety all passengers from the Madras Howrah Janata Express which was marooned by the swirling waters of Vamsadhara near Sirikakulum on Friday according to reports reaching here today. 500 villagers were also evacuated to safer areas. Eastern Naval Command at Vishakhapatnam despatched a team of 19 divers, 15 officers and 60 sailors proficient in swimming and life saving operations to render assistance to the stricken population in the flood affected area. A Naval Medical Team is also assisting the civil authorities. Over 10,000 food packets were dropped by the naval and air force helicopters in the flood affected areas.

The advance Naval Operational base set up at Sirikakulum coordinated the rescue operations by naval helicopters and boats, five army boats and three IAF helicopters which have also joined the relief operations. The Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh and three Ministers carried out an aerial survey of the flood affected areas in an Indian Navy helicopter. Vice Admiral M.K. Roy apprised the Chief Minister about the flood situation and rescue operations who appreciated the navy's efforts towards the flood relief operations.

YNS/RM