

**DEVELOPMENT OF TRANSPORT AND
COMMUNICATION IN TRAVANCORE (1860-1948):
THE SOCIO-ECONOMIC IMPACT**

Thesis
submitted to the University of Calicut
for the award of the Degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY IN HISTORY

JIBIN MATHEW



**DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY
UNIVERSITY OF CALICUT
2019**

DECLARATION

I, **Jibin Mathew.**, do hereby declare that the dissertation entitled **DEVELOPMENT OF TRANSPORT AND COMMUNICATION IN TRAVANCORE (1860-1948): THE SOCIO-ECONOMIC IMPACT**, submitted to the University of Calicut in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of **Doctor of Philosophy in History**, is a bona fide work done by me under the guidance of **Dr. Muhammed Maheen. A.**, Professor and Head, Department of History, University of Calicut, and that I have not submitted it or any part of it for any degree, diploma or title before.

University of Calicut,

Jibin Mathew

Dr. Muhammed Maheen. A.

Professor and Head
Department of History
University of Calicut

CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the dissertation entitled **DEVELOPMENT OF TRANSPORT AND COMMUNICATION IN TRAVANCORE (1860-1948): THE SOCIO-ECONOMIC IMPACT**, submitted to the University of Calicut in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of **Doctor of Philosophy in History**, is a bona fide work carried out by **Jibin Mathew.**, under my guidance and supervision. Neither the dissertation nor any part of it has been submitted for the award of any degree, diploma or title before.

University of Calicut
Date:

Supervising Teacher

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CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES
LIST OF MAPS
ABBREVIATIONS

	Page No.
INTRODUCTION	1-20
CHAPTER I TRAVANCORE UNDER BRITISH RULE	21-67
CHAPTER II DEVELOPMENT OF MODERN MEANS OF TRANSPORT	68-166
CHAPTER III INTRODUCTION OF MODERN COMMUNICATION SYSTEM AND IT'S EXPANSION	167-234
CHAPTER IV THE SOCIO – ECONOMIC IMPACT	235-325
CONCLUSION	326-339
GLOSSARY	340-342
APPENDICES	343-358
MAPS	359-371
ILLUSTRATIONS	372-383
BIBLIOGRAPHY	384-417

LIST OF TABLES

Table No.	Title	Page No.
2. 1	The distribution of Toll gates in Travancore	100
2. 2	Table showing the schedule of Rates for all toll gates	104
3. 1	Table of year and number of private letters carried	171
3. 2	Working of the Hundi service in Travancore from 1901-02 to 1947-48	179
3. 3	Number of Anchal offices and Letter boxes in Travancore from 1892-93 to 1947-48	181
3. 4	Working of the Anchal Savings Bank in Travancore from 1912-13 to 1947-48	183
3. 5	Different Types of Anchal Transit service from 1919-20 to 1947-48	188
3. 6	Number of Anchal Letters, Cards, Newspapers, Parcels and Packets Issued in Travancore from 1927-28 to 1940-41	189
3. 7	Working of the Imperial Post Offices in Travancore from 1934-35 to 1946-47	210
3. 8	Working of the British Postal Savings Bank in Travancore from 1934-35 to 1946-47	211
3. 9	Table showing the number of Letters, Post cards, Newspapers and Packets issued in through Imperial Post Offices in Travancore from 1935-36 to 1940-41	214
4. 1	The Area under plantation crops in Travancore (Area in thousand acres)	250
4. 2	Table of Joint-Stock Companies, Banks in Travancore.	254
4. 3	The Total Value and Percentage distribution of the Chief Exports and Imports of Travancore, 1870-71 to 1938-39	255
4. 4	Statement showing the Sanctioned allotment for the maintenance of roads as compared with the toll revenue for years 1921-22 to 1933-34.	271

4. 5	The Number of Vehicles Registered in Travancore from 1936 to 1938	272
4. 6	Revenue from Nationalization of State Transport in Travancore	274
4. 7	Statement of guaranteed interest paid to the S. I. R Co. by the Travancore state.	277
4. 8	Statement of Income from Railway to the Travancore from 1924-25 to 1941-42.	278
4. 9	Travancore Railway summary of passenger Traffic carried during the Year from 1926-27 to 1946-47.	280
4. 10	Table Showing the Income and Expenditure of Anchal Service in Travancore from 1899-'00 to 1940-41	284
4. 11	Working of the Telegraph offices in Travancore from 1926-27 to 1946-47	293
4. 12	Table showing the Total Value of Exports and Imports, Value of Imports and Total Value of Trade from 1854-55 to 1936-37	310

LIST OF MAPS

Map No.	Title	Page No.
1	Map of the Madras Presidency	359
2	Map of the Erstwhile Princely State of Travancore	360
3	Map of Means of Communication in Travancore	361
4	Map of Nationalization of Road Transport in Travancore	362
5	Map of Toll gate at Aramboly	363
6	Map of Travancore Coast and Backwaters	364
7	Map of Opening a Canal from Alleppey to Changanacherry	365
8	Map of Nationalization of Water Transport in Travancore	366
9	Map of South Indian Railway	367
10	Map of Anchal Postal Service in 1883	368
11	Map of Anchal Postal Service in 1902	369
12	Map Showing the Main Trunk Telegraph Lines of communication of the World	370
13	Map of Main Industries by Taluks in Travancore	371

ABBREVIATIONS

AIR	:	All India Radio
BBC	:	British Broadcasting Service
EIRC	:	East Indian Railway Company
ESRM	:	Ezhava Social Reform Movement
GIPR	:	Great Indian Penisular Railway
IBC	:	Indian Broadcasting Corporation
KDHP	:	Kannan Devan Hills Produce
LMS	:	London Mission Society
ME	:	Malayalam Era
NSS	:	Nair Service Society
PHE	:	Pallivasal Hydro Electric project
SIR	:	South Indian Railway
SNDP	:	Sree Narayana Dharma Paripalana Yogam
TAS	:	Travancore Anchal Service
TRAS	:	Travancore Railway Anchal Service

INTRODUCTION

Development is a cumulative process which brings out a continuous improvement in the process of change, both physical and human. Development of infrastructures such as transport and communication is an essential prerequisite for development. By adopting new technologies, infrastructure can be developed or adapted for economic and human growth. To substantiate this argument, it is fair to argue that the transport and communication is a powerful agent of social transformation which breaks isolation, brings new ideas and dispels ignorance. The history of humanity shows the history of movements of peoples towards different directions of the world. The results were the geographical discoveries, formation of colonial capitalism, scientific revolution etc which caused unprecedented impacts on the whole society. The role of Transport and Communication is essential for the growth and development of economies, as stated earlier. In other words, industrial revolution and colonialism were the twins that marked the development of transport and communication in the history of the world. This was true as in the case of Indian sub- continent which was a British colony.

England was the country which experienced the Industrial Revolution first which had began in the seventeenth century in England which later spread to Western and Central Europe, but the process of industrialization varied from one country to another.¹ The differences between the different nations in the degree of industrialization gradually fostered a spirit of national rivalry among them. Every European nation tried to surpass the others in developing its machines industries, exploiting its natural resources, stimulating its trade, both domestic and foreign, and increasing the social security and purchasing power of its citizens. Economic nationalism thus

¹ Ranjan Chakrabarti, *A History Of The Modern World: An Outline*, New Delhi, 2012, p.123.

became the order of the day everywhere in Europe and it brought with it tariff wars, colonial rivalry, and exploitation of the underdeveloped countries of the world.² It's spark England became the 'workshop of the world', the whole of England became dotted with factories and new industrial cities came into existence. Industrialization, however, did not remain confined to England alone. Other European countries like France, Germany and Russia went through a similar process. Europe reached the climax of its material development with world supremacy in industrial production. Rapid increase in industrial production achieved as a result of it transformed Europe towards the achievement of supremacy in conquering the world.

The basic character of the British rule, since its emergence in India in 1757, passed through different stages in its long history of the imperialist rule in India. The first period is that of the merchant capital, represented by the East India Company, and extending in the general character of its system to the end of the eighteenth century. The second period is that of the industrial capital which established new basis of exploitation in India in the nineteenth century. The third is the modern period of finance capital, developing into a distinct system of exploitation of India on the remains of the old, and growing up from its first beginnings in the closing years of the nineteenth century to its fuller development in most recent phase.³

The British theory, or rather strategy, of development of India was based on the adoption of policies aimed at (a) the provision of law and order

² *Ibid.*, p.124.

³ Suresh Kumar, *Political Evolution in Kerala 1859-1938*, New Delhi, 1994, p.18
This State of affairs was described by Karl Marx in the following ways."Indian situation up to the middle of nineteenth century turns on three main factors: first, the destructive role of British in India, uprooting the old society; Second, the regenerative role of British rule in India in the period of free-trade capitalism, laying down the material premises for the future new society: third the consequent practical conclusion of the necessity of a political transformation whereby the Indian people should free themselves from imperialist rule in order to build the new society" R.Palme Dutt, *India To-Day*, Calcutta, 1986, pp.95-96.

(b) the promotion of private property rights in land (c) the development of foreign trade on the basis of the free-trade principle (d) the promotion of means of transport and (e) the investment of British capital. The logic of private gain, individual enterprise and the operation of the market would then take care of development. This strategy was obviously based on the classical economists' view of the desired policy for development.⁴

The encounter between European political economy and pre-colonial political economy of India in the eighteenth century provided a political fluidity; which led to radical changes in the economy, and accelerated the process of social mobility. Thus, colonialism produced new forms of civil society but preserved many elements of the old regime, which were less expensive and expedient tools for exploitation.

In a sense the colonies underwent a fundamental transformation under colonialism which led to their becoming structured colonial societies. Moreover, colonialism did make the colony an integral part of the world capitalist system.⁵ Modernization as a historical concept includes such specific aspects of change as industrialization of the economy or secularization of ideas, geographical and social mobility.

Colonialism was the chief agent of social modernity in subjugated societies. As a historical process, it brought about profound transformation in the economic, social, cultural and political structures of the societies over which it had established the relations of domination.⁶ The term modernization signifies the process of transformations from traditional societies to modern societies. In the British colonial phase Travancore society witnessed this process of social transformation to modernity. The nature and intensity of the

⁴ Bipan Chandra, *Essays On Colonialism*, New Delhi, 2014, p.169.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p.6.

⁶ S Thulaseedharan Assary, *Colonialism, Princely States and Struggle for Liberation: Travancore (1938 - 1948)*, New Delhi, 2009, p.44.

process varied between the princely states and the regions under direct British rule. Travancore was the most progressive and modern state in India. Social and political awareness of the people generated by the colonial interventions in varied forms and permutations acted as a causative factor in inaugurating a new era of social modernity in Travancore. Introduction of modern education, an active press, social reforms legislations, introduction of English medicine, etc. generated awareness among the people leading to social consciousness. In that sense social modernity was the byproduct of British colonialism in Travancore.⁷

In a predominantly agricultural country like Travancore, the infra-structural facilities that need development for economic growth were agricultural finance, irrigation, marketing, transport and communication. Economic development pre-requires reallocation and redistribution of the available wealth and resources. Reallocation and re-distribution of wealth and resources take place through the mobility of factors of production. For factors of production to be mobile, the infra-structure of the economy has to be developed and expanded.

The efficient means of communication, which alone can facilitate increased social mobility and mass participation, is one among them. All traditional societies were largely isolated and static while modern societies are essentially inter-related and mobile. Transformation of society is possible only by effecting improvements in transport and communication facilities like roads, canals and railways and developing media of communication like press, the newspaper, the radio etc. Thus the introduction of Public Works Department in 1860 in Travancore was the culmination of all the above mentioned factors.

⁷ Santhosh Kumar.R, 'Interrogating Colonial Modernity in Travancore' *Journal of Kerala Studies*, Vol.XXXX, March- December 2013, p.24.

The present study “Transport and Communication in Travancore (1860-1948): The Socio-Economic Impact” begins with the introduction of Public Works Department was in 1860. The improvements brought in the field of Transport and Communication and the extent to which they helped the process of modernization of traditional society in Travancore.

The means of transport facilities like Roads, Waterways, Railways and Air transport service were prevailed in Travancore. The *Anchal* service, the British Postal system, Telegraph, Telephone and Radio brought about a communication revolution in Travancore and led to much larger contacts between the people and the consequent modernization of the society through increased social mobility.

The significance of the Study

The present study deals with twin tools of change i.e. transport and communication. The research tries to find out the exact changes that happened in the traditional socio-economic scenario of Travancore after the middle of the 18th century, which seldom documented in Travancore history. The present study exclusively focuses on the Socio- Economic change happened in Travancore society after the introduction of Transport and Communication, hitherto unheard in the history of the princely state.

Limitations of the Study

The Administrative Reports from 1860 to 1948 are not fully available. The statistical Reports published by the Travancore government in the above said period is also not fully available. Many of the Archival related to the study sources are brittle both in Regional and central archives in Kerala and Tamilnadu. The secondary sources are also lacking with regard to the present study.

Review of Literature

T.K. Velupillai's, 'Travancore State Manual' in four volumes include the royal history of Travancore from ancient period. This chronicles of the state of Travancore begin with the legend of Parasurama about the origin of this land, and ends with the beginning of the reign of King Sree Chithira Thirunal Balarama Varma. Among them he points out franchise reforms, reforms in Public service, Temple Entry Proclamation, establishment of Travancore University, economic reforms and infrastructure development. However the drawback is that, being a Government publication the author chiefly engages in praising the activities of the Government rather than making a critical analysis.

V.Nagam Aiya's, 'The Travancore State Manual' in three volumes give us a vivid picture of Travancore and its people with its geographical peculiarities. It describes the physical features, flora and fauna. It also details out the archaeological sources along with the copies of important inscriptions in Tamil and Vattezhuthu scripts. Besides the political history of Travancore, there are a number of beautiful black and white pictures taken nearly a century ago.

'The Decline of Nair Dominance: Society and Politics in Travancore 1847-1908' by Robin Jeffrey, deals with the social and political history of Travancore from 1847 to 1908. Jeffrey expresses the British point of view that the colonial Government and the missionaries were responsible for all the developmental activities in Travancore. However, Jeffrey uses new approaches and perspectives such as socio-anthropological analysis which makes it a good inter-disciplinary research work.

Ulloor S.Parameswara Aiyer's 'Progress of Travancore under H.H. Sreemoolam Tirunal', is a peep into a very significant era of Travancore

history, when the seeds of development in several crucial areas were sown with inimitable farsightedness. The work assumes greater significance as it was written by a man of pre-eminence who had been very close to the ruler of the land.

‘Native Life in Travancore’ by Mateer Samuel, in this book the author discusses chiefly the religious and other social and moral aspect of Travancore. Further particulars of castes and ceremonies and chapter on the more abstract and stastical topics of legislation and judicial administration, land tenures and revenue on diversified population are available in it.

Amelia Bonea’s, ‘The News of Empire: Telegraphy, Journalism, and the Politics of Reporting in Colonial India C.1830-1900’, the work constructs the interconnected history of telegraphy and journalism by drawing on a wide range of historical material and through an in-depth analysis of the newspaper press. Questioning grand narratives of ‘media revolutions’, Amelia Bonea argues that the use of telegraphy in journalism was gradual and piecemeal. News itself emerged as the site of many contestations, as imperial politics, capitalist enterprise, and individual agency shaped not only access to technologies of communication, but also the content and form of reporting.

‘An Era of Darkness’ by Shashi Tharoor is trying to accurate many misconceptions about one of the contested periods of Indian history. In his book the writer examines the many ways in which the colonizers exploited India, ranging from the drain of national resources to Britain, the destruction of the Indian textile, steel-making and shipping industries and the negative transformation of agriculture, he demolishes the arguments of Western and Indian apologists for Empire on the supposed benefits of British rule, including democracy and political freedom, the rule of law, and the railways.

David Arnold's, 'Everyday Technology: Machines and the Making of India's Modernity' is a pioneering account of how small machines and consumer goods that originated in Europe and North America became objects of everyday use in the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Rather than investigate 'big' technologies such as railways and irrigation projects, Arnold examines the assimilation and appropriation of bicycles, rice mills, sewing machines and typewriters in India. In this book he offers new perspective on the globalization of modern technologies and show us that to truly understand what modernity became, we need to look at the everyday experience of people in all walks of life, taking stock how they repurposed small technologies to reinvent their world and themselves.

Daniel R. Headrick in his work 'The Tools of Empire: Technology and European Imperialism in the Nineteenth Century' describes the nineteenth century as transformed by two revolutions, the growing industrial technology of the west and Europe's domination of Africa and Asia. The unique study-based on the archival research and recent scholarship –traces the connection between the two, not just through the classic economic search for raw materials and new markets, but through the innovative entrepreneurial spirit of the age. Contending that technological advances not only permitted imperial expansion but stimulated it as well, Daniel R. Headrick describes how the Europeans used these tools to penetrate and conquer their colonies.

'Testing Concepts about Print, Newspapers, and Politics: Kerala, India, 1800-2009' by Robin Jeffrey, in this article Jeffrey attempts to bring greater subtlety to our understanding of the role that print and newspapers play in the shaping of modern society. The essay begins by focusing on the centrality that Jurgen Habermas and Benedict Anderson give to print and newspapers and examines the applicability of their ideas to Kerala, India's most newspaper-consuming state, over the past 200 years. The essay suggests that by

conceptualizing print and newspaper development in three stages, we arrive at a more accurate understanding of the impact of print consumption on societies and their politics.

‘The Travancore Anchal’ by N.S. Moss, narrates the Anchal postal system that prevailed in Travancore, which was one vital factor in the administration of Travancore state. This book was written exclusively on the Anchal service and illustrates the developmental stages of Anchal service in the state.

‘Agrarian Change and Economic Consequences: Land Tenures in Kerala, 1850-1960’ by T. C. Varghese in his work deals comprehensively mentions about land tenure measures in the Travancore state. It puts forward importance on the role of land for a transformation from traditional to modern society. This work also mentions the Travancore, Malabar and Cochin land tenure patterns.

V. Karthikeyan Nair’s, ‘Navodhana Moolyangalum Kerala Samoohavum’ , in this book discusses the note worthy milestones in the social life of Kerala. Beginning from the 19th century it presents briefly the social changes that occurs in Travancore upto the 20th century. It includes topics such as the formation of Kerala society, wealth, power, social perspectives, reforms movements, etc. In short it deals with the different situations of Kerala society.

‘Keralathinte Ennalekal’ by K.N. Ganesh, mainly deals with the economic and cultural history of Kerala. Books about the economic history of Kerala are rare in Malayalam. This book is written adopting a different style of writing history. The social and economic changes occurs in Travancore are portrayed in this book.

‘Jaathivyavasthitium Kerala Charithravum’ is a notable work by P.K. Balakrishnan, in this, he goes deep into the thoughts on caste and politics which remain as a centre of power among all aspects of society. In its authenticity and mode of treatment incomparable to any other work in Malayalam this work leads us to the conclusion that the vanity of caste in the past was only an illusion. The author mainly discusses the social history of Kerala from the origin of the agricultural villages to the period of the 1850’s to 1910. It contains the history of Travancore agricultural economy, castes, the rule of the kings, language, roads, forests, etc and their origin and development.

C. Kesavan’s ‘Jeevitha Samaram’ is an autobiography which was different because it opens a new perspective in the narration of one’s experiences in life. The author, in his autobiographical sketches has recorded truthfully the evil traditions that existed in society and the struggles conducted against them. It also contains a record of the developments brought about in the state. This book is a good example of how a biography can be of help to one who tries to look into the happening in the past.

Hypotheses

- Travancore Society was caste based and had all evils of caste system.
- Travancore, the Erstwhile Princely State was ruled by higher caste men supported by Brahmins.
- Early mode of conveyance was mainly through Water transport, while Road transport trade was for a namesake.
- As part of imperialism the British administration interfered in state affairs as a result of various treaties.

- The Public works department was introduced in 1860 as a part of Colonial Modernization
- Social legislations provided circumstances for the growth of infra structural facilities. The reforms introduced by colonial administration led to all round growth and progress which facilitated Socio-Economic development of the state.
- Land tenure reforms of the Travancore state accelerated the land distribution system which created a total change in of agricultural production.
- The establishment of new roads and its improvement created mobility in the state
- With the introduction of roads, inland water communication lost its importance. However, it remained as a less cost mode of communication.
- The colonial Masters introduced Railway as a main mode of conveyance in 1904. But the motive to introduce Railway in Travancore was mainly aimed at the ‘drain of wealth’.
- From time immemorial Kerala had developed commercial contacts with foreign countries. Travancore is blessed with a number of ports in different parts of the state which had further developed with the coming of the Britishers.
- Air transport was also introduced in Travancore which facilitated in conveying Air Mail service and also acted as passenger service.

- Origin and development of indigenous Anchal postal service had a decisive role in the state which had attained specific status during the time of British rule.
- British postal service had also provided all facilities including Money order, savings Bank etc.
- Telegraph, which brought about revolution in the world, also played its role in Travancore State.
- Introduction of Telephone and Radio also played a decisive role in the history of Travancore.
- The Development of Transport and communication as a whole served as a backbone for a 'revolution' in the socio economic sphere of Travancore.

Aims and Objectives of the Study

- Analyse the factors that led to the emergence of Infrastructure facilities.
- To trace the role played by the colonial masters for the development of Transport and Communication.
- To know the role played by Dewan Madhav Rao in the Modernisation of Travancore.
- To check how colonial modernity in Travancore and its impact in the state.
- To evaluate the character of road transport in Travancore and assess its performance in all round growth of Travancore.

- To know the role of inland communication in the state and to know how it helped for the economy of Travancore.
- To know the background and motive for the introduction of railway in Travancore by Colonial administration.
- To assess the role of Britishers in exploiting the High ranges of Travancore and to examine the collection of raw materials by the ample use of technologies.
- To assess the role of Air transport in Travancore and how it helped to stabilize the vastness of economy of the state.
- To evaluate the role of *Anchal* postal service in the state and its functions at the grass root level.
- To know the introduction of print technology news papers and magazines and how it helped to form a public sphere in Travancore.
- To evaluate the role of infrastructure facilities to overcome emergency situations like famine, war etc.
- How Transport and communication facilities help to attain better health service in the state, especially during the epidemics like Malaria, Small pox etc.
- To assess the factors that provided migrations, both in and outside the state and its impact on Environment.
- To Analyse the importance of cash crops in the economy of Travancore and its impacts.
- To Analyse the role transport and communication played for the eradication of social inequalities.

Methodology

The present work follows the analytical, descriptive and interpretive methodology based on the primary and secondary sources. Certain key concepts utilized in the study are significant for the interpretations and conclusions in specific contexts. They are given as follows:-

Colonial Modernity

Modernity asserted its presence in India in collaboration with colonialism. Colonialism was the chief source of social modernity in subjugated societies. As a historical process, it brought about profound transformations in the economic, social, cultural and political structures of the societies over which it had established the relations of domination. The social reforms, educational reforms, Land reforms, Transport and communication, print technology etc. are described as harbingers of colonial modernity.

Universal modernity enables us to identify the forms of our own particular modernity. The forms of modernity have been varying between different countries depending upon specific circumstances and social practices. The burden of reason, dreams of freedom, the desire for power, resistance to power; all these are elements of modernity.⁸ According to Dipesh Chakrabarty, The reach of colonial modernity extended well beyond institutional and economic reform to inform attitudes and practices relating to education and health, domesticity and gender roles, religious beliefs and social reform.⁹

⁸ Partha Chatterjee, *Empire and Nation: Essentials Writings 1985-2005*, Ranikhet, 2015, p. 151.

⁹ Dipesh Chakrabarty, 'The Difference- Deferral of a Colonial Modernity: Public Debates on Domesticity in British India', in David Arnold and David Hardiman(ed.), *Subaltern studies VIII: Essays in Honour of Ranajit Guha*, New Delhi, 1994, p. 88.

Tools of empire

The Colonial administration in one sense aimed at a total transformation in a traditional society at the same time it tried to appropriate the sources of the Colonized world. The new ability of Europeans in the nineteenth century to conquer other continents stemmed from a relatively few inventions.¹⁰ This is what is called tools of Empire.¹¹ This term was coined by Daniel R Headrick. The term denotes Colonial expansion. According to him it took place in three phases: penetration, conquest, and consolidation. In the first stage, steamers and the prophylactic use of quinine were the key technologies. In the period of conquest European infantry weapons, which were revolutionized after the mid-century, were crucial. In the third phase, it was the communications revolution that facilitated consolidation. The communications revolution: the railway, the steamship, the submarine cable, and the Suez Canal that made the imposition of colonial rule easier. By using these tools the state could develop through commercialization of agriculture, development of export and imports etc.

Middle class

The increasing number of new groups and categories that emerged, from the expansion of trade and industry, education and professions, Max Weber rightly observes, that did not develop indigenously before or during the period of the English rule. It was a finished artifact which had no autonomous beginnings.¹² As part of above mentioned developments these

¹⁰ Daniel R. Headrick, *The Tentacles of Progress: Technology Transfer in the Age of Imperialism, 1850-1940*, New York, 1988, p. 5.

¹¹ Daniel R. Headrick, *The Tools of Empire: Technology and European Imperialism in the Nineteenth Century*, New York, 1981, p. 6.

¹² B. B. Misra, 'The Middle Class of Colonial India: A product of British Benevolence' in Sanjay Joshi (ed.), *The Middle Class in Colonial India*, New Delhi, 2010, pp 38-39.

called middle class emerged in Travancore, i. e., Ezhavas, Syrian Christians etc. as the dominant middle class.

Public Sphere

Jurgen Habermas defines Public sphere as “The bourgeois public sphere may be conceived above all as the sphere of private people come together as public; they soon claimed the public sphere regulated from the above against the public authorities themselves, to engage them in a debate over the general rules governing relations in the basically privatized but publicly relevant sphere of commodity exchange and social labour. The medium of this political confrontation was peculiar and without historical precedent: people’s public use of their reason”¹³

The term ‘public sphere’, which refers to the space in which publicity is said to operate, is useful because it points to a definable effect, namely, publicity, rather than presuming a cause, for example, ‘media’ of course, publicity is itself only a means to a larger end, which can vary according to the political interest it serves.¹⁴

Citizens act as a public when they deal with the matters of general interest without being subject to coercion; thus with the guarantee that they may assemble and unite freely, and express and publicize their opinion freely. This is necessary in a public body where knowledge is imparting and receiving through knowledge is imparting and receiving through a reciprocal process. It is facilitated through Medias, like Newspapers and magazines,

¹³ Jurgen Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: An Inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society*, Thomas Burger, Fredrick Lawrence (trans.), Cambridge, 1991, p. 27.

¹⁴ Arvind Rajagopal, ‘The Public Sphere in India Structure and Transformation’, in Arvind Rajagopal(ed.), *The Indian Public Sphere Readings in Media History*, New Delhi, 2009, p. 2.

radio and television.¹⁵ To make a public sphere, print media is highly essential as it prepares the ground for rational debates. This is what Benedict Anderson emphasized in his print capitalism.¹⁶ The development of transport and communication also provide a structural formation and subsequent public sphere which also led to the genesis of socio reforms in the society.

Law of migration

One of the most significant concepts of the migration is Everett lee's Theory of Migration referred to as the 'push-pull' theory.¹⁷ Lee in his Theory of Migration categorizes the process into the area of Origin, area of Destination, Intervening obstacles and Personal factors. The factors which motivate people to leave their places of origin and to reach a new destination, which he calls, push factors. Similarly, some attractions may compel to leave their place and to reach some other destinations which he calls the pull factors. More over some intervening obstacles like distance and education and personal factors also compel to leave one place and to migrate some other destinations The improved roads, the facilities offered under the railway system, the wonderful development of the mercantile marine, the habit of travelling about, and the increasing knowledge of workmen, have all tended to facilitate the flow of people from spots where they are not wanted to fields where their labour is in demand.¹⁸ The formation of cities, market economy etc paved the way for the rise of middle class, as stated earlier.

¹⁵ Jürgen Habermas, 'The Public Sphere: An Encyclopedia Article' in Meenakshi Gigi Durham and Douglas M. Kellner (ed.), *Media and Cultural Studies Keywords*, Oxford, United Kingdom, 2006, p. 73.

¹⁶ Robin Jeffrey, 'Testing Concepts about Print, Newspapers, and Politics: Kerala, India, 1800-2009', *The Journal of Asian Studies*, Vol. 68, No. 2, 2009, pp. 465-466

¹⁷ Everett S. Lee, 'A Theory of Migration', *Demography*, Vol. 3, No. 1, 1966, p. 50.

¹⁸ E. G. Ravenstein, 'The Laws of Migration', *Journal of the Statistical Society of London*, Vol. 48, No. 2 June., 1885, p. 167.

Sources

This study draws on Primary sources in the form of administrative Reports, Land Revenue Manuals, Travancore Statistics Reports, Travancore Gazetteer, Travancore Information Listeners etc. Archival sources were collected from Tamil Nadu Archives, Chennai, Kerala State Archives and Central Archives, Thiruvananthapuram. The primary and secondary sources were collected from various repositories like Kerala Legislative Library, Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala University Library, Palayam, Thiruvananthapuram, University of Kerala Library at Karyavattom and Department of History Library Karyavattom campus, Sree Chitra Tirunal Library, Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala Council for Historical Research Library, Thiruvananthapuram, Centre for Development Studies Library, Thiruvananthapuram, Madras University Library, Chennai, Connemara Library, Chennai, Kerala Kamudi Archives, Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala State Public Library, Thiruvananthapuram etc.

Design of the Study

The present work is structured into four chapters excluding introduction and conclusion.

The first chapter titled ‘Travancore under British Rule’ explains about Travancore, it’s the specific area, its flora and fauna, physical geography, religion, and literacy etc. It also deals with the modernization of Travancore. Another important element of discussion is how colonial hegemony overlapped in the traditional nature of the state. Abolition of Slavery, *Uzhiyum* and *Viruthi*, the right of *Shanar* to wear upper garments etc. were the important social reforms introduced by the state with the help of interference from colonial administration. The mode of production in land also had a prime role for social change. A sequence of proclamations was also

issued in short intervals. The *Pandarapattom* proclamations of 1865, *Janmi-Kudiyam* Act of 1867 etc were the main among them. The background of the Inland and Overland transport system is also discussed, in this chapter.

The second chapter ‘Development of Modern means of Transport’ is the continuation of the first chapter. It starts with the introduction of Public Works Department in 1860. The development of roads, the transformation from primitive mode of conveyance to the locomotive one; the establishments of tolls, Nationalization of Transport etc are discussed in detail. The second part of this chapter comprises the role of water of communication in the socio-economic scenario of Travancore. The transformation from *Vallom* to steam engine is also gleaned in this. The Role of Rivers, Backwaters and Lagoons, Canals, Bridges, Ferry service, Boats etc are also arranged in this chapter. Bridges, Ferry service, Boats, which were owned mainly by private owners, are described in it. The chapter discusses the background for the introduction of railway in India in general and Travancore in particular. The Higher mode of conveyance i. e. the introduction of Air Transport is also discussed in it.

The third chapter entitled ‘Introduction of Modern Communication System and its Expansion’ starts with the introduction of indigenous postal service called *Anchal* service. Details of its development through the years are discussed in detail with variables like tables and pictures. Simultaneously it also helps to discuss the existence of the British postal service which reduced the distance between the world and Travancore. Telegraph which brought about a ‘revolution’ in the world also had its roots in Travancore. Telephone technology also had its influence role in Travancore. Radio which was another great invention also had its share in the 20th century Travancore.

The fourth chapter titled as ‘The Socio-Economic impact’ was the crux of the present study. It is structured with help of the concepts like Colonial

Modernity, Tools of Empire, Emergence of Middle Class, Public Sphere and Print capitalism, News of Empire, Colonizing the body and Law of Migration.

In the concluding part, the researcher confronts with the Hypotheses and makes clarification about the study. It also contains a brief summary of all the chapters explained in the text.

CHAPTER-I

TRAVANCORE UNDER BRITISH RULE

Travancore, the Princely State situated towards the southernmost part of ancient Kerala is between 8°4', and 10°22' North latitude and between 76°13' and 77°38' East longitude. ¹ The country is hailed as *Thiruvithamkur*, in Malayalam and *Srivadhanapuri* in Sanskrit which means the abode of the Goddess of prosperity. ² The boundaries on the north were the state of Cochin and the Coimbatore district of British India, on the east the district of Madura and Tirunelveli, and on the south and the west, the Indian Ocean. ³ The State of Travancore was having a length of about 174 miles from the north to the south and was 75 miles broad at the maximum with an area of 7625 square miles. The state ranks next after Hyderabad and Mysore amongst the Indian states in point of population and has a revenue of over two and half crore of rupees. ⁴

Physical Features

Travancore was one of the most beautiful parts of southern India. ⁵ The Western Ghats form a continuous mountain chain of varying altitude from

¹ The Travancore Almanac and Directory for 1938, Trivandrum, p. 109.

² This interesting country was known under different names at different period of its history. *Vanchi Desam* or the land of treasure; *Dharma Bhumi* or the land of celestials; *Tripapur* or the land of the bearers of the sacred feet; *Rama Rajyam* or the kingdom of Rama Raja; and Kerala or the land of cocoanut palms, are some of the names. Its ancient denomination is *Parasu Rama Kshetram*. This was associated with the tradition that Malabar (of which Travancore forms a part and with which it is homogeneous in origin, constitution and history) was reclaimed by Parasu Rama of the race of Bhrigu, the primeval patriarch of the Aryans. Of course the miraculous creation of the country by the hurling of his axe from Gokarna into southern sea, is obviously a nature myth. Vide, S. Ramanath Aiyar, *Travancore of To-Day*, Madras, 1920, p. 6.

³ Travancore Administration Report, 1938-39, p. 1.

⁴ The Travancore Directory for 1939 Part II, Trivandrum, 1938, p.3.

⁵ Lord Curzon (1898 -1905), the viceroy of India, depicts the dazzle of Travancore when he visited in 1901 as: " Side by side with our own system, and sometimes almost surrounded by British territory, there are found in this wonderful country the possessions, the administration, the proud authority and the unchallenged traditions of

north to south, isolating Travancore from the Madras Presidency on the east and conferring distinctiveness on its history and culture. The Mountain forms a wall on the eastern boundary of the state and the land towards the west is covered with dense vegetation till it reaches the cultivated plains and the backwaters and the Arabian Sea.⁶

Extensive tea and cardamom plantations have sprung up on most of the higher elevation; pepper, rubber, ginger and turmeric flourish in the lesser uplands; and in both regions there were reserve forests of valuable timber, both of virgin growth and of scientific planting. There are paddy fields along the valleys, and paddy cultivation is also extensively carried on in the south in Nanjinad and Edanad and in the fens and backwater reclamations in the north.⁷

Flora and Fauna

The land of Travancore was rich in natural resources and the beauty of nature. The broad coastal area and the banks of the backwaters were covered with dense coconut plantations, while all over the plains these were a variety of trees such as the areca nut, the jack, the mango, the tamarind and the cashew nut. Tapioca was cultivated almost everywhere in the lower levels and the cultivation of yams, beans and gram was also considerable. The forest region was divided into four classes according to their peculiarities, namely, heavily moist forest of evergreen trees, land originally covered with moist forest, but now overspread with trees of various ages, deciduous forests with grass growing with short grass and useless for any purpose, except pasture

the Native dynasties –a combination which both in the picturesque variety of its contrast, and still more in the smooth harmony of its operation, is, I believe, without a parallel in the history of the world”. Vide, S. Ramanath Aiyar, *Op. Cit.*, p. 80.

⁶ Travancore Administration Report, 1943-44, p. 1.

⁷ Travancore Administration Report, 1931-32, p. 1.

etc. The State reserved forests consisted of less than a third of the entire area and were rich with teak, black wood, ebony, anjili etc.⁸

Plantations of tea, coffee and cardamom were done on the higher elevations; pepper, rubber, ginger etc., covered the lower heights.⁹ The spices of Travancore attracted the people all over the world which finally ended in the colonization of Kerala. But rice was the main food crop of traditional cultivation. The elephant, the leopard, the tiger, the bison, the bear, the sambur and a variety of small game were plentiful in the forests. Among the geographical features of the country are the broad lagoons or back water forming a cheap water way for travel from the extreme north to the south towards Trivandrum was connected by navigable canals along the numerous streams and river flowing westward to the sea.

Extremes of temperature were unknown in the low country, the prevailing characteristic of which was a warm humidity. The country is cooler in the heights of Peermade, the Cardamom Hills, the High Ranges and the Ponmudi Hills. Travancore receives both the south-west and the north-east monsoons. The south-west monsoon begins about the middle of *Edavam* (May-June) and the north east monsoon commences during the month of *Thulam* (October-November). The rainfall is generally heavy, averaging about 89 inches per annum. Rice, fish and tapioca form the staple food of the people.¹⁰

Rivers

The state of Travancore was blessed with a number of rivers, like Periyar, Muvattupuzha river, Minachel river, Manimala river, Pampa river, Achankovil river, Kallada river, Ittikara river, Neyyar, Thambraparani river,

⁸ Travancore Administration Report, 1942-43, p. 2.

⁹ Kondoor Krishna Pillai, *Travancore and Its Ruler*, Changanacherry, 1941, p. 3.

¹⁰ Travancore Administration Report, 1944-45, p. 2.

Kodayar, Palayar and Chalakudi river etc, which add to the fertility of the land. The kayals or backwaters like Veli *kayal*, Kadinamkulam *kayal*, Anjengo *kayal*, Edva and Nadayara *kayals*, Paravur *kayal*, Kayamkulam *kayal* and Vembanad *kayal* enrich the State.¹¹ A chain of backwaters, connected by navigable canals, extends along the western coast throughout the length formed the most important means of communication.¹²

Geology of Travancore

The country consisted mostly of archean rocks on the western fringe of which rests a sedimentary formation of which is known locally as the varkala formation. Among the economic minerals of Travancore, monazite is more important and Travancore, the richest in the world in this natural wealth.¹³ Zircon and ilmenite are found along with monazite and these are also exploited to some extent. Mica and graphite occur in archean rocks. The extensive deposits of lignite and china clay or kaolin in the varkala formation are also of considerable economic value.

Population

The system of Census held once in 10 years, which took place in the year 1941 had assessed the population of Travancore as 6070018, (3, 045, 102 male and 3, 024, 1916 females) It showed that there was an increase of 974045 or 19. 1%, during the period of ten years from 1931 to 1941. The average density of population in the state in 1931 was 665 per square mile. In 1941 census the growth was to 792 per square mile. Based on the area of land used for cultivation, the density of population was 1, 463 per square mile. .¹⁴

¹¹ T. Foulkes, *The Geography of Travancore*, Cochin, 1878, p. 6.

¹² The Travancore Almanac and Directory for 1932, Trivandrum, 1931, p.ii.

¹³ *Ibid.*, p. iii.

¹⁴ Travancore Administration Report, 1946-47, p. 2

The predominant religion of the state was Hinduism. It was also the religion of the royal families that ruled the state for many generations and centuries. The Hindus were divided into various castes that segregated each other and constituted about 3/5 of the population i. e, 3, 671, 480. There were Christians belonging to different denominations consisting of about 1/3 of the population i. e, 1, 963, 808 and Muslims who were nearly 1/14 of the population i. e, 434, 150. In addition there were also a small number of Europeans and Americans.¹⁵

Literacy

The number of literates per 100 of the population was 47:1 in 1946. The percentage of literacy for males was 58:1 and for females 36:0.¹⁶ Except among a small section of the population, the *Purdah* system was unknown in Travancore.¹⁷ Women generally enjoyed great freedom in the State, and this combined with their general education has brought about their active participation in affairs. Malayalam is the main language of the people, but in the border districts Tamil, Kannada, Tulu and Konkani were also spoken.¹⁸

Currency

The Travancore Mint was established at Padmanabhapuram in 1789-90 (965 M. E). The first gold coin in Travancore called *Anantarayan panam* was issued from there. In addition to this silver coins known as *chackrams* and copper coins called *kash* were also issued. In 1824 the Mint was transferred to Trivandrum. However the history of coins in Travancore dates back to remote antiquity, far earlier than the establishment of the mint.¹⁹ During 1816-20

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 3.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁷ Travancore Administration Report, 1929-30, p. 3.

¹⁸ Travancore Administration Report, 1938-39, p. 3.

¹⁹ Travancore Administration Report, 1942-43, p. 170.

wins such as *Anatarayan Panam* (gold), the silver *chackram* and copper coins of different values were in circulation. There were also coins called Gally (*Kaliyam panam*) and *Rasi Panam* etc.

After 1860-61 four different kinds of silver coins called *panams* varying in designs were minted. During 1870-77 the ruler of Travancore ordered the minting of gold coins called *Varaham*, having the value of 7 ½ rupees and half *Varahams* of the value of 3 ¾ rupees. However they had to be discontinued soon. During 1888-89 new copper coins for 8 *kash* and 4 *kash* were issued. The small silver coin of one *chackram* could be counterfeited, and hence its minting was discontinued in 1900-01. Instead silver coins of the value of two *chackrams*; and copper coins of 1 *chackram*, ½ *chackram* and ¼ *chackram* were introduced. In 1943, there was an acute shortage of small coins, as people had a tendency to hoard them. Due to the development of trade, commerce and small industries the demand for coins also increased. So Government issued more 1 *chackram* ½ *chackram*, ¼ *chackram* and cash coins.²⁰ The details of the Travancore Currency were given here:

16 *Kasu* -1 *Chackram*,

4 *Chackram* -1 *Panam*,

7 *Panam* (28 *Chackram*) -1 Rupee.²¹

There was no Travancore Rupee coin: and the highest denomination ever minted was Half Rupee. The British Indian silver coins of the denominations of One Rupee, Half Rupee, Quarter Rupee and One -eighth Rupee were all legal tender in Travancore, but not copper coins.²² The

²⁰ Travancore Administration Report, 1946-47, p. 191.

²¹ N. S. Moss, *The Travancore Anchal*, Kottayam, 1973, p. 27.

²² *Ibid.*, p. 26.

established rate of exchange was 28 ½ *chackrams* (456 *kasu*) per British Indian Rupee.

The administrative matters of the mint were under the control of the Financial Secretary to Government, and the mint was under the charge of a Superintendent.²³ During the year 1946-47 copper coins for the value of Rs. 1, 45, 393 were minted in Travancore. Silver coins for the value of Rs. 3, 75, 000 were minted from Bombay.²⁴

Administration

The state was divided into four Administrative divisions and thirty taluks.²⁵ The *Pakuthi* is the unit of administration and there were 433 *Pakuthis* in all the 30 taluks together. The average area of a *pakuthi* was 17. 6 square miles. The Kara is a sub division of the *pakuthi*. The Kara was the unit of the old village organisation. The total of *karas* in the state is 3, 936 and the average area of a *kara* was less than two square miles.²⁶ The administration was carried on through several departments constituted on modern lines.

Formation and Development of Travancore

The rulers of Travancore were descended, from the old Chera kings of southern India, referred to as independent in the Edicts of Asoka Maurya of

²³ Travancore Administration Report, 1944-45, p. 178.

²⁴ Travancore Administration Report 1946-47, p. 191.

²⁵ Southern, Central, Northern and high range were the four administrative divisions. The following were the taluks namely Thovala, Agathiswaram, Kalkulam, Vilavancode, Neyyattinkara, Trivandrum, Nedumangad, Chirayinkil, Quilon, Karunagapally, Karthikapally, Mavelikara, Kunnathur, Kottarakkara, Pathanapuram, Shencottah, Pathanamthitta, Thiruvella, Ampalapuzha, Changanachery, Kottayam, Vaikom, Sherthala, Parur, Kunnathunad, Muvattupuzha, Thodupuzha, Minachil, Peermade and Devikulam. Vide, Census of India, 1941, Volume XXV Travancore, Trivandrum, 1942, p. 27.

²⁶ Achyutha Menon, *The Socio- Economic Reconstruction of Travancore*, Trivandrum, 1937, p. 5.

the third century.²⁷ Later on Kerala came under the rule of the perumals, and after the death of the last perumal somewhere about the middle of the ninth century A. D., the country was divided into a number of independent states, of which Venad, Desinganad, Elayadath Swarupam, Attingal and Nedumangad formed parts of Travancore. Venad was the most important of them and was the nucleus round which modern Travancore was built up.²⁸ In 1729 A. D, when Martanda Varma became the king of Venad, his territory extended only from Nagercoil to Attingal. Internal rebellion was active and inter- state wars were common at that time. Martanda Varma soon began to strengthen, unite and expand the country. With the help of an army lent by the Nawab of Carnatic and, subsequently another army sent by the Pandyan king, Martanda Varma suppressed the rebellion in the State, defeated the neighbouring princes and annexed their territories.²⁹

Marthanda Varma (1729-58)

Marthanda Varma came to throne in 1729. He followed the policy of 'Blood and Iron'. In the battle of Colachal on 10th August 1741 he defeated the Dutch which was a significant achievement for an earlier ruler and captured De Lannoy, who later became the *Valiyakappithan* of Marthanda Varma's army.³⁰ By the Treaty of Mannar, Kayamkulam became the dependent of Travancore. An important innovation introduced by Marthandavarma was the framing of the annual budget called *Pativukanakku*. Perhaps the most notable political move of Marthandavarma was the dedication of his kingdom and the annexed ones to Sri Padmanabha of

²⁷ The Travancore Almanac and Directory for 1937, Trivandrum, 1936, p.i.

²⁸ Census of India, 1931, Vol. XXVIII, Travancore, Trivandrum, 1932, pp. 1.

²⁹ *Ibid.*

³⁰ M. O. Joseph, *Valiyakappitan Adunika Thiruvithankuranite Srishtav* (Mal.), Alleppey, 1947, p. 7.

Trivandrum (*Thrippatidanam*) on Wednesday, January 3, 1750.³¹ There after the Travancore Rajas were known as *Padmanabhadhas* (Servants of Sree Padmanabha). The *Bhadradeepam* and *Murajapam* in the Padmanabha Swami Temple were two festivals also started by Marthandavarma.³² Who was hailed as the Maker of Modern Travancore.³³

Karthika Thirunal Ramavarma (1758-1798)

He was known as Dharmaraja, during his reign Dharma Raja not only retained all the territories his predecessor Marthandavarma had captured and administered the kingdom with success. He was called Dharma Raja on account of his strict adherence to *Dharma Sastra*, the principles of justice by providing protection to thousands of Hindus and Christians fleeing from Malabar during the religious and military persecution of Tipu Sultan.³⁴ Dharmaraja shifted the capital from Padmanabapuram to Trivandrum. He was respectfully called *kizhavanraja* (old King) and he divided the country into revenue units' *thekkemukham*, *vadakemukham*, *padinjaremukham*. Raja keasavadas was the first dewan of Travancore.³⁵ Raja Kesavadas was one among the most famous Dewan of Travancore, who did remarkable service to the country such as the development of the ports at Vizhinjam and Alleppey.³⁶ The establishment of the chalai bazaar and the completion of the Sree Padmanabha Swamy Temple tower were his other achievements.

³¹ Neetu, Record No. 21, Vol. I, February 1750, Central Archives Trivandrum, here after CAT.

³² A. P. IbrahimKunju, 'The Administration of Travancore in the Eighteenth Century', *Journal of Kerala Studies*, Vol. II, December 1975, p. 444.

³³ N. K. Bhaskaran, 'The Malayali Memorial', *Journal of Kerala Studies*, Vol. III, March-December, 1981, p. 227.

³⁴ C. K. Kareem, *Kerala Under Haidar Ali and Tipu Sultan*, Ernakulam, 1973, p. 91.

³⁵ G. Ramakrishna Pillai, *Raja Kesava Das* (Mal.), Trivandrum, 1930, p. 21.

³⁶ *Ibid.*

Balarama Varma (1798-1810)

Bala Rama Varma was one of Travancore's least popular and incompetent kings, whose reign was marked by unrest and various internal and external problems to the state. He became King at the young age of sixteen. Velu Thampi was appointed the Dalawa of Travancore after removing the corrupt Dalawa Jayanthan Nampoothiri. In 1805 Travancore government signed treaty with English East India Company.³⁷ Velu Thampi Dalawa issued his proclamation January on 11, 1809 at Kundara indicting British rule and exhorting the people to rally under his banner for a patriotic rebellion against the foreigners who were strengthening their hold over the country's independence.³⁸

Rani Gouri Lakshmi Bai (1810-1815)

Rani Gouri Lakshmi Bai dismissed the corrupt Ummini Thampi and appointed Resident Col. Munro as Dewan in 1811.³⁹ He was the first English Dewan in Travancore. He introduced the secretariat the system of administration and changed the designation of *karyakar* to *tahsildar*. The land revenue settlement was affected, land holders were given title deeds called *Pattayams*.⁴⁰ He also introduced direct management of *Dewasoms* by which the lands and wealth owned by the temples came. In 1812 Gouri Lakshmi Bai abolished purchase and sale of slaves and granted them independence.⁴¹

³⁷ B. Sobhanan, 'Trade Monopoly of Travancore', *Journal of Kerala Studies*, Vol. III, 1981, p. 35.

³⁸ A. Sreedhara Menon, *A Survey of Kerala History*, Kottayam, 2014, p. 264.

³⁹ Aattor Krishna Pisharadi, *Thiruvithankoor Charithram* (Mal.), Trivandrum, 1929, p. 124.

⁴⁰ P. G. Edwin, 'British Impact On Kerala', *Journal of Kerala Studies*, Vol. V, June 1978, p. 273.

⁴¹ P. Shungoony Menon, *Tiruvithamcore Charitram*, C. K. Kareem (trans.), Thiruvananthapuram, 2014, p. 320.

Rani Gouri Parvathi Bai (1815-1829)

Maharani Gouri Parvathi Bai instituted several reforms in Travancore during her regency: The Maharani permitted Christian Missionary activities in Travancore and even donated lands for the construction of churches in her state. London Mission Society (LMS) at Nagercoil was started in 1816 under patronage of Maharani. The beginning of modern education in Travancore can be traced to the issue of the Royal Rescript by Rani Gouri Parvathi Bai in 1817. Primary education was made compulsory in Travancore. Nairs, Ezhavas, Sudra community women were permitted to wear ornaments. Removal of prohibition wearing gold ornaments by Sudras, Ezhavas etc.⁴² Government took firm steps to wipe out small pox and clear cut policy about the vaccination.⁴³ After an outbreak of Small pox epidemic on the borders of Travancore⁴⁴ and as part of preventive measure, appointment of Dr. Brown on Rs. 900/- per month for taken vaccination 1819.⁴⁵ The introduction of Palayam market in Trivandrum was another achievement of her reign⁴⁶

Swathi Thirunal (1829-1847)

In the year 1829 as Maharajah Swathi Thirunal reached the age of sixteen the Maharani who was Regent relinquished her regency on his behalf and invested him with royal powers. The reign of Swathi Thirunal (1829-1847) was considered the Golden Age in the history of Travancore known as *Garbhasreeman*.⁴⁷ The first act of the Maharaja as an administrator was to shift the *Huzur Cutcherry* and other public offices from Kollam to Thiruvananthapuram for more effective control in the discharge of

⁴² Neetu, Record No. 145, Vol. II, 1818, CAT

⁴³ Neetu, Record No. 136, Vol. II, 1817, CAT.

⁴⁴ Neetu, Record No. 118, Vol. II, 1819, CAT.

⁴⁵ Neetu, Record No. 217, Vol. IV, 1919, CAT.

⁴⁶ Neetu, Record No. 237, Vol. V, 1817, CAT.

⁴⁷ A. Sreedhara Menon, *Kerala History and its Makers*, Kottayam, 2016, p. 180.

administration. He devoted personal attention in the transaction of all important affairs of state and kept a vigilant watch over the progress in the various departments. The educational policy of the ruler shows him to be a far-sighted administrator. He laid the foundation of modern education in the State by establishing English schools and by offering employment to those having knowledge of that language. He also set up department of Engineering, Irrigation, *Maramathu* for the first time and Several important institutions came into existence due to the personal interest of the Maharaja, and some of them were the Trivandrum Observatory, the Museum & Zoo, the Government Press, the State Library, etc. ⁴⁸

Uthram Tirunal Marthanda Varma (1847-1860)

Uthram Tirunal Marthanda Varma abolished all restrictions under pressure from the repeated requests of the Christian missionaries to the covering of their upper body by shanar women in South Travancore in 1859. The First British Post-Office in Travancore was opened at Alleppey in 1857. ⁴⁹First modern factory for the manufacture of coir was also opened at Alleppey in 1859 during the reign of Uthram Thirunal Marthanda Varma.

Ayilyam Tirunal Rama Varma (1860-1880)

The accession of Ayilyam Tirunal started a new era in Travancore. Assisted by his Dewan T. Madhava Rao, the Maharajah could implement many reforms and progressive changes in Travancore. ⁵⁰ A considerable development in Education, legislation, Public Works, Medicine, Vaccination and Public Health, Agriculture etc could be achieved. The beginning of agrarian reforms in Travancore started with the reign of Ayilyam Tirunal. The

⁴⁸ *Ibid*, p. 182.

⁴⁹ A. Sreedhara Menon, *Kerala State District Gazetteers, Alleppey*, Trivandrum, 1975, p. 313.

⁵⁰ M. Rajarajavarma, *Sree Vanchirajyam*(Mal.), Trivandrum, 1941, p. 68.

Pandarapattom proclamation of 1865 enfranchised all *Sirkar Pattom* lands and made them heritable and transferable.⁵¹ The *Janmi Kudiyam* Proclamation of 1867 provided for fixity of tenure of the tenant. First systematic census was conducted during his reign on May 18th 1875. Thus Travancore became ‘the Model Native State’ of India, during his period.⁵²

Visakham Thirunal (1880-1885)

Among the benevolent rulers of Travancore Visakham Thirunal Rama Varma holds a significant place because he had introduced a number of reforms which were beneficial to the people.⁵³ His reforms of far reaching effect were in the fields of education, police, judiciary, etc. Perhaps the most memorable activity of reform was the introduction of tapioca as a food crop in the state. Though it was brought here many decades ago from South America, its use as a nourishing food crops was unknown in the state.⁵⁴ It was a great relief to the people during the years of the famine in Travancore.

Sree Moolam Thirunal (1885-1924)

Moolam Thirunal Rama Varma came to the throne succeeding Maharajah Visakham Thirunal. The Legislative Council of Travancore, the first Legislative Council in British Indian was established in 1888. Though the administration was aimed at the welfare of the people in general, unfortunately only the higher sections were benefited and the majority consisting of the lower castes were cruelly subjected to ill treatment. They were not permitted even to travel along the public roads, enter the places of

⁵¹ C. N. Somarajan, ‘A Survey of Land Reforms in Kerala upto 1956’, *Journal of Kerala Studies*, Vol. IX, March- December, 1983, p. 133.

⁵² Ulloor S. Parameswara Aiyer, *Progress of Travancore Under H. H. Sreemoolam Thirunal*, Thiruvananthapuram, 1998, p. 27.

⁵³ M. K. K. Nayar, *The Story of an Era Told Without Ill- Will*, (trans. Gopukumar M Nair), Kottayam, 2013, p. 59.

⁵⁴ Samuel Mateer, *Native Life in Travancore*, London, 1883, p. 221.

worship or given admission to schools to learn to read and write. It was in protest against the cruel injustice to the lower castes that Ayyankali organized the famous *Villuvandi* struggle by travelling in a bullock cart along the public road to challenge caste discrimination.⁵⁵ The first Assembly of elected members in the history of India, ‘The Sree Moolam Polular Assembly’ was constituted in Travancore in 1904. For establishing the rights of the people the Malayalee Memorial was submitted in 1891, and the Ezhava Memorial in 1896, during the reign of Sree Moolam Thirunal.

Setu Lakshmi Bai (1924-1931)

Setu Lakshmi Bai ruled Travancore as the Regent of the Kingdom between 1924 and 1931. She replaced the matrilineal system of inheritance with the patrilineal one. Sethu Lakshmi Bai's regency continued the progressive administration of Travancore Dynasty and brought forth reforms like abolition of Devadasi system and the prohibition of animal sacrifice. Her meeting with Mahatma Gandhi resulted in a royal proclamation by which all the public roads (except the eastern road) to Vaikom Mahadeva Temple were opened to all castes in 1925.⁵⁶

Chithira Thirunal Balarama Varma (1931-1949)

Chithira Thirunal Balarama Varma took over the reign of Travancore on November 6, 1931 and was the last ruling Raja of Travancore. The actual modernization of Travancore took place in the 20th century. It became a model to all other states in British India, under the reign of Sree Chithira Thirunal, the last ruler of the state. His famous administrative reforms include the Temple Entry Proclamation of 1936,⁵⁷ the abolition of capital

⁵⁵ K. K. S. Das, *Ayyankali Keralacharithrathil* (Mal.), Thiruvananthapuram, 2014, p. 34.

⁵⁶ E. Rajan, *Vaikom Sathyagraham*(Mal.), Kozhikode, 2017, p. 275.

⁵⁷ K. R. Raveendran Nair, *Kerala Charithra Nayakar* (Mal.), Thiruvananthapuram, 2011, p. 82.

punishment, the introduction of adult franchise of 1940, etc. In order to encourage the poor children of the state to attend schools, the Vanchi Poor Fund, which was mid-day meal scheme, was introduced. In January 1933 the Abstention Movement was begun. In 1935 the Public Service Commission was established.⁵⁸ The State Transport system was constituted in 1938.⁵⁹ The inauguration of Air Transport on October 29, 1935 was a great step forward in the history of transport and communication in Travancore.⁶⁰ The establishment of the Travancore University (later called Kerala University) in 1937 was an achievement of great historical value. During the period the Pallivasal Hydro Electric Project, which materialized the power of electricity helping the process of industrialization in the state, became a reality.

The Advent of Europeans and the Treaties of subjugation

Marthanda Varma built up Travancore as a powerful and united state by ruthlessly suppressing all the rebellious feudal lords and by annexing neighbouring petty principalities. The English East India Company offered substantial help to Marthanda Varma to suppress the internal rebellions as well as to defeat the Dutch forces.⁶¹ The English East India Company had benefited from the enlargement and consolidation of Travancore,⁶² but the real motive behind the foreigners on the administration of the country who began with that. Though Marthanda Varma maintained his independence in the sale of spices, in 1743, the king declared pepper and other spices a state

⁵⁸ K. Vijayakumar, 'The Influence of Caste in Kerala Politics: A Historical Perspective', *Journal of Kerala Studies*, Vol. VIII, 1981, p. 262.

⁵⁹ Mathrbhumi Weekly, Vol. 37, Issue. 51, March 6, 1960, Kozhikode, p. 18.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 470.

⁶¹ K. P. Padmanbha Menon, *History of Kerala Vol. I*, New Delhi, 1982, p. 334.

⁶² A. P. Ibrahim Kunju, *Rise Of Travancore: A Study of The Life and Times of Martanda varma*, Trivandrum, 1976, p. 97.

monopoly and made necessary arrangements for their collection from the cultivators directly.⁶³

In the treaty concluded in 1753 A. D between the Dutch and the Travancore government, there was a stipulation regarding to a customs reciprocity⁶⁴ as is seen from the following passages “The Dutch should supply Travancore with the munitions of war annually, to the value of a stated quantity of pepper at certain fixed rates, from the Travancore Government sold their territories then in possession of Travancore and another stated quantity from those territories which Travancore might conquer thereafter”.⁶⁵ Travancore was able to pursue this customs reciprocity further on. The Travancore government sold their Pepper, Cassia, Cinnamom and other articles of state monopoly to the Dutch and the English in return of iron, copper, sugar, arms and ammunition.

During the reign of his successor Rama Varma, Travancore was threatened with invasions by the sultan of Mysore. In 1788, Therefore, Travancore entered into an agreement with company for military assistance. According to the terms of the contract, Travancore agreed to supply a large quantity of pepper at a low cost to the English East India Company for 10 years in return for arms and European goods.⁶⁶

The treaty of Seringapattanam in 1792 was a turning point in the political set up of south India. In the third Anglo Mysore War, Tipu Sultan was defeated and the English had become supreme in south India. It was

⁶³ A. P. Ibrahim Kunju, *Medieval Kerala*, Thiruvananthapuram, 2007, p. 257.

⁶⁴ Customs reciprocity is a form of alliance in which unlike customs unions and federations, geographical limitations have no place. Customs reciprocity alliances between distinct countries. Vide, K. Thanu Pillai, *Customs and Tariffs with Special Reference to the Maritime States of South India*, Trivandrum, 1935, p. 123.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*

⁶⁶ S. Ramachandran Nair, *The State and Economy in Colonial British Kerala*, Thiruvananthapuram, 1998, p. 5

followed by the establishment of colonial power.⁶⁷ Travancore thus escaped from annexation and it was reduced to the status of a dependent ally of the Company. In 1795 Travancore and the company signed “a treaty of Friendship and Alliance with the company”.⁶⁸ By Article III of the treaty of 1795, it was forced to accept three battalions of English troops for the maintenance of which the state was to pay eight lakhs of rupees. Article VII stipulated that in case the company required the aid of troops, the state was to provide such assistance. The state was not to entertain any foreigners other than the English. The treaty thus ensured complete dominance over the state.⁶⁹

Marquess Wellesley, the Governor - General of India (1798-1805) appointed Col. Macaulay as the political resident of Travancore with special instructions to bring Travancore under the Subsidiary Alliance. After his ascendancy, he perceived in Travancore as “a coolness or diminution of regard towards the British connection.”⁷⁰ The ruler resisted all the moves to introduce the new alliance. The entire native forces of Travancore which numbered more than fifteen thousand Nairs rose in revolt against the Company’s encroachment into the internal affairs of the state. Col. Macaulay with the help of Velu Thampi, the Dewan of Travancore could brutally suppress the revolt and forced the weak Maharaja to sign the treaty at gun point.⁷¹ Thus the treaty of “Perpetual Friendship and Alliance “between Travancore and the English East India Company was signed in 1805 which

⁶⁷ A. P. Ibrahim Kunju, *Op. Cit.*, p. 260.

⁶⁸ R. N Yesudas, *British Policy in Travancore 1805 – 1859*, Trivandrum, 1977, p. 12.

⁶⁹ A. P. Ibrahim Kunju, *Op. Cit.*, p. 260.

⁷⁰ R. N. Yesudas, ‘British Policy in Travancore 1805-1859’, *Journal of Indian History*, Vol. LV, April-August 1977, p. 161.

⁷¹ B. Sobhanan, ‘A Decade of Crisis in Travancore’, *Journal of Kerala Studies*, Vol. VI, September-December, 1979, p. 432.

soon became a treaty of enslavement.⁷² The state had to give 0.81 million rupees as annual subsidy to the Company.⁷³ The treaty of 1805 was the outcome of the imperial policy of Lord Wellesley.⁷⁴ The English political Resident came to wield excessive great power in the region and the Rajah finally succumbed to his pressure and subordinated his state to the English according to the treaty of 1805.⁷⁵ The Sixth and Ninth articles of the 1805 treaty were more harmful to the interests of Travancore.⁷⁶ While the sixth Article enabled the English to take over any administrative portfolio or occupy any part of the country, as a counter-measure to the possible default of payment on the part of Travancore for the military and defensive assistance it was receiving from English, the ninth article compelled Travancore to accept the advice from them on matters like accounts, industry, agriculture, trade, etc. All these clauses were nothing short of an encroachment upon the sovereignty of Travancore.⁷⁷

Macaulay and Velu Thampi were very close until the revision of the treaty of 1805 and the revised subsidy fell into heavy arrears. When Velu Thampi failed to discharge the arrears of the subsidy, the resident flew into a rage. Velu Thampi decided to revolt to end the constant interference of the resident in the affairs of Travancore. The revolt of 1809 however failed as the British were able to bring together a large army from different parts of British India. The net result of the subsidiary system was to deprive the native state

⁷² Neetu, Record No. 20, Vol. II, 1805, CAT.

⁷³ S. Ramachandran Nair, *Op. Cit.*, p. 6.

⁷⁴ T. P. Sankarankutty Nair, *A Tragic Decade in Kerala History*, Trivandrum, 1977, p. 67.

⁷⁵ Leena More, *English East India Company and the Local Rulers in Kerala: A Case Study of Attingal and Travancore*, Tellicherry, 2003, p. 237.

⁷⁶ K. K. Kusuman, 'Travancore's status in Relation to British Paramountcy - A Case Study', *Journal of Kerala Studies*, Vol. I, January, 1974, p. 302.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*

of every initiative and reduce Travancore to the position of a dependent state.⁷⁸

Inter-portal agreement

The inter-portal Trade convention entered into between the Government of Travancore and the Government of India was an example of unjust treaty imposed on the state. The Act VI of 1848 of British India freed the coasting trade from all customs duties on goods passing from one part to another within that country.⁷⁹ Therefore this act was known as the Free Inter-portal Trade Act. The Native states were excluded from the benefits of the Act. Travancore in common with the other native states suffered much in the development of its trade. The articles of export and import were subjected to customs levy, being a treaty for foreign commodities. The practical operation of the free Interportal Act revealed its weakness. The existence of a backwater route to the port of British Cochin from Travancore made possible the evasion of duty, a profitable business. Smuggling increased which affected the salt and customs revenue of the British government. The provincial governments were forced to move in the matter; besides protecting their revenue they desired to fall in line with the Government of England; for in 1853 the Government of England decided that “Travancore and Cochin should be treated in every respect in regard to their trade on the same terms as are applicable to British India”.⁸⁰ In 1861 the Government of Madras proposed the extension of the Act of the states of Travancore and Cochin, pointing out that the exclusion of these states was causing serious injury to the British revenue.⁸¹ They stated that owing to the network of backwaters along the coast and very peculiar geographical position of British Cochin, smuggling

⁷⁸ A. P. Ibrahim Kunju, *Op. Cit.*, p. 261.

⁷⁹ K. Thanu Pillai, *Op. Cit.*, p. 162.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 163.

⁸¹ *Ibid.*

was easy in both directions. It was emphasised by them that the loss of salt revenue to British India on account of Cochin salt finding its way into British Malabar aggregated to about one and half lakhs of Rupees a year. Further tobacco valued at Rupees from Ten to Twelve lakhs in the selling rate of the Travancore monopoly found its way in British Cochin was far in excess of its demand.⁸²

The British government determined to prevent this in the interests of their own revenue and in deference to the economy known as free trade. Reciprocity between British India and the states of Travancore and Cochin was sought to be promoted by the British. Dewan Madhava Rao opposed the proposal as would to diminish Travancore's revenues.⁸³ Finally, Travancore government were obliged to accept the terms proposed by the British power. By the article IX of the subsidiary treaty of 1805, the terms of the British had to be accepted by the state.⁸⁴

The right of the state to levy customs duty was governed by the commercial Treaty of 1st June 1865 signed between Travancore, Cochin and British governments. By this treaty no customs duty could be levied for British manufactured goods in Travancore for products from Cochin except Tobacco, Salt, Opium and Spirit.⁸⁵ The taxes realised from certain articles in the Cochin port were to be shared between Travancore, Cochin and the

⁸² *Ibid.*

⁸³ T. K. Velu Pillai, *A History of Travancore*, Trivandrum, 1935, p. 88.

⁸⁴ Article IX of the Travancore treaty of 1805 contains the following provision:-“ His Highness here by promises to pay at all times the utmost attention to such advice as the English government shall occasionally judge it necessary to offer to him, with a view to the economy of his finances, the better collection of his revenues, the administration of justice, the extension of commerce, the encouragement of trade, agriculture and industry, or any other objects connected with the advancement of his highness interests, the happiness of his people, and the mutual welfare of both states” Vide, Travancore Indian States Committee, Part I-memorandum, Government press, Trivandrum, 1928, p. 3.

⁸⁵ Travancore Administration report, 1864-65, p. 33

British Governments in certain proportions. The salt tax in Travancore was raised to make it equal to what it was in British territory. Travancore was permitted to retain its duty on imported tobacco, as the Government could not afford to lose the revenue thereon which formed a large percentage of the total receipts.⁸⁶

The British Government agreed to compensate the Travancore Government for the loss of revenue from imports with an annual payment of Rs. 40000/-. The amount of the compensation was calculated on the basis of the value of foreign import trade i. e., of European goods. The import duty for foreign goods was Rs. 53218/-, of which seventy five percent, approximately Rs. 40, 000/- was duty derived from foreign goods first imported into British India and afterwards transported to Travancore.⁸⁷ The British Government guaranteed this amount so long as the duty on direct foreign imports collected by the state did not exceed Rs. 13, 218/-. If the income of the state from this item was more than Rs. 13, 218/- the British government would deduct the excess amount from their payment. The important results of this agreement were that the total customs revenue of the state from import was fixed at Rs. 53, 218/-. It became the basis for future import revenue assessment.

The implication was that Travancore's import duty in respect of foreign goods would remain as it was in 1865.⁸⁸ During the past sixty years the interior and outlying parts of the country were opened up; a network of roads and bridges and the advent of the railway and motor transport by land and water have developed trade and commerce. The commercial products, trade and manufacturing activities and plantation crops etc had vastly expanded and led to the growth of joint stock enterprises and an advanced and

⁸⁶ T. K. Velu Pillai, *Op. Cit.*, p. 88.

⁸⁷ Travancore Indian States Committee, Part I-Memorandum, Government press, Trivandrum, 1928, p. 91.

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 90.

the unique progress of education in the country not only raised the standard of living of the people, but has also fostered in them a growing appetite for foreign goods.⁸⁹

Abolition of Slavery

Slavery is a peculiar social institution. Some historians have traced the origin of slavery to climate, soil, topography, water sources which contributed to a broader geographical determinism. Agriculture i. e commercial agriculture induced a freud towards large holdings which in turn created a demand for labour. These compelling natural forces permitted to grow a peculiar Institution called slavery.⁹⁰

The system of slavery in Travancore was connected with the socio-economic organization of the traditional hierarchical Malayali society. The landed interest of the caste Hindus feared that the abolition of agrestic slavery would lead to the restructuring of the economic basis of the society. As early as 1812, Rani Lakshmi Bai of Travancore had issued a proclamation prohibiting the purchase and sale of slaves, other than those attached to the soil. Those who transgressed the law were liable for confiscation of property and banishment from the country.⁹¹The Government of India Act V of 1843 was the first step towards the ending of slavery in the land.

The demand for the abolition of agrestic slavery in Travancore began with a petition submitted to the Maharaja by thirteen missionaries through the British Resident on 19 March 1847. The missionaries pointed out that

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*

⁹⁰ Kenneth M. Stampp, *The peculiar Institution Slavery in the Ante-Bellum South*, New York 1989, p. 131.

⁹¹ K. Sardamoni, *Emergence of a Slave Caste; Pulayas of Kerala*, New Delhi, 1980, p. 80.

according to the 1836 census 1, 64, 864 out of 1, 280, 663 persons in the state were slaves.⁹²

In 1849, the British Resident under the pressure of the missionaries took up the question of abolition of slavery with the Raja and requested him to promulgate an order following the British India Act and grant freedom to the slaves under the government and feudal classes. In Travancore by the proclamation of 1853 slavery was legally abolished. All the children of *sirkar* slaves born after the Proclamation were declared free, but all caste distinctions and ceremonies or prohibitions were to be respected.⁹³ However this regulation was not ready to liberate the caste rules of a feudal society. The regulation stated that “the slaves as well as all other should clearly understand that there shall be no change in the customs and untouchability in force according to the respective caste etiquettes.”⁹⁴

The proclamation of 1853 had not incorporated provisions for the emancipation of all slaves in Travancore. The government of Madras was directed to Travancore government to include a provision in the proclamation, corresponding to section II of the Act V of 1843 of the Government of India which forbade the intervention of any public authority to enforce the service of slaves for their masters.⁹⁵ Finally Government of Travancore had agreed to abolish taxes levied from slaves and conceded them the right of private property. Thus on 24 June 1855, the ruler of Travancore cancelled the proclamation of 1853 and issued a fresh proclamation.⁹⁶ This was followed

⁹² *Ibid.*, p. 81.

⁹³ Adoor K. K. Ramachandran Nair, *Slavery in Kerala*, Delhi, 1986. p. 53.

⁹⁴ K. K. N Kurup, ‘The Colonial Investments and the abolition of Slavery in South India: A Case Study of Kerala’, *Journal of Kerala Studies*, Vol. XI, March - December 1984, p. 195.

⁹⁵ S. Ramachandran Nair, ‘The Movement for social justice in Travancore: An Economic Interpretation’, *Journal of Kerala Studies*, Vol. XIII, March- December, 1986, p. 92.

⁹⁶ Cover File No. 15429, Bundle No. 18, 1843-1865, KSA.

by another proclamation in 1858 and it further ordered to effect the strict enforcement of the Royal Proclamations.⁹⁷

The enthusiasm of the missionaries and their humanitarianism were shadowed by their selfish motive - the motive of converting the low castes to Christianity. The missionary committees in England judged the performance of missionaries by the number of conversions they had made.⁹⁸ In this context it is worthwhile to examine the reasons for the reluctance of the Travancore Government and opposition of the caste Hindus to the emancipation of agrestic slaves.⁹⁹ There was little documentary evidence to prove the fears and resentment of the caste Hindus. The emancipation of the slaves was a revolutionary measure, as it was interwoven with the social and economic life of the people. Slavery in the state was closely connected with agrarian economy and caste system. A drastic change in the traditional order would upset the social balance. The land owning class feared that the emancipation of slaves could lead to the neglect of the cultivation of the food crops.¹⁰⁰ Paddy cultivation solely depended on slave labour. After the emancipation of all slaves in Travancore there was an immediate wage increase in the labour market. After 1855 it was slightly increased and it was due to emancipation process undertaken by the Travancore Government.¹⁰¹ According to K. K. N Kurup "Once the abolition of slavery was enforced the development of a free labour market in different parts of the country was finally profitable for the capitalist who could purchase cheap labour and

⁹⁷ K. Saradhamoni, 'Abolition of Slavery in the 19th Century', *Journal of Kerala studies*, Vol. II, June 1975, p. 230.

⁹⁸ Robin Jeffrey, *The Decline of Nair dominance: Society and Politics in Travancore, 1847-1908*, New Delhi, 2014, p. 39.

⁹⁹ K. K Kusuman, *Slavery in Travancore*, Trivandrum, 1973, p. 54.

¹⁰⁰ S. Ramachandran Nair, *Op. Cit.*, p. 94.

¹⁰¹ Tharian George K and P. K Michael Tharakan, 'Development of Tea Plantations in Kerala: A Historical Perspective', *Working Paper No. 204*, Centre for Development Studies, Trivandrum, 1985, p. 17.

curtail the production cost”.¹⁰² But Sanal Mohan disagrees with the above statement. He stated that, the arguments that posit inherent relationships between capitalism and free wage labour were never an absolute necessity for the development of capitalism, especially capitalism under colonial conditions.¹⁰³ Moreover in the context of colonial Travancore and rest of Kerala, it is difficult to conceive of free wage labour becoming completely free of its root in the caste structure. It can be observed that the slave caste markings were too deeply engraved on the social selves of the labouring outcastes of Travancore to be wished away by the magic wand of capitalist relations of production.¹⁰⁴ Although there were many arguments about the Abolition of slavery and its after effects in Travancore, this step was indubitably a social revolution.

Shanar rebellion

The use of upper cloth by the Shanar women and their imitation of the mode of dress of the caste Hindus aroused jealousy and antagonism among the caste Hindus. In Travancore ‘Breast was bared’ as a symbol of respect to the caste Hindus. The traveller named Gross records an incident; women who had lived for sometime in a European camp appeared before the Queen of Attingal. Seeing that the women was wearing clothes to cover her breasts the Rani ordered her breasts to be cut off.¹⁰⁵ The Government of Travancore issued an order permitting the low caste women converts to Christianity to wear “short bodies or jackets as was worn by the women of Syrian Christians and Muslim-Mappillas” in 1814.¹⁰⁶ Ringeltaube, a German missionary, who

¹⁰² K. K. N Kurup, *Op. Cit.*, p. 197.

¹⁰³ P. Sanal Mohan, *Modernity of Slavery: Struggles Against Caste Inequality in Colonial Kerala*, New Delhi, 2015, p. 18.

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁵ Elamkulam Kunjan Pillai, *Kerala Charithrathile Iruladanja Edukal*(Mal.), Kottayam, 1983, p. 150.

¹⁰⁶ V.Nagam Aiya, *The Travancore State Manual*, Vol.I, Madras, 1989, p.525.

laboured in South Travancore during the first quarter of the 19th century, represented the grievances of the Shanar converts to the British Resident.

On June 29th 1814 the Missionary Ringletaube received the message from Resident Munro that the Shanars who were converted to Christianity were exempted from Poll tax.¹⁰⁷ After many years this exemption was extended to all Shanar and Ezhava irrespective of religious differences.¹⁰⁸

Again in 1829 through a proclamation the Government of Travancore confirmed the right of low caste women converts to cover the upper part of their body. But restriction was imposed on the mode of wearing cloth.¹⁰⁹ They were prohibited from imitating the mode of dress of the caste Hindus. The restriction was to differentiate caste Hindu women from low caste women appearing in public places. The Christian converts, with the support of the missionaries, tried to remove this stigma and attain social equality with caste Hindus. This led to an agitation.

The Shanar women, in addition to the prescribed jacket, often in lieu of it, imitated the mode of dress of the caste Hindus. The caste Hindus began to attack the Shanar women, who dared to appear in public with their breast covered. Serious affrays ensued and the situation was aggravated by the interference of the missionaries and pretty government officials. The agitation of the Shanars eventually led to the Royal proclamation of July 26, 1859,¹¹⁰ abolishing all restrictions in the matter of the covering of the upper parts by Shanar women, though there was still the stipulation that they should not imitate the dress of the women of upper castes. Even this stipulation was subsequently removed at the instance of the British Government. The

¹⁰⁷ C. M. Agur, *Church History of Travancore*, Madras, 1903, p. 574.

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 579.

¹⁰⁹ S. Ramachandran Nair, *Op. Cit.*, p. 94.

¹¹⁰ A Sreedhara Menon, *A survey of Kerala History*, Kottayam, 2014, p. 310.

transformation developed in the social set up due to the Shanar Rebellion, which came to be known by different terms such as *Seela Vazhakku*, *Melmundu Vazhakku*, *Mula Marappu Vazhakku*, etc. The account of C. Kesavan is helpful to explain the popular reaction to this struggle “my grandmother, who was happy over the outcome of this freedom struggle, donated many fine breast covering clothes to Ezhava women.”¹¹¹

Uzhiyam and Viruthi

The Erstwhile Princely State of Travancore was in the clutches of several feudal customs like *Uzhiyam* and *virutti* for a very long time. *Uzhiyam* means ‘labour without remuneration’. *Viruthi* was ancient system of feudal practice existed in Travancore. Originally it denoted the land received from the Government as compensation for some work done for it.¹¹² There are no documents to show when this system originated. Both were cruel and unjust because under this practice Paraya, Pulaya, Nadar and Ezhava communities had to do labour without any kind of remuneration for certain periods of time as decided by the authorities. Moreover, they were forced to supply provisions etc. for the use of palaces, temples and royal tours on occasions of ceremonies and festivals. The free services of the women and children of the low caste families also were at the disposal of the feudal lords, as per this custom. The earliest recorded evidences relating to *Uzhiyam* and *Viruthi* show that about five-thousand families consisting of twenty-five thousand people were directly subjected to this barbarous custom.¹¹³ The *avarnas* had to

¹¹¹ C. Kesavan, *Jeevithasamaram*(Mal.), Trivandrum, 2015, p. 66.

¹¹² D. Dayanandan, *Thiruvithamkoor Charithrathile Chila Edukal* (Mal.), Thiruvananthapuram, 2016, p. 21.

¹¹³ P. Ramachandran, ‘Abolition of Uliyam and Viruthi in Travancore’, *Journal of Kerala Studies*, Vol. III, September-December, 1976, p. 521.

perform *Uzhiyam* for the construction of roads, bridges, canals, public buildings, etc.¹¹⁴

The Royal Government of Travancore supported by the upper caste Hindus exploited the lower castes by subjecting them to the brutal and inhuman practice of *Uzhiyam* and *Viruthi*, by which they were forced to do, unpaid labour including supply of goods and products to the Government and the royal houses. Those who dared to oppose and rebel were subjected to inhuman punishments. The poor villagers and peasants were discontented, but were silent due to tenure. There were protests against this system of forced unpaid labour, but the authorities and the administration by the higher castes were not lenient. At last the protests were undertaken by missionaries and social leaders such as Mar Athanasius and Vedamanikkan, as a result of which the Christians of Travancore were liberated from this custom on certain occasions due to caste reasons.

On 29, December 1815 a Proclamation was issued by Maharani Gauri Parvathi Bai, abolishing *Uzhiyam* from all activities connected with temples and supplying provisions to *Uttupuras* on Sundays. On 18th September 1821 the Nadar Christians of Nanchinad were exempted from *Uzhiyam* duties on Sundays. But others belonging to the lower castes had to continue to do this bonded labour on all days of the week. *Uzhiyam* was discontinued by the 1860s, when the government created a public works department which introduced waged labour.¹¹⁵

It was only 43 years later, on 13, August, 1864 that the *Viruthi* system was abandoned among the tenants of the *Sirkar* Pattom lands. In April 1880 by an order the *Viruthikkars* of Trivandrum, Nedumangad and Neyyattinkara

¹¹⁴ Koji Kawashima, *Missionaries and a Hindu state: Travancore, 1858-1936*, New Delhi, 1998, p. 150.

¹¹⁵ *Ibid.*

Taluks were forced from the duties of supplying provisions for 'Esvara seva' in temples. In December 1881 the Ezhava were exempted from supplying firewood to the Vaikom temple.

Since the poor labourers who did agricultural work for their livelihood were frequently called for *Uzhiyam* duty they had little time left for the cultivation of the land under their holdings. Consequently they were always in debt and could not pay their dues without arrears to the land lords or the Government. Hence in October 1883 Dewan Rama Ayyangar held a conference of officers and prominent land holders to discuss the matter, and obtained their consent to abolish the *Uzhiyam* and *Viruthi* services. However, the Government decision to stop these practices was taken only on 7th August 1893.¹¹⁶

Legislations of Land Tenure in Travancore

Land reform was needed for social change in an agrarian society through the intervention of the state. The state does not intervene casually and expediently. It adopts, to use Weber's expression, the instrumental rational action for intervention.¹¹⁷ The system of land tenure includes the rights and patterns of control on the use of the resources of the land. The word 'tenure' means the conditions under which somebody occupies land. Agricultural progress of a land depends on the proper arrangement of the land tenure system, which decides the proper utilization of various factors that control the success of production such as land, labour and capital.¹¹⁸ Though the system of land tenure in Travancore had undergone changes later, the legislations of land tenure introduced were quite decisive with regard to social transformation in the early stage of development in this region.

¹¹⁶ P. Ramachandran, *Op. Cit.*, p. 530.

¹¹⁷ Paramjit S. Judge, *Social Change Through Land Reform*, Jaipur, 1999, p. 11.

¹¹⁸ T. K. Velu Pillai, *The Travancore State Manual Vol. III*, Trivandrum, 1940, p. 116.

In the course of the history of Travancore we find that the legislations of Land tenure had resulted in improving the situation of the tenants. There were other results such as increase in the area of cultivation and rise in production which helped the upper class population of land owning communities. The overall effect of the land tenure legislations was that the lower strata of society were elevated in social status. In course of time, this could create political, social and economic transformation in Kerala.

The land tenure system in Travancore was different from those existed in Cochin and Malabar. The political situations in Cochin and Travancore were almost similar, but Malabar was under direct British rule as early as 1788. Travancore could extend its boundaries and annex the neighbouring kingdom and all the conquered lands were brought under government ownership.

Towards the close of the 18th century, the government was the biggest *janmi* of Travancore. The land belonged to either the Government or the *janmi*, but they were not the actual cultivators. For cultivation, the land was distributed to the tenants.¹¹⁹ In the 18th century land records show that in many *Kuzhikanam* lands cash crops were cultivated. There might be a close relation between the development of plantation crops and *Kuzhikanam* system of ownership. In that period *Otti* and *Pattom* related *Kuzhikanam* fields were numerous.¹²⁰

One major difficulty for the development of agriculture in Travancore was the non-availability of lands suitable for cultivation. The land tenure system that existed in Travancore was complicated. There were two broad types of cultivable land *jenmam* lands and *Sirkar* lands. Brahmins and the

¹¹⁹ S. Ramachandran Nair, *The State and Economy In Colonial British Kerala, Op. Cit.*, p. 27.

¹²⁰ K. N Ganesh, *Keralathinte Ennalekal*, (Mal.), Thiruvananthapuram, 2011, pp. 74-75.

temples owned the *jenmam* lands. They were exempted from taxation. In *Sirkar* lands there were different types of taxes, which were unscientific. Together the tax exemption and the complex tenure system made the agrarian economy of the state truly chaotic.

In the settlement Records of 1802 it is recorded that the total tax fixed accordingly for the measurement of the land was less than Rupees 9 lakhs. At the same time in Malabar, which was directly under the British rule Tipu Sultan had already after the invasion from Mysore, had fixed Rupees 19 lakhs, for even lesser area of land. The British after reconsidering the tax had reduced it to Rupees 16 lakhs.¹²¹ The reason was that in Travancore full assessment of tax was made only on *Sirkar verumpattom* (lands liable to full tax or assessment) lands, which was include only one-fourth of the total cultivated lands.¹²² After Velu Thampi was appointed the Dewan of Travancore, the financial position of the state was considerably improved. He introduced the system of *Kandezhuthu* in collecting taxes.¹²³ Velu thampi was succeeded by Ummini Thampi as dewan in 1810 A. D. But he was inefficient and the financial conditions of Travancore drifted from bad to worse. The country was brought almost to the verge of financial ruin, leaving it in great debt.¹²⁴

The appointment of Colonel Munro as the British Resident in 1811 could bring in a new era of agricultural development in the State. Before that, revenue administration was not free from corruption, inefficiency and mismanagement. Tax exempted Brahmins and temples owned large areas of

¹²¹ T. C. Varghese, *Agrarian Change and Economic Consequences land Tenures in Kerala 1850-1960*, New Delhi, 1970, p. 30.

¹²² S. Venu Mohan, 'The Structural Change In The Agrarian Economy of Travancore', *Journal of Kerala Studies*, Vol. XXXII, March - December, 2005, p. 190.

¹²³ S. Ramanatha Aiyar, *A History of Travancore*, Madras, 1938, p. 48.

¹²⁴ T. Varghese, 'Origin of Financial Administration in Travancore', *Journal of Kerala Studies*, Vol. VI, September -December, 1979, p. 503.

land, which caused huge loss of revenue to the Government. Munro directed the Government to bring such lands under taxation by the Government. As a result, the Government confiscated the lands owned by wealthy temples of the State.¹²⁵ Thus a little less than two third of the cultivated area was brought under the direct ownership of the Government.

The Syrian Christian elite, who had considerable share of *sircar* tenancies, could exploit the opportunities for developing commercial cultivation inherent in these reforms, based on the advantages arising from their patriarchal family organization and earlier trading traditions. It is quite likely that with the capital accumulated from trade, they moved into agricultural land, following the Royal Edict of 1816. The state monopoly over trade, which was introduced in eighteenth century, must have prompted them to do so.¹²⁶

In April 1818 through a Royal Proclamation, special concessions were allowed to the tenants who brought under cultivation land reclaimed from rivers, back waters, etc. As a result, large areas of wastelands were brought under cultivation.¹²⁷ Similarly, the royal Proclamation of 1819 encouraged cultivation to make hilly tracks suitable for cultivation.

Tax exemption was granted for six years from 1819 to 1825 to cultivators if they returned to the hilly tracts, which were abandoned previously due to the attack of wild animals. In 1823, the Government of Travancore issued special concession to the cultivators of Nanchinad, which ordered that only the actual lands cultivated had to be paid taxes. Tax

¹²⁵ Suresh Kumar, *Political Evolution in Kerala Travancore 1859-1938*, New Delhi, 1994, p. 23.

¹²⁶ P. K. Micheal Tharakan, 'Socio- Economic Factors in Educational Development: The Case of Nineteenth Century Travancore', *Working Paper No. 190*, Thiruvananthapuram, 1984, p. 56.

¹²⁷ Selected proclamations by the Sovereign from 1811 to 1936, Trivandrum, 1937, p. 616.

concessions were granted to the cultivators who suffered loss due to sudden attack of wild animals. In 1828 Government further announced the concession that if the tenants had arrears of tax, they would not lose the land allotted to them for cultivation. They had to pay penal interest for the arrears of the tax.

128

The system of measuring the area of the agricultural land and fixing the rate of *Pattom* amount based on the fertility of the land came into effect with the proclamation of 1836. Such records were known as Settlement Register. With this, it was also decided that the tax should be revised once in 12 years. Until 1837 agricultural field given on *Pattom* based included only fields used for paddy cultivation. However, as per the proclamation of 1837 land used for other crops could also be given on *Pattom*.¹²⁹ During this period agricultural activities were intensified. Land, which was considered waste and uncultivable, was made use of for increasing agricultural productivity. Coastal regions were also made suitable for paddy cultivation.

Land tenure legislations in Travancore during the 19th and 20th centuries could bring about effective transformation and progress socially as well as economically in the agricultural sector. The following are highly significant among them.

Pandarapattom Proclamation of 1865

The tenants who actually cultivated the *sirkar* lands had no rights of property over the lands. The tenants, who could not sell or transfer the land because they did not own it, occupied about half of the total cultivable land. They had only the right to occupy it. The number of this type of tenants was also increasing due to the increases in population. Traditionally it was held

¹²⁸ S. Venu Mohan, *Op. Cit.* p. 191.

¹²⁹ V. Karthikeyan Nair, *Navodhana Moolyangalum Keralasamoohavum*(Mal.), Kottayam, 2015, p. 35.

that all such lands were actually owned by the *Sirkar*.¹³⁰ Due to the concessions offered by the Government more and more waste lands were brought under cultivation, but they were also considered owned by the Government. The landlords or *Janmies* could evict their tenants at their will and pleasure but could not mortgage it or make improvements. Tenants, on the other hand, saw such land as having no value beyond the rice it produced.¹³¹

Considering all these aspects King Ayilliam Thirunal Rama Varma took the initiative to issue the famous *Pattom* Proclamation on 2nd June 1865.¹³² The Proclamation made it clear that the peasants who occupied the lands could regard their lands as inheritable saleable and transferable property, but had to pay the tax without arrears.¹³³ Since the Proclamation gave them the right of ownership over the land held by them it was the ‘Magna Carta’ of the peasants of Travancore.¹³⁴ It removed all uncertainties that had prevailed over the ownership rights of the land in Travancore. This Proclamation also produced the possibility for the weaker section of the population to become owners of the land in which they lived.¹³⁵

The new Land Tenure legislations are highly significant land marks in the history of Travancore because they were responsible for creating far-reaching changes in the social mobility of the people. Due to the consequent commercialization of agriculture market economy developed money transactions became more prominent. The cultivators needed more capital

¹³⁰ T. C. Varghese, *Op. Cit.*, p. 64.

¹³¹ Robin Jeffrey, *Op. Cit.*, p. 80.

¹³² Cover File No. 228, Bundle No. 38, 1865-1878, KSA.

¹³³ *The Travancore Land Revenue Manual Vol. I*, Government Press, Trivandrum, 1935, p. 1.

¹³⁴ T. K. Velupillai, *The Travancore State Manual Vol. III*, Trivandrum, 1940, p. 191.

¹³⁵ S. Ramachandran Nair, *Op. Cit.*, p. 28.

investment for which they approached money lenders. In other words a new credit system was introduced.¹³⁶

Another result of the *Pattom* Proclamation was that land became a saleable commodity. The monopoly over land held by a small number of higher caste *janmis* gave way to the rise of a new class of land owners belonging to the lower strata of society. Land transactions became common and it was assessed that during this period areas of land at an estimated value of about Rs. 4, 75, 000/- was sold by land holders to cultivators.¹³⁷ The Europeans who were interested in Plantation and related industries also invested capital in Travancore. The natives tried to become land owners by the reclamation of waste lands while the Europeans encroached forest areas of hilly regions to establish huge plantations. The Government of Travancore under progressive minded rulers gave encouragement to the cultivators of waste lands by offering tax concessions. Both native and European cultivators were encouraged.¹³⁸ The relationship between land and cash became much closer, and Nair institutions and traditions were less able to cope with the change. At the same time, Syrian Christians who held interest in trade, held land and wanted more to extend their holdings used the new opportunity.¹³⁹

The Janmi-Kudiyam Proclamation of 1867

After the *pattom* proclamation several *janmis* exercised their legal right to evict the *kudiyans* and the courts of law had to support the *janmis* in their demand. This led to the interference of the sovereign who issued certain instructions to the courts, commanding them not allow eviction in cases where the *kudiyans* had paid their dues to the *janmi*. The Royal proclamation of 8th

¹³⁶ S. Ramachandran Nair, 'Peasant Movements and Tenancy Reforms in Travancore', *Journal of Kerala History and Culture*, Vol. I, March, 1996, p. 96.

¹³⁷ T. C. Varghese, *Op. Cit.*, p. 65.

¹³⁸ *Ibid.*

¹³⁹ Robin Jeffrey *Op. Cit.*, p. 81.

August 1867 was therefore issued by the ruler with the object of making the *kanom* tenure irredeemable by the *janmis*. By this proclamation, *kanom* tenure was recognised as a perpetual lease and the tenants were given fixity of tenure subject to the payment of a fair rent determined by custom or contract.¹⁴⁰

The Janmi-Kudiyam Act of 1896

Disputes about the dues of the *kudiyans* or tenants to the landlords were common during the later decades of the 19th century. The Government received numerous complaints from the *janmies* and *kudiyans*, that the authorities did not enforce the terms of the Proclamation of 1867. Powerful *janmis* continued to evict the *kudiyans* from their lands, inspite of the provisions of the proclamations, Hence the Government considered it necessary to appoint a commission to rectify the defects of the early Proclamation. According to the report of recommendations submitted by Justice Kunju Raman Nair a draft bill was prepared and consequently the *Janmi- Kudiyam* Act was passed in 1896.¹⁴¹

The regulation of 1896 declared the *kudiyam*'s right of occupancy to be a permanent right exempt from eviction except on non-payment of rent continuously for 12 years.¹⁴² This ensured permanent occupancy rights and fixed rents for the *Kanam kudiyans*. However, despite the good intentions of the state, the tenants could not get the benefits they were assured.¹⁴³ The *Janmis* were given the right to enhance the rent at the time of periodical

¹⁴⁰ M. A Oommen, *Land Reforms and Socio- Economic Change in Kerala*, Banglore, 1971, p. 20.

¹⁴¹ T. K. Velu Pillai, *Op. Cit.*, p. 169.

¹⁴² Suresh Kumar, *Op. Cit.*, p. 172.

¹⁴³ P. Chandramohan, *Developmental Modernity In Kerala: Narayana Guru, SNDP Yogam and Social Reform*, New Delhi, 2016, p. 22

renewal of *kanapattom*.¹⁴⁴ This too did not give much protection to tenants holding land at will - either under *kanam* tenancy or directly from the *janmis*. Another problem the tenants faced was the incidence of unequal revenue assessment under different tenurial categories, and at times of different cultivators under the same tenure.¹⁴⁵

The Janmi - Kudiyan (Amendment) Act of 1932

In order to overcome the shortcomings of the *Janmi- Kudiyan* Act of 1896, the government appointed a committee consisting of the representatives of the *Janmis* and *Kudiyans* in 1915. But the recommendations of the committee evoked bitter controversies. It was not acceptable to both *Janmis* and *kudiyans*. The government dropped the bill and tried to settle the issue amicably. After fourteen years of protracted negotiations the government succeeded in evolving a new formula which was acceptable to both landlords and tenants.¹⁴⁶ Consequently the *Janmi - Kudiyan* (Amendment) Regulation of 1932 was passed unanimously by the Travancore Legislative council.¹⁴⁷ The Act conferred proprietary right on the *kudiyan* and the obligation of annual payment of janmis dues called *janmikaram*. The *kanam* tenant was declared complete owner of the land with the entire rights incident to ownership of the land. The right of revision or enhancement of *janmikaram* rested with the Government.¹⁴⁸ The crux of the Amendment was “The Regulation granted absolute freedom to the tenants in the use of his land by converting wetland into garden or by converting garden land into cultivable

¹⁴⁴ “*Kanapattom* means a demise of *janom* land made or renewed by the *janmi* by whatever name such demise is designated”. Vide, The *Janmi and Kudiyan* Regulation V of 1071 of Travancore, Madras, 1912, p. 7

¹⁴⁵ P. Chandramohan, *Op. Cit.*

¹⁴⁶ S. Ramachandran Nair, *The State and Economy In Colonial British Kerala, Op. Cit.*, p. 31.

¹⁴⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁴⁸ P. Suresh Kumar, ‘Genesis of Land Reforms in Travancore’, *Journal of Kerala Studies*, Vol. XXXI, March- December, 2004, p. 162.

wet land, or in any other standing there, or to alter the course of cultivation in respect thereof, and in short to do suffer anything to be done on the land without reference with the *janmi*”.¹⁴⁹

In short, the *Janmi- Kudiyan* (Amendment) Regulation of 1932 cleared the agricultural sector by removing many of the old traditions and practices related to *Kanam* tenancy. The power and position of the land lords, who were generally the members of the upper castes were lost, and the “concept of land membership changed from ‘land to rule’ to ‘land to own’”.¹⁵⁰

The Travancore Land Tax Proclamation of 1946

The Land Tax Proclamation of 1946 also had played a significant role in removing the obstacles to enact the provisions of land-tenure reforms introduced by the rulers of Travancore. This Proclamation was intended to convey the assessed lands totally under a uniform rate of assessment. Lands that came under categories such as *Sree Pandaravaka*, *Sree Padam*, *Kandu Krishi*, *Edavagai* etc. were included under a uniform pattern of taxation.¹⁵¹ Irrespective of the nature of the products cultivated all lands were brought under uniform tax rates. This encouraged the cultivators to make use of the land under some kind of cultivation.

However the *Janmie - Kudiyan* Acts did not succeed in solving all problems in the agricultural sector or landlord - tenant relations. For example, there was no provision to regulate the letting of the *Pandaravaka* lands and no provision for the compensation to be paid to the tenant for the improvements made by the tenants in the land. The most important among them was that the acts did not apply to land other than the *janmom* lands. In addition, even in that only the *Kanapattom* holders were given propriety rights. Because of

¹⁴⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁵⁰ S. Ramachandran Nair, *Op. Cit.*, p. 33.

¹⁵¹ This kind of lands were charged with a uniform land tax of 14 *annas* per acre of land, Vide, T. C. Varghese, *Op. Cit.*, p. 133.

these defects or shortcomings later, many new types of land lease system originated in Travancore.¹⁵²

The Land tenure legislations made many long lasting changes. The investment of British capital opened many plantations and later spread to other manufacturing industries, mainly coir. As British investment activities increased, expansion of transport and communication facilities and the advent of railways and development of sea trade in the beginning of the 20th century, accelerated economy.¹⁵³ In short the changes in the agrarian sector and the pattern of land tenure system in Travancore were interconnected.

Early Mode of Transport in Travancore prior to 1860.

Since Travancore was rich in the number of rivers and lakes, transport by water was more common and easier for the people. For the purpose of moving men and materials from one place to the other country boats called *Valloms* were used. Inter-regional transactions through water were comparatively cheaper even in olden days.

In the 1st century AD Pliny recorded that in Kerala pepper was conveyed in “boats formed from single logs.”¹⁵⁴ Similarly, the people of Travancore had estimated the distance between two places by taking into account the time needed to cover the distance. For instance the unit of time called *Naly* was used to refer to the distance of about a mile and half in the level ground.¹⁵⁵ In hilly places the distance would be reduced to one third. Smaller distances were measured using the unit of sound such as *Vilipad*.¹⁵⁶

There are beautiful descriptions that provide detailed information about the old trade routes and roads or pathways and the modes of conveyance used

¹⁵² *Ibid.*

¹⁵³ *Ibid.*, p. 107.

¹⁵⁴ A Sreedhara Menon, *Kerala District Gazetteers, Trivandrum*, Trivandrum, 1962, p. 460.

¹⁵⁵ Ward and Conner, *Geographical and Statistical Memoir of the Travancore and Cochin States Vol. I*, Trivandrum, 1863, p. 50

¹⁵⁶ One mile is equal to 1.609 kilometer. Vide, *Ibid.*

in the ancient literary works of South India. The inscriptions of Ravi Varma Kulasekhara (1299-1313) also show that Quilon was a developed town with large streets and extensive roads.¹⁵⁷ Ancient literary works like *Unnuneeli Sandesam*, a Malayalam work of unknown authorship written in the 14th century, contains the detailed description of a land route from Quilon to Thiruvananthapuram. The route is called *Kollaperuvazhi* or *Nadakkavu* from Thiruvananthapuram to Kollam which passes through places such as Palkulangara, Trippapur, Varkala, Nadayara, Ayirur, Puthenkulam, Chirakkara, Nedumgolam, Ottaplamood and Umayanalloor to reach Kollam. There were trees providing shade to travellers on both sides of this road, called *Cholamarams*.¹⁵⁸

However there were a number of broad and narrow paths and country roads in Travancore. The famous inscription of Ravivarma Kulasekhara at Kanchipuram mentions that Quilon town was connected by a network of broad roads.¹⁵⁹ Quilon during that time was one of the well developed business centres having a number of large markets where wealthy traders engaged in the sale of pepper, ginger, cinnamon, etc. In addition to the wide network of cart roads connecting Quilon to various interior parts of Travancore, there was the main road known as *Naraya Peruvazhi* which connected Quilon town to the Port of Quilon.¹⁶⁰

The early roads were only open tracks for the use of foot travellers and the nobles who travelled on horseback or on palanquins carried by labourers. The palanquin carriers would produce a particular sound so that the polluting lower castes could run and hide till the palanquin went out of sight. In his book 'Land of Perumals' Francis Day observes that, "the usual mode of

¹⁵⁷ A Sreedhara Menon, *Kerala District Gazetteers, Quilon*, Trivandrum, 1964, p. 407.

¹⁵⁸ A Sreedhara Menon, *Kerala District Gazetteers, Trivandrum, Op. Cit.*, p. 453.

¹⁵⁹ A Sreedhara Menon, *A Survey of Kerala History, Op. Cit.*, p. 144.

¹⁶⁰ *Ibid.*

travelling was by *Manchelor* or palanquin carried by bearers each of whom received four pies per mile, bullock or buffalo carts, which were paid at the rate of one *anna*¹⁶¹ nine pies per mile and by boats of various kinds including little snake boats through very shallow streams. For the transportation of commercial goods bullocks and donkeys were also used.

Primitive forms of conveyance like tomjons and palanquins were used by wealthy people. Common people generally had to travel on foot because even cart traffic was not common, due to the scarcity of animals suitable for cart traffic. Later, after the making of good cart roads for easy transport the use of bullock carts became frequent. As a result the number of carts increased in Travancore for the transport of goods and passengers. Special beautified bullock carts for speedy travel of the rich became common in the late 19th century, while the British introduced horse carriages such as phaetons, broughams, victorias, landaus, etc.¹⁶²

In the case of the roads of Travancore its history is interesting and enlightening. Wars were often the causes which encouraged the construction of roads. Even during the middle ages roads were constructed for transporting war materials and weapons from one place to another. In Travancore the situation was different, the Government under Kings was committed only to retain and protect the interests of the dominant castes and caste practices. Wars were fought in selected battle grounds and hence the building of roads was not an urgent necessity here.¹⁶³ In the 18th century Travancore, the roads that existed were only open tracks or pathways used by foot-travellers and the nobles who rode on horse-back or travelled on palanquins. During the reign of Marthanda Varma, Public roads were opened, markets and diverse other

¹⁶¹ A coin current in Travancore, it is equal to 1/16 of an Indian rupee.

¹⁶² A Sreedhara Menon, *Kerala District Gazetteers, Trivandrum, Op. Cit.*, p. 461.

¹⁶³ P. K. Balakrishnan, *Jathivyavasthithiyum Keralacharithravum* (Mal.), Kottayam, 2016, p. 199.

useful institutions established, and revenue measures introduced.¹⁶⁴ The first available records of road making belong to the period of Dewan Rama Aiyer in 1751 AD who made roads for military use.¹⁶⁵

The social structure in 19th century Travancore was highly hierarchical on caste basis.¹⁶⁶ The society was categorized into two- the higher castes or the *Savarnas* and the lower castes or *avarnas*.¹⁶⁷ The Brahmins or Namboothiris were considered the highest in the caste hierarchy and even the *Kshatriyas* or the ruling castes were considered inferior to them. To avoid being polluted by touch or approach the *Savarnas* observed strictly the rules of pollution, which had fixed a distance to be observed between castes. For example the social distance between the Namboothiri and the *Kshatriya* was two feet, but that between them and the Nairs was 16 feet with the Ezhavas 32feet and for the Pulayas it was 64 feet.¹⁶⁸ Since this rule of *tindal* was strictly observed by all, the *avarnas* were forbidden to use public roads, or to enter public places like the market or even centres of worship like shrines and temples.¹⁶⁹

A significant feature of the roads in the 18th century was that there were special roads constructed for the use of the royal family members and the superior castes. Such roads were called *Rajapatha* and the *avarnas* were

¹⁶⁴ P. Shungoony Menon, *History of Travancore from the Earliest Times*, Madras, 1878, p. 119.

¹⁶⁵ A Sreedhara Menon, *Kerala District Gazetteer, Trivandrum, Op. Cit.*, p. 453.

¹⁶⁶ “The use of public highways was forbidden to outcastes and anyone daring to pass on within polluting distance of a Nair would be down at once. To secure immediate recognition of such classes they were required to keep themselves uncovered above the waist; shoes, umbrellas, fine cloth and costly ornaments were interdicted to them. The holding of umbrella on public occasions was prohibited to all castes except Brahmins even in rainy season. The proper salutation from a female to persons of rank was to uncover the bosom.”Vide, Samuel Mateer, *Op. Cit.*, p. 291

¹⁶⁷ P. K. V. Kaimal, *Revolt of the Oppressed Punnapara-Vayalar 1946*, Delhi, 1994, p. 12.

¹⁶⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁶⁹ Koji Kawashima, *Op. Cit.*, p. 151.

strictly forbidden to violate the polluting distance.¹⁷⁰ The *Raja pathas* were only unpaved pathways when they were made during the period of the Dalawa Rama Iyer. Such *Raja pathas* were constructed between Nedumangad and Aryankavu, Neyyattinkara and Attingal (via Venjaramoodu) etc.

Inland navigation by boats of different sizes developed with the building of various canals which connected the lakes of Quilon and Kayamkulam through Chavara and Ponmana. Karthikappalli river was connected with Kayamkulam lake at its north eastern side by a canal, which passed through Pathiyoor. Similarly a canal passage was opened between Paravoor lake and Edawa lake in Kollam.¹⁷¹ The construction of the Cannankara canal was started in 1746 during the reign of Matanada Varma but it is not evident from the records, when the construction of the canal was completed.¹⁷²

Karthika Thirunal Rama Varma (1758-1798) who succeeded Marthanda Varma and his Dalawa Ayyappan Marthanda Pillai were also enthusiastic in the construction and maintenance of roads. Many rest houses for travellers were built between Kunnathunad and Thottappalli.¹⁷³ The next Dewan of Travancore was the famous Raja Kesavadas who did remarkable contribution in the modernization of travel, commerce and communication in Travancore. For development of export he built two new ports, one at Alappuzha and the other at Vizhinjam. To promote trade with ports such as Bombay and Calcutta three ships were built. Several canals and roads were constructed for improving commercial facilities. Warehouses were built at Colachel, Poonthura and Vizhinjam and the ports were improved. It was

¹⁷⁰ P. Bhaskaranunni, *Pathonpatham Nootandile Keralam* (Mal.), Thrissur, 2012, p. 1153.

¹⁷¹ P. Shaungoony Menon, *Op. Cit.*, p. 173.

¹⁷² A. P. Ibrahim Kunju, 'The Administration of Travancore in the Eighteenth Century', *Journal of Kerala Studies*, Vol. II, December, 1975, p. 438.

¹⁷³ *Ibid.*

Dewan Kesavads who broadened the road and market towards the eastern side of the temple Sree Padmanabha at Thiruvananthapuram. Bridges over the Killiar river and Karamana river were built with granite rocks. Several other public works were undertaken during the time, probably by making use of *Uzhiyam* labour.¹⁷⁴

In addition to the building of canals and roads other farsighted construction works for the benefit of the people such as uniting different rivers with each other and the sea, etc were carried out during the reign of Rama Varma under the advice of Dewan Kesava Das. For the purpose of easy and speedier travel a road was completed connecting Cape Comorin in the South to Kodungalloor in the north. *Thanneer pandals* or watersheds and *satroms* or inns were also constructed by the wayside for the benefit of the travellers¹⁷⁵.

In their 'Memoir of the Survey of Travancore and Cochin States Lieutenants Ward and Conner had described some routes in the country which were prominent in the beginning of the 19th century.¹⁷⁶ They are.

(a) The route from Panagudy to Thiruvananthapuram via, Aramboly and Quilon (length 102 miles) (b) That from Kollam to Chenkotta via, Kottarakkara and Aryankavu pass (length 69 ½ miles) (c) The route from Kollam to Kochi, via Alappuzha and Cherthala (length 92 miles) (d) That from Kollam to Erattupetta via, Ranni and Kanjirappally (length 69 miles) (e) The route from Panthalam to Pathanapuram (length 16 ¼ miles) (6) That from Krishnapuram to Changanassery via Mavelikara and Thiruvalla (length 25 miles) (f) The route from Karthikappally to Achenkovil Pass via,

¹⁷⁴ T. K. Velu Pillai, *The Travancore State Manual Vol. III*, Trivandrum, 1940, p. 439.

¹⁷⁵ V. Nagam Aiya, *Op. Cit.*, p. 218.

¹⁷⁶ T. K. Velu Pillai, *Op. Cit.*, pp. 465-466.

Mavelikkara, Panthalam and Konniyur (length 55 ½ miles) (8) That from Changanassery to Peruvanthanam via, Kanjirappalli (length 42 ½ miles).¹⁷⁷

In addition to these main routes there were minor foot tracks connecting the various regions of the State through which vehicular traffic was difficult. Moreover they were separated by numerous canals and streams, without bridges. The existing bridges were not useful for traffic using vehicles. The financial condition of the state was not good enough so that capital investment on building roads and bridges could not be considered.

The greatest and the most outstanding personality in the commercial and industrial history of Travancore was Raja Kesavadas. He was the master brain behind the formation of Alleppey, as a nucleus of trade centre in Travancore. The Government built a few ships and a Ware house. Through the intervention of his friends in Bombay, Cutch and Sind merchants settled down in the new port. Cloth Merchants were brought from Tinnevely. The hill produces were brought to Alleppey where they were stored in charge of Vijarippukar.¹⁷⁸ The timber grown in Malayattoor forests was given out on contract to an influential native Christian, named Mathoo Tharakan, who brought his timber to Alleppey and sold it there.¹⁷⁹

The town of Alleppey was filled with a network of canals. These canals were opened to connect the port with the backwater. The work started by Raja Kesava das towards the improvement of Alleppey was taken up by Velu Tampi Dalawah who took initiative to construct new roads. Velu Thampi gave orders to repairs of certain carts belonging to the commercial office of Alleppey.¹⁸⁰ Markets were opened at Changanacherry and

¹⁷⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁷⁸ K. Thanu Pillai, *Op. Cit.*, p. 160.

¹⁷⁹ P. Shaungoony Menon, *Op. Cit.*, p. 249.

¹⁸⁰ Neetu, Record No. 57, Vol. I, 1804, CAT.

Thalayolaparambu near Vaikom as feeders to the port of Alleppey. The place which attracted the special interest of Velu Thampi was Quilon. What Alleppey was to Raja Kesava Das, Quilon was to Velu Thampi. He built new bazaars and invited Tinnevely and Madura merchants to occupy them. The Manjali market in the Parur Taluk was also opened by him.¹⁸¹ He constructed a *Rajapatha* from Kollam to Shencottah in 1802 for moving men and materials of the army. The absence of roads in pre-British Kerala has been described as 'striking, 'and although roads were built to facilitate the movement of British troops after Velu Thampi's rebellion in 1809, by 1845 these had fallen into disuse and disrepair.¹⁸²

Colonel Munro was the British Resident as well as the dewan of Travancore. Being interested in the development of the country Munro took initiatives for constructing bridges and arranged jungars for crossing the rivers and streams of the country, so that goods transportation could be improved. In 1824 Gouri Parvathi Bai sanctioned the construction of two major canals - Parvathi Puthanar and Paravur Canal. The former connected Veli lake with Kadinamkulam lake and Anjengo (Anchuthengu) lake with Vamanapuram river. As a result the Water transport from Thiruvananthapuram to Varkala became possible. Paravur Canal connected the lakes Edawa and Paravur. The length of the canals was 17 miles including 4 bridged constructed at the cost of 4 lakh rupees. The construction of the canals was under the management of Dewan Venkata Rao (1822-1830). Many *Rajapathas* were also built for the members of the royal family and higher caste nobles.¹⁸³

The developments and changes that took place in the High range regions of Travancore deserve special attention. In 1840, the British Officials

¹⁸¹ K. Thanu Pillai, *Op. Cit.*, p. 161.

¹⁸² Robin Jeffrey, *Op. Cit.*, p. 84.

¹⁸³ V. Nagam Aiya, *Op. Cit.*, p. 22.

Ward and Cooner undertook a survey of the High Ranges and found out the possibility of its development.¹⁸⁴ They observed that a number of elephant routes or tracks used by wild elephants through the thick forests could be developed into useful roads for the civilized world. Elephants being intelligent animals have a natural instinct to find the shortest route possible through dense forests. Early pioneers of forest expeditions had discovered this. General Hamilton of the Madras Army had used such tracks to reach peak Anamudi in 1862.¹⁸⁵ Similarly, following the track of the elephant's Col. Valentine had travelled from Munnar to Udumalpet, through dense forests.

The society of Travancore was tainted with many social taboos like untouchability, unseeability, strict observation of pollution laws due to caste difference, strict rules over women's dress codes including the prohibition on the use of breast clothes, temple entry prohibitions, and even the ban on the use of public roads by the members of the lower castes. Following the timely advice of the liberal minded administrators and the progressive attitude of the British Government necessary royal Proclamations were made, so that the social evils could be removed one by one. Abolition of slavery, Abolition of *Uzhiyum* and *Viruthi*, availability of waste lands for cultivation leading to Pandarapattom proclamation of 1865, etc transformed the whole history of Travancore. The growth of plantations, development of trade etc., accelerated the importance of transport facilities in the state. Travancore was a virgin land in respect of about road facilities. In the backdrop of the pressure from colonial masters and also the need of the age, the Public Works Department was established in 1860, which was a turning point in the history of Travancore.

¹⁸⁴ A. Sreedhara Menon, *Kerala District Gazetteers, Kottayam*, Trivandrum, 1975, p. 253.

¹⁸⁵ *Ibid.*

CHAPTER-II

DEVELOPMENT OF MODERN MEANS OF TRANSPORT

In the absence of transport networks social and economic life of the people would be reduced to isolated phenomena. Hence transport systems need special attention and assessment in the history of a country's progress. Different geographical regions of the world have to depend on the smooth functioning of communication system for social and economic integration. The modernization of transport is considered an urgent task and pre condition required for political, economic and social development. There were facilities for and Water and Road, and communication in Travancore during the 19th century. In the 20th century Railway and Air Transport was also introduced in Travancore.

Road Transport

The word 'road' is a variant of raid, as it comes from *ridan*, to ride, which gave rise to *rad*, which developed both into road and into raid. The origin of the ordinary meaning of the word road is uncertain. It is generally regarded as having been applied to the track ridden on; but S. and B. Webb suggest that it may have come from the verb 'to rid', the track having been cleared of obstacles¹. The New English Dictionary connects it with the Dutch *reeden*, i. e 'fit out'. The earliest roads doubtless began as hunting trails and game tracks that were trodden out by the foot of man and beast. These rough tracks were made more distinct and durable as restless men used them to satisfy that intellectual interest in different conditions of life expressed in the song in Goethe's 'Wanderjahre', the longing for unconventional freedom of

¹ J. W. Gregory, *The Story of the Road: From the Beginning Down to A. D. 1931*, London, 1931, p. 12.

Stevenson's 'Vagabond', and the yearning to explore the unknown which drove Kipling's pioneer to follow where the stranger roads go down. The earliest and most persistent of all motives which have induced men to wander, was however, the need for food and fuel, and the materials necessary for weapons and implements.²

Road goods transport is only one part of the total inland transport activity. Co-ordination of all inland transport activities has often been advocated as a way of solving transport problems.³

There were reasons to believe that the transport revolution in India occurred in the mid-nineteenth century. Before that time, natural forces were employed such as the energy of man and animal on land, the motive force of wind or water afterwards, steam power were used. The development of the means of transport had remained unchanged since remote antiquity; then, within half a century, it increased at an unimaginable rate.⁴

The working of a road network necessarily implies the united action of nature and man, and corresponds therefore to a geographic and human choice. It would appear at first that the very structure of the country inevitably determines the system of its communications.⁵ Natural obstacles compel land transit to follow the lines of least resistance, to take the most convenient passages, and contribute to the establishment of roads along well-defined trails. As Jean Deloche observes certain valleys would have channelled trade at a very early state, that certain passes would have been frequented from an early date, that ways of passage would have retained their importance

² *Ibid.*, p. 4

³ Micheal Webb, *Transporting Goods by Road*, London, 1972, p. 3.

⁴ Jean Deloche, *Transport and Communications in India Vol. I*, Newyork, 1993, p. 4.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 5.

throughout history, and that the old routes would have been firmly entrenched in the earth. This was happened in the case of India also.

The beginning of road development in India, as elsewhere, has been lost in the mist of time. Men probably had begun to follow the tracks of the large migratory wild animals, taking advantage of topographical irregularities and choosing established and well-defined landmarks.⁶

The need for transport is increasingly felt with the replacement of independent village economy by national or international economy. Of all the different types of transport, motor transport has been acclaimed as the most important in the transport system. Nowadays motor transportation has become the principal means of bringing people from one place to another both in rural and urban areas.⁷ It has entered deep into the countryside and has reached places inaccessible to other modern modes of transport. Travelling has been facilitated and big cities have been linked to the countryside, and villages have been brought nearer to one another, thus breaking their isolation. Even in freight traffic, the motor carrier has superseded the rail-road in urban centres, and has made major inroads into the long distance movements of a great deal of cargoes.

A growing economy needs a speedy, efficient and cheap system of transport. In a country like India as in the case of any other developing country- the first requisite of economic development is the development of transport facilities. Road transport, particularly motor transport, by joining different parts of the country, carries the results of development to different parts, resulting in increased demand for goods. This stimulates the growth of both industries and agriculture, widens the scope of trade and commerce and other essential activities, giving a push to the developmental process. The

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 8.

⁷ K. K. Sharma, *Motor Transport in Rajasthan*, New Delhi, 1975, p. 1.

resulting market economy encourages specialization in production. Incidentally, it leads towards an equalization of prices all over the country. Motor transport, by encouraging the growth of industry and agriculture, by fostering a balanced regional growth and by raising the overall level of consumption, ultimately brings about a rise in the living-standard of the people. This can only be achieved through an extensive use of the resources, and there is no better way to produce intensively and extensively, than by securing greater mobility.⁸

The road system was generally perceived to have been put together piecemeal and in response to short term political goals. The roads that did exist were not well maintained and those that were functional were not unnecessarily delivering prosperity to local people. In some places, the roads even seemed to enabled illegal trade to prosper without building the modern economy they were supposed to foster.⁹ The connectivity they afforded was channelling people and resource in aberrant ways.

The Madras government in November 1855 gave instruction to the Travancore government to construct roads, canals and public buildings as part of modernisation.¹⁰ After the advent of T. Madhava Rao as Dewan in 1858 started a new era of development in Travancore was started. In spite of the sporadic efforts put forth from time to time for improving the condition of roads, there was a great paucity in road communication prior to the organization of the Engineers' Department in 1860. During the period of Dewan T. Madhava Rao, Chief Engineer Barton, the Head of the Department

⁸ *Ibid.*

⁹ Penny Harvey and Hannah Knox, *Roads: An Anthropology of Infrastructure and Expertise*, London, 2015. p. 5.

¹⁰ R.Gnanaselvam, 'Public Works Department in Travancore: Its Early History and Growth', *Journal of Kerala Studies*, Vol.XXXI,2004,p.146.

of Public Works was appointed in the year 1863.¹¹ Barton organised the department to prove equal in efficiency to the requirements of the government. Barton naturally endeavoured to introduce the contract system of work.¹² It was the beginning of a new era in the field of public works in Travancore.

The Public Works Department undertook so many works and constructed a new network of roads for the purpose of transport and dispatching goods from one place to another. The entire state was connected with roads facilitated for the same purpose. The Main Southern Road from Trivandrum to Aramboly which was in a state of deterioration was the first to be taken up for improvement.¹³ The opening of a road from Quilon to Tinnevely was a great achievement since this road was served as a channel of trade.¹⁴ Ample and substantial headway was made in road construction during the period 1862-72.¹⁵ The road stretching from Kottayam to Gudalur via Peermede, which passed right across the High Ranges was started during 1862. The first section of this road from Kottayam to Peermede was finished in 1872 and the second section from Peermede to Gudalur in 1885.¹⁶

While the approach road to the Northern ghat from Kottayam which was maintained in good order, several old timber bridges were replaced by masonry structures. The Changanchery road was completed fully bridged and drained and metalled and the traveller's bungalows at Mundakayam.¹⁷ The road approaches from Nagercoil to Colachel (8.5 miles) with cross road from Eraniel to Odeigherry (4.5 miles) was also completed and include a masonry

¹¹ Travancore Administration Report, 1862-63, p. 49.

¹² *Ibid.*, p. 50.

¹³ A. Sreedhara Menon, *Kerala District Gazeeters, Trivandrum*, Trivandrum, 1962. p. 455.

¹⁴ PWD, File No. 16333, Bundle No. 1867, KSA.

¹⁵ A. Sreedhara Menon, *Kerala District Gazeeters, Trivandrum, Op. Cit.*

¹⁶ A. Sreedhara Menon, *Kerala District Gazeeters, Kottayam*, Trivandrum, 1975, p. 252.

¹⁷ Travancore Administration Report, 1864-65, p. 160.

bridge from four to twenty feet spans at Eraniel. The southern road from Trivandrum to the Aramboly pass has been maintained in excellent order, several great improvements were made by deviations and by reconstruction.¹⁸ Similarly Bridle paths were also being made to open up the solitudes of the Cardamom Hills in the High ranges of Kottayam.¹⁹

Several miles of road were undertaken chiefly for the benefit of coffee planters²⁰. A considerable outlay was absorbed in the repair of breaches in tanks, channels and roads in south Travancore, caused by heavy floods. These do not occur every year, but they certainly repeat themselves at intervals and inflict much loss and inconvenience. Repairs were effected promptly, but preventive measures were without further delay. The PWD was fully alive to this, and the delay that already occurred was due to the pressure of other work.²¹

It was also during this period that the beginning was made for the construction of a new road from Trivandrum passing through the central part of the Quilon District and extending to Kottayam (the later Main Central Road) with a view to extend this through North Travancore. In 1877-78, the construction of the Main Central Road was completed.²² Most of the roads were gravelled and the bridges were all of wooden platform.

In addition to maintenance of roads, 138 miles of traces or bridle paths were also maintained at an average cost of Rs 8. 5 per mile preparatory to widening them into cart roads²³. The cart roads, while primarily serving the planters, also tended indirectly to open up forestland were immediately

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 161.

¹⁹ Travancore Administration Report, 1869-70, p. 134.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 129.

²¹ *Ibid.*

²² A. Sreedhara Menon, *Kerala District Gazeeters, Trivandrum, Op. Cit.*, 455.

²³ Travancore Administration Report, 1882-83, p. 79.

availed of by timber merchants. Most of the bridges on the Kottayam to Mundakayam road were finished and had replaced the old and dangerous semi permanent timber bridges. ²⁴ The length of village roads stood at 899. 5 against 902. 5 miles and the average cost of their maintenance Rs18 ³/₄ against Rs. 17. 5. The difference was appreciable and due to conversion from village to cart roads. ²⁵

The increase in the Northern division owed chiefly to the improvement of the road from Kottayam through the ghats of Kumili, the relief works and the tracing and construction of a bridle path on a new alignment in the High Range. ²⁶ In the Quilon division, the increase was accounted for principally by the restoration of the Quilon to Shencottah road estimated to cost Rs. 2, 56, 880 and in the Trivandrum division by the metalling and gravelling of the main southern road from Trivandrum to Aramboly frontier.

High Range Road, it was decided to construct and maintain a bridle path at present, ²⁷ the cost of constructing a cart road being prohibitive and work to the Rs. 60, 915 was done during the year 1899. ²⁸ The length of cart roads maintained was 2, 171 miles, showing an increase of 164 miles over the last year. This includes 342 miles of planter's road. ²⁹ The increase in the Trivandrum division chiefly owed to the metalling of the first 15 miles of the Trivandrum to Shencottah road. In the Quilon division the increase was due to the restoration of and special repairs to the Quilon to Shencottah road. ³⁰

²⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 81.

²⁵ Travancore Administration Report, 1895-96, p. 89.

²⁶ Travancore Administration Report, 1897-98, p. 79.

²⁷ A bridle path is a path intended for people riding horses.

²⁸ Travancore Administration Report, 1898-99, p. 59.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 61.

³⁰ Travancore Administration Report, 1900-01, p. 31.

The Kottayam to Kumili road was remetalled up to near Mundakayam, and all the wooden bridges except one, up to Periyar on the line were reported to have been replaced by iron or masonry structures. A very large amount of work was done in the way of replacing old bridges, mostly wooden ones, by more substantial structures, especially in North and Central Travancore.³¹

The Kanan Devan Hills Produce Company (here after K. D. H. P.) started in 1897 played a leading part in improving the system of transport and communication in the High Ranges.³² In 1899 L. Davidson, General Manager of the K. D. H. P. Co., set about the construction of the Kundale Valley road from Munnar to Top Station. It extended over a distance of four kilometres. The northern outlet road from the High range, the construction of which was undertaken by the Kannan Devan Hills Produce Company under a special agreement with the Durbar was completed during the year 1905, i. e., more than one year before the stipulated time, and with a considerable saving in cost.³³

The Chief Engineer in his report says that, as compared with the Madras presidency, Travancore has been liberally provided with roads; and that although on account of the heavy rainfall, especially in North Travancore, it is difficult to keep the roads in good condition, they compare favourably in this respect with those in British India. The construction on work of the three important roads in Northern division, were the improvement of the Quilon to Shencottah road, the improvement of the road from Quilon to Madathura, the restoration of the cart road from Kottayam to Kumili, and the erection of the bridge over the Periyar on that road. The construction of feeder and approach roads to the Railway stations in Travancore of the Cochin and the Quilon -

³¹ Travancore Administration Report, 1904-05, p. 28.

³² A. Sreedhara Menon, *Kerala District Gazeeters, Kottayam, Op. Cit.*, p. 253.

³³ Travancore Administration Report, 1904-05, p. 31.

Tinnevely Railways, the opening of the bridle path from the high range towards the west, the construction of the Northern outlet road, the improvement of a portion of the road from Munnar to Bodimettu and the construction of the road from Vaikom to Udayamperur and other works were also equally important.³⁴

Land was acquired for converting the path from Meenachil to Kaduthurthy into a cart road³⁵ for availing transportation. The widening and metalling of the Pattanapuram- Konni road and improvements were made in the village road from Krishnapuram to Karunagapalli.³⁶ The opening of a road from Talayolaparambu to Kuthakuttukulam, the construction of a road from Poovanakadavu to Cherukolepuzha and the construction of the deviation lineal of work from Ernakulam to Munnar were also completed.³⁷

The work of opening a cart road from Kumili to Devicolam, especially portions from Devicolam to Periakanal, was fully completed during the year 1925.³⁸ The damage caused by the heavy rains and floods of 1924 to roads and bridges was repaired especially in Alwaye, Kottayam and Quilon Divisions.³⁹

On the road from the western fort gate to the beach in Trivandrum, special repairs were made in connection with Arat festival.⁴⁰ It was ordered that the maramath department would attend to the watering of the road on the

³⁴ Travancore Administration Report, 1902-03, p. 26.

³⁵ PWD, File No. 254, Bundle No. 367, 1923, KSA.

³⁶ Travancore Administration Report, 1914-15, p. 46.

³⁷ Travancore Administration Report, 1919-20, p. 62.

³⁸ Travancore Administration Report, 1924-25, p. 63.

³⁹ Travancore Administration Report, 1924-25, p. 63.

⁴⁰ PWD, File No. 22, Bundle No. 18, 1904, KSA.

Arat days. Metalling certain roads inside fort in connection with the *Murajapom* ceremony was undertaken in 1948.⁴¹

Alleppey, the principal port, had long been inaccessible by road but with the completion of the road from Haripad to Ambalapuzha during the year, this disability was removed. Special efforts were also directed towards the construction as early as possible of a road from Alleppey to Shertalai and thence to Arur on the Travancore to Cochin frontier.⁴² Travel from Travancore to Cochin, earlier accessible only by backwater was made easy by these new roads.⁴³ All roads in the State were maintained by Government except in the forest areas.

Work and repairs occupied the major concerns of officials who had to spend 73 percent of annual allocation in 1926-27. Footpaths were converted to roads, special repairs were done on existing roads and bridges, maintenance of roads was efficiently executed and new roads were constructed.⁴⁴

Munnar town was partly isolated and became inaccessible on the western part due to the destruction of the western outlet road and to overcome this drawback a new road was proposed from Kothamangalam to Munnar via Neriamangalam, Munnakanam and Pallivasal.⁴⁵ After feasibility study and investigation, sanction was granted for the construction of the new road.

A large programme of metalling and repairing of roads was carried out in connection with the visit of the Viceroy in December 1929 and among the roads thus improved were the Western Frontier road, the Main Central road

⁴¹ PWD, File No. 2619, Bundle No. 727, 1947, KSA.

⁴² Travancore Administration Report, 1924-25, p. 111.

⁴³ Travancore Administration Report, 1926-27, p. 123.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 122.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 126.

and the Kottayam to Kumili road. New roads extending 69 miles were opened and the total lengths of roads improved were 412 miles.⁴⁶

In the Trivandrum - Shencottah road the portion between the School of Arts and the L. M. S Church junction in the Trivandrum city was cemented as an experimental measure in the year 1930 to cope with the heavy traffic.⁴⁷ The following were the principal roads that existed in 1936 in the Trivandrum district. M. C. road from Trivandrum to the northern frontier (155 km); Main Southern road from Trivandrum to Aramboly (53 km); Trivandrum - Shencottah Road (64 ¼ km) ;Trivandrum -Quilon road(44¼ km); Nedumangad - Shorlacode road(39 km).⁴⁸ The ruler sanctioned Chalai bazar road and a length of 1500 feet of another road with heavy traffic, other than the main Road, being Spraymaxed as an experimental measure.⁴⁹

The government opened a road from Thondankulangara to Aryad Munro light. This road was practically in the town of Alleppey and largely used by the public.⁵⁰ The secretary, chamber of commerce, Alleppey, had emphasized the usefulness and importance of the road. There existed car streets also in Travancore, mainly in Suchindram, Cape Comorin, Parakkal, Padmanabhapuram and Bhutanpandy.⁵¹ The car streets were metalled and annual maintained.

The road from Kumili to Chenkarakutty, the only road to the Eravithoppu and Mukkampara coupes was seriously damaged due to cyclone in 1925.⁵² The Government sanctioned excess grant of Rs. 4400 (four

⁴⁶ Travancore Administration Report, 1929-30, p. 155.

⁴⁷ A. Sreedhara Menon, *Kerala District Gazeeters, Trivandrum, Op. Cit.*, p. 456.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*

⁴⁹ PWD, File No. 1446, Bundle No. 387, 1927, KSA.

⁵⁰ PWD, File No. 897, Bundle No. 479, 1935, KSA.

⁵¹ PWD, File No. 1305, Bundle No. 372, 1923, KSA.

⁵² PWD, File No. 749, Bundle No. 51, 1925, KSA.

thousand and four hundred) in 1927 for the maintenance of the 46 miles of the Kottayam - Kumili Road lying in the Kottayam division.⁵³

In the year 1931 Rs. 16, 80, 652 was spent for the opening of new roads including improvements and special repairs to the existing ones and Rs. 9, 95, 249 spent for the maintenance of roads, paths and canals in the state. The length of the newly constructed road was 69 miles as against 48 miles of the previous year. The repaired and improved roads had a length of 412 miles against 282 of the year before. Rs. 11, 67, 621 was sanctioned on the road from Neriamangalam to Pallivasal and out of it Rs. 9, 49, 517 was spent during the year.⁵⁴ In 1931 the Neendakara Bridge was completed and Rs. 5, 17, 180 was the total amount spent for its construction. During the year an amount of Rs. 3, 37, 000/- was sanctioned for road development and repair work and Rs. 2, 08, 749 was utilized. An amount of Rs. 39920 was earmarked for the construction of Neriamangalam bridge across the Periyar.⁵⁵

The Travancore Government proposed the opening of a 47 mile road from the Anamallais to Angamali (Travancore) S. C. Railway. at a cost of Rs. 12 lakhs. In those days the produce of the plantations in the High ranges were taken to the Tutucorin Port and this would obviously open a good portion of Travancore territory now left untapped and stimulated the industrial activity.⁵⁶ Widening of the road from Kumili to Deviculum via Vandamettu also held commercial activities.⁵⁷

Reviewing the administration of G. B. E Truscott (Chief Engineer with the Travancore Government in charge of the Department of Engineering), the

⁵³ PWD, File No. 876, Bundle No. 384, 1929, KSA.

⁵⁴ The Times of India, September 17, 1931, p. 11.

⁵⁵ The Times of India, April 16, 1936, p. 14.

⁵⁶ The Times of India, May 13, 1938, p. 19

⁵⁷ PWD, File No. 1425, Bundle No. 460, 1933, KSA.

government of Travancore observed that they were pleased to record their appreciation of the good work done during the year 1935.⁵⁸

In the meantime a few Municipalities had taken over the responsibility of maintaining non-arterial roads within their respective municipal limits. Private players volunteered to help Government in the construction of new roads. As far as ryot roads were increased the public came forward to improve them and the department acted as mentors and advisors and offered to build bridges and culverts.⁵⁹ By paying nominal compensation government took over lands covered by roads and recorded them as *poramboke*.⁶⁰ Government sanctioned to levy half contribution from the ryots because of improvements to the *thodu*, being waved⁶¹. Opening ryot roads in central Travancore from 1915 and that had been able to get over 100 miles of such roads constructed and handed over to government in the Taluks of Tiruvalla and Changnacherry.⁶²

From 1930 onwards there witnessed an immense extension of roads and great changes in their relative importance. Government observed that the policy of the department, in the matter of devoting increased attention of the improvement of road and communication was continued.⁶³ An exclusive account known as “Road Development Fund” was formed for financing, construction and maintenance of roads in 1932-33.⁶⁴ Increasing funds for such public utility was allotted by Government for continuous road traffic. The existing roads of the states were linked to the adjacent Madras Residency

⁵⁸ The Times of India, April 16, 1936, p. 14.

⁵⁹ Travancore Administration Report, 1937-38, p. 149.

⁶⁰ Travancore Administration Report, 1940-41, p. 138.

⁶¹ PWD, File No. 802, Bundle No. 543, 1939, KSA.

⁶² PWD, File No. 451, Bundle No. 510, 1937, KSA.

⁶³ The Times of India, April 16, 1936, p. 14.

⁶⁴ Travancore Administration Report, 1936-37, p. 160.

and Cochin State road systems. Centres of Agriculture, Industry and trade were effectively connected by roads.⁶⁵

A continuous programme of special surfacing of the main roads inside the towns was completed in 1939-40 under the town-planning scheme. This helped to avoid not only the dust nuisance to the travelling public and inhabitants by the side of the roads but also the considerable loss that was likely to arise from the rapid deterioration of the tyres used in transport vehicles owing to the poor condition of the town roads. The problem of improving the condition of roads in Trivandrum Town had been engaging the attention of Government for many years, but practical action was taken only in the year 1933. To avoid the dust nuisance, the surfaces of many roads in the Town were treated with spraymax, which went some way to attain the object in view.⁶⁶ The road surfacing with cement concrete was therefore tried as an experiment and was found successful. Another outstanding work done during this period was the bituminous surfacing of the main southern road from Trivandrum to Thamarakulam and thence to Cape Comorin which was perhaps the largest concrete road in India.⁶⁷ In Travancore there was a plenty of timber in the state and that the strength of ordinary timber could be increased by special treatment. Government, on the advice of Kamesam, the new Timber Expert and Director of Development, decided to use wood for roads. As an experimental measure, a mile of road in Trivandrum and a mile of road in Nagercoil town were surfaced with pressure treated wood blocks.⁶⁸ The Public Works Department would carry out the scheme in consultation with the Director of Development.

⁶⁵ Travancore Administration Report, 1934-35, p. 164.

⁶⁶ The Times of India, September 14, 1934, p. 12.

⁶⁷ A. Sreedhara Menon, *Kerala District Gazeeterss, Trivandrum, Op. Cit.*, p. 457

⁶⁸ The Times of India, April 13, 1938, p. 15.

The path runs through reserve forests and unregistered grasslands and as such the forest department. The area, through which the footpath runs, covers vast and open grassy land containing no valuable tree growth. The widening of the footpath into a road will facilitate timely detection and prevention of smuggling, since remote localities, now subject to depredations by smugglers from the adjoining British villages, can be easily reached by the officers and subordinates of the department.⁶⁹

The rates of maintenance grants for the roads of the same kind were different for each road. For example, M. S road in the Nagercoil division had a maintenance grant of Rs. 1500 per mile, while the grant for all the other metalled roads there varied from 100 to Rs. 750 per mile. In the case of unmetalled roads and planters road, the grant varied from Rs. 40 to Rs. 300 and Rs. 80 to 120 per mile respectively. The planters trace had a maintenance grant of Rs. 10 only per mile and PWD traces had Rs. 15 to Rs. 25 per mile.⁷⁰

Cardamom was the only crop for which land was given in this area known as the cardamom hills reserve and there is not an acre of suitable land unoccupied or uncultivated. Roads provided means of communication and for industrial development, and to help the ryots to improve their cultivated land to cheapen cost of production. To facilitate to needs of the cultivators government sanctioned three important roads. (a) Kumili - Kattapana - Kallar - Devikulam road. (b) Peermade- Ayappankoil - Kallar- Deviculam road: and (c) Thodupuzha -Thovala - Kallar Road. The Kumili to Devikulam road traverses almost the entire plain of cardamom lands stretching from Kumili right up to Santhanpara.⁷¹

⁶⁹ PWD, File No. 1105, Bundle No. 568, 1940, KSA.

⁷⁰ PWD, File No. 778, Bundle No. 498, 1936, KSA.

⁷¹ PWD, File No. 1229, Bundle No. 514, 1937, KSA.

The India Road Congress was inaugurated by the Government of India in December 1934. Travancore was represented on the council of the Congress by the Chief Engineer. The objects of the congress were generally to promote the science and practice of road construction and maintenance by annual meetings for the discussion of papers and inspection of works of interest. The second session of the congress was held at Bangalore in January 1936 and the third at Lucknow in February 1937.⁷²

In those days road accidents were few in number, but not completely absent. The number of accidents fell from 46 in 1943 to 32 in 1944. The accident rate was one for every 146, 000 miles run as against one for 105, 000 miles in the previous year.⁷³

One of the road accident case reported in 1945 was involving the state transport lorry no. TRV 3329. The accident took place near the rope way station, Munnar and the accused was convicted under the section 428 of the Travancore Penal Code. He sentenced to pay a fine of Rs. 50.⁷⁴

The investigation and survey of the entire National Highway of about 165 miles in length from the north up to Trivandrum was completed. Under road construction schemes, the investigation of the Cardamom Hill roads was in progress; special improvements to certain roads were completed and arrangements were being made for semi grouting the surface of the main roads of the state.⁷⁵

Government accorded administrative sanction to the work of improving the road from 112th mile M. C road to 1st mile Kuthattukulam

⁷² The Travancore Directory for 1948 Part I, Trivandrum, 1947, p. 431.

⁷³ Travancore Administration Report, 1943-1944, p. 172.

⁷⁴ PWD, File No. 1913, Bundle No. 721, 1947, KSA.

⁷⁵ Travancore Administration Report, 1945-46, p. 198.

Ramapuram road.⁷⁶ The government took steps in converting the village road from Arappamattam to Kodikulam into a cart road.⁷⁷ In 1947, the ruler was pleased to accord administrative sanction to the work of improving the Poojapura circle, at the estimated cost of Rs. 17, 000.⁷⁸

One of the most important roads, which got the special attention of Dewan C. P. Ramaswamy Aiyer was the 54 mile long Thiruvananthapuram to Kanyakumari highway.⁷⁹ Early in 1939 a decision was taken to renovate this road at a total cost of Rs 14 lakhs, 45 miles at the Kanyakumari end. Thus, India's largest concrete road was constructed in record time. Passenger traffic in all routes continued at the peak level. Despite insistent demands from the public for taking up fresh routes, the department had to be content mostly with improvements and adjustments in the monopoly routes.

With the help of bicycles, the urban administration was able to speed up the transmission of messages in the rural side, because the vehicle could be used on narrow pathways and rough roads in colonial India.⁸⁰ Later the first motorbike arrived in the district in 1908.⁸¹ It was a Beaston Humber of one and a half horse power. After one single trip from Munnar to Top station, the machine struck work, to earn the nickname 'Beastly Humbug'. Gordon Kemlo who came to build the ropeway took it with him to South Africa when he left the district the following year. The Second motorbike was brought to the district by H. L. Pinches, the then General manager in 1911.⁸² From then

⁷⁶ PWD, File No. 805, Bundle No. 710, 1947, KSA.

⁷⁷ PWD, File No. 803, Bundle No. 720, 1947, KSA.

⁷⁸ PWD, File No. 779, Bundle No. 709, 1947, KSA.

⁷⁹ A. Sreedhara Menon, *Triumph and Tragedy in Travancore Annals of Sir CP's Sixteen Years*, Kottayam, 1967, p. 104.

⁸⁰ P. Sivadasan, 'Wheels of Social Transformation: The Bicycle in Early Twentieth Century Kerala', *South Indian History Congress, 36th Annual Proceedings*, Puduchery, 2016, p. 4.

⁸¹ Sulochana Nalapat, *The Story of Munnar*, Kottayam, 2010, p. 75.

⁸² *Ibid.*

on, motorbikes gradually replaced the horse as a mode of transport for work on the estates. By 1923, the company had one lorry and three cars. About this time, the first journey from Munnar to the Anamalais was undertaken by motorcar, ‘a distance of about 100 miles being completed within the one day!’.

Nationalisation of State Transport Department

It was Arumana Sreenarayanan Thampi, son of Travancore ruler Visakhham Thirunal who started a private sector Transport company in Travancore. In 1910 he registered a company called Commercial Transport Corporation. He was also the owner of Sreevilasom Motors and he conducted transport service in Thiruvananthapuram - Nagercoil and Thiruvananthapuram - Quilon routes.⁸³ He made use of 10 buses for that. These vehicles, which had stone tyres and used the fuel of Carbon gas, produced terrible sound which frightened the people. The speed of the vehicles was between 25 and 30 miles, and was called eight seaters. Thampi was the forerunner of today’s Transport Service.

For some time past Government had become alive to the fundamental defects of the existing system of transport, which were, mainly controlled by private agencies and individuals. Owing to ruthless competition among these agencies, the system had been thoroughly demoralised. Added to this was the fact there was unnecessary waste of capital by running too many buses on the routes than was proved to be sufficient to meet requirements of the travelling public.⁸⁴ Towards 1937, there were a little over 1, 100 motor buses plying for hire in the state, and motor transport was fast replacing other means of

⁸³ Pattom G. Ramachandran Nair, *Thiruvananthapurathinte Ithihasam*(Mal.), Thiruvananthapuram, 2003, pp. 317-18.

⁸⁴ The Travancore Directory for 1943 Part I, Trivandrum, 1942, p. 445.

transport.⁸⁵ For the better control of regulation of motor traffic, Government took now taken over under its direct management, an important trunk line of communications, which was at present almost a monopoly enterprise in the hands of one individual. If the experiment proved a success, as it was bound to do, the service would be extended to the remaining trunk roads. In 1938 first motor vechile was registered in Travancore State and during this period, there was a phenomenal increase in the number of motor vechiles in the state. Owing to the above mentioned reasons government became convinced that it was their duty as well as their right to take into their own hands the control and regulation of public conveyances along the main trunk road and in other selected localities in the state and to improve and organise water borne traffic. There was a unanimous public opinion in favour of a change over for a nationalized system of transport service.

Nationalisation of Road Transport means the exercising of the right of the state to monopolise and the taking over the Bus routes and services hitherto in the possession and enjoyment of private corporations and individuals respectively and to make them state-owned and state-managed.⁸⁶

Nationalisation of public utility services has been the aim of Travancore. Before the First World War, the public in Travancore was not generally bus minded.⁸⁷ Bus travel was then a luxury and rich man's mode of conveyance. But constant contact with the civilized ward as a result of commercial and industrial advancement and foreign trade, bus mania of the rich gradually transformed and manifested itself in the form of commercial and industrial enterprises. Foreign industrial magnates in their attempt to capture foreign markets made full use of this country resulting in the

⁸⁵ The Times of India, February 25, 1938, p. 23.

⁸⁶ Report of the Investigation officer on Nationalisation of Transport, p. 1. Vide, PWD, File No. 8438, Bundle No. 814, 1950, KSA.

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*

population and large scale introduction of bus service in the State.⁸⁸ As the service of an expert was necessary to work out the scheme E. G. Salter who was the Assistant operating superintendent of the London Passenger Transport Board which is the biggest transport undertaking in the world was appointed as the Superintendent of Transport and he assumed charge as such at Trivandrum in September 1937.⁸⁹

From England 60 common chassis with Perkins diesel engines were imported. They were assembled by the mechanics here. Sree Chithira Thirunal Maharaja inaugurated the service on 1938 at 5. 00 in the evening. There were continuous services in the routes Thiruvananthapuram - Kanyakumari- Nagercoil - Colachel regularly. In 1938 C. P. Ramaswamy Aiyer flagged off three buses in Thiruvananthapuram. It was the beginning of two ways Transport Corporation. The responsibility of the supervisory activities fell on C. P. Gopala Panicker, who was the Private Secretary of C. P. Ramaswamy Iyer. During the first trip from Thampanur to Sasthamangalam people who were curious stood on both sides of the road to see the memorable event.⁹⁰ The sections first covered by the vehicles of the department were Trivandrum - Nagercoil, Trivandrum- Neyyattinkara, Nagercoil - Colachel and Nagercoil - Cape Comorin Service within the municipality of Trivandrum with an Extension to Nedumangad was commenced in 1938. The Trivandrum - Quilon service was also started. All transport services on these routes were monopolised by the departmental buses.⁹¹ There was general agitation in the country in favour of vested interests against this policy of the Government. But the Government stood

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*

⁸⁹ The Travancore Directory for 1943 Part I, *Op. Cit.*

⁹⁰ Pattom G. Ramachandran Nair, *Op. Cit.*, p. 317.

⁹¹ Travancore Administration Report, 1937-38, p. 228.

fast and maintained their policy.⁹² After the war nationalisation of transport also developed and adequate administration resulted in the development of agriculture, industry and commerce, which were the aims of the civilised government.⁹³

In Travancore in many villages, there were waiting sheds for people waiting for the bus. They had roofs and good cement benches for people to sit comfortably. In some places like Sankara Mangalam they were under the shade of banyan trees.⁹⁴

Introduction of Express Bus Services in the Department was a new feature of the year 1941, the Trivandrum to Kottayam Express services commenced on August 17, 1941. Trivandrum was the starting point of all-important services run by the State Transport in this area. Services were operated according to the Time Table prepared by the Director of Transport. There was no extension of ordinary services during the year. The express service was extended from Alwaye to Munnar with one journey per day in each direction.⁹⁵

The city and suburban services in Trivandrum were reorganised and consolidated into a separate unit with the area of operation of the vehicles enhanced. The city services were extended up to Thirumala in the east and Kattachakonam in the north. The total number of buses in the city and the suburban services to Vizhinjam, Neyyattinkara and Nedumangad increased from 9 to 20, the demand for increasing the number of Express buses was met by providing additional services.⁹⁶ New Express services were introduced

⁹² Nationalisations of Transport-Report of the Investigation Officer, p. 2, Vide, PWD, File No. 8438, Bundle No. 814, 1950, KSA.

⁹³ The Times of India, February 25, 1938, p. 23.

⁹⁴ Mathrubhumi Weekly, Vol. 37, Issue. 51, March 6, 1960, Kozhikode, p. 17.

⁹⁵ Travancore Administration Report, 1943-1944, p. 170.

⁹⁶ Travancore Administration Report, 1945-46, p. 177.

from Quilon and Kottarakara to Kottayam. An Express coach service was introduced between Trivandrum and Kottayam to provide comfortable travel to the public. All the other Express services were also continued during the year.⁹⁷

Due to heavy demands of vehicles for normal services and shortage of petrol, Private hire operation was restricted to minimum. Requests for vehicles for non-essential purposes had to be invariably rejected. Requests from educational institutions were, largely allowed.⁹⁸ The unsettled political conditions in the northern taluks put great strain on the department to supply transport facilities to the police and military in connection with security measures overall. In 1948, there reported a case P. J Govindan, Kundara wrote to government, requesting to arrange an express bus service from Keralapuram to Sakhtikulangara for marriage purpose, at his own expense. The authority gave sanction to the request.⁹⁹

Owing to the circumstances of the war there was scarcity of petrol, tyres and other things required for Transport service. Hence, it was advertised regretfully that it was not possible to hire department vehicles for any requirements other than for official purposes in the interest of the state. In future it was not possible to issue special permits to buses since it affected Government of India's war efforts. Since this State of affairs was likely to continue, for wedding journeys, travels, pilgrimages, etc. people were requested not to seek special buses of the department for such purposes. Instead they were requested to undertake such journeys in service buses.¹⁰⁰

⁹⁷ *Ibid.*

⁹⁸ PWD, File No. 366, Bundle No. 744, 1948, KSA.

⁹⁹ PWD, File No. 121, Bundle No. 742, 1948, KSA.

¹⁰⁰ Kerala Kaumudi, September 11, 1942, p. 3.

Government gave much attention to the convenience of the passengers. Government got a complaint from public of dripping of dirty water during rainy season from the top of stage carriages fitted with gas plants where characol bags were stored. The authority gave corrective measure and ordered the respective owners of the permit, if characol bags were placed on the top of the vehicles for absolute necessity it should be covered by tarpaulin or other means with a view to stop the dropping of such dirty water.¹⁰¹

It was advertised that from 10th May 1942 onwards the concession tickets issued for travel in Department buses would be allowed only to students. Tickets at the rate of 25% concession would not be issued in future.

¹⁰²

The government sanctioned the proposed service between Mayyanadu and Kallada via Kottiyam and Kundara. The necessity of the above mentioned bus service was that Kallada was a commercial centre exporting copra, coir, coir products etc. to Quilon and Alleppey. There was no public transport facility for people to come and go from these places to the hospital.¹⁰³ The nearest hospitals for inhabitants of Kallada and suburbs were L. M. S hospital at Kundara. These difficulties were overcome by the introduction of this bus service.

There was no means of transport from the northern most boundary of Travancore to Parur town, which was only about four miles away. People of this locality were put to great difficulty due to this lack of transport facilities. No improvement of this village could be done without introducing motor transport facilities. The pedestrians in the Parur - Kuriapally road were many

¹⁰¹ PWD, File No. 177, Bundle No. 759, 1949, KSA.

¹⁰² Kerala Kaumudi, May 21, 1942, p. 3.

¹⁰³ PWD, File No. 607, Bundle No. 746, 1948, KSA.

in number.¹⁰⁴ Considering all these factors, government allotted a bus service to the above mentioned route. There were present six express service of the state transport department running both ways daily between Trivandrum and Nagercoil via M. C. road. These services were no doubt a boom to the travelling public. For the benefit of public, diversion was granted to one of the six express buses running between Trivandrum and Nagercoil from Azhakimandapam to Nagercoil via Neyyoor and back.¹⁰⁵ The mission hospital at Neyyoor, was very famous as it was visited by many persons for consultation and operation etc. It was beyond the reach of a common man to hire private taxi for conveying persons to the hospital at Neyyoor. The introduction of express service only satisfied the need of the common people.

The bus fares in 1948 were, for ordinary passenger service was 4. 25 paise per mile, while city services it was nine paise per mile. The rate for express coach service was 10. 5 paise per mile.¹⁰⁶ The system of issuing concession tickets to bonafide students was another speciality of the state transport department. The revenue collected by the scheme rose to Rs. 4305 in 1947 as against Rs. 3415 in 1946.

The experiment conducted by Travancore Transport Department to see whether Transport buses could use charcoal gas as fuel instead of petrol became successful. A committee appointed consisting of experts from Madras Government had recently considered the matter and a favourable report was submitted to the Government. The use of charcoal gas as suggested by Engineer, Salter would be a remedy to that contingent situation. Moreover charcoal gas was cheaper than petrol also.¹⁰⁷

¹⁰⁴ PWD, File No. 491, Bundle No. 758, 1949, KSA.

¹⁰⁵ PWD, File No. 421, Bundle No. 744, 1948, KSA.

¹⁰⁶ PWD, File No. 453, Bundle No. 745, 1948, KSA.

¹⁰⁷ Kerala Kaumudi, October 2, 1941, p. 4.

For the use of the buses of this Department to Nagercoil about 75 measures of good quality charcoal was required daily. Priority was given to the Charcoal prepared from Mango trees, cashew nut trees, *maruthu* etc. Only charcoal pieces of size not less than ½ inches were required.¹⁰⁸ The charcoal was brought to the Department's garage at Nagercoil and measured in Madras 'Para' measure of the size 20" x 20" x 10. Applicants quoted the details of the prize in sealed covers.

In response to public demands, arrangements were made to extend the Alwaye - Munnar Express up to Madupatty. An Express service was started in the Kottayam –Vaikom route from 1947.¹⁰⁹ This was in response to a long standing public demand and the traffic returns clearly justify the introduction of this service.¹¹⁰

The department decided to meet the traffic demands in connection with the various important religious and other festivals in the state operated special services. Apart from augmenting services in departmental routes, services were conducted in routes operated by private concerns for the *Mandalapooja* and *Makaravilakku* festivals at Sabarimala.¹¹¹

The British post office was used as the medium for sending excise chowkey because of the absence of the Anchal office at Karinkulam in the high ranges for sending the collections. The K. D. H. P and Co. Ltd had agreed to take up the contract for transmission of mails between Munnar and Karinkulam in their bus on a monthly subsidy of Rs. 90. This was sanctioned

¹⁰⁸ Kerala Kaumudi, August 29, 1942, p. 3.

¹⁰⁹ PWD, File No. 366, Bundle No. 744, 1948, KSA.

¹¹⁰ Administration Report of the Transport Department, 1937, Trivandrum, 1948, KSA, p. 5.

¹¹¹ Travancore Administration Report, 1947- 48, p. 187.

because the risk of sending the amounts through the bus and there was no fear of robbery by marvars.¹¹²

In connection with Makaravilaku festival at Sabrimala necessary arrangements were made to operate special service between Kottayam - Erumeli, Kottayam -Vandiperiyar, Chengannur - Erumeli and Changanassey - Erumeli. Reservation seats in Express buses between Trivandrum and Erumeli made to the capacity of the buses intended for the operation maximum being 30 in one bus. The bus owners had withdrawn a number of buses from service because of petrol scarcity¹¹³ and thus increased the difficulties of travelling public by the resultant congestion. Burmah shell, Ootacamund used to supply petrol to department vechiles, if necessity arose at Changancheery, Ponkunnam and Mundakkayam.¹¹⁴

Travancore State transport provident fund committee at its meeting held in 1947 had resolved to nominate a non-pensionable employee as an additional member of the committee.¹¹⁵ The general administration of the provident fund would rest with the Director of Transport assisted by a committee consisting of the Chief Accountant of the department and two elected representatives and one nominated representative of the subscribers' fund.

Most of the buses were equipped with saloon bodies designed to provide maximum riding comfort. A high standard of tidiness was maintained and seats were regularly sprayed with insecticides. Waiting rooms were provided at important stations. The utmost civility and courtesy on the part of

¹¹² PWD, File No. 352, Bundle No. 68, 1927, KSA.

¹¹³ PWD, File No. 173, BundleNo. 768, 1949, KSA.

¹¹⁴ PWD, File No. 176, Bundle No. 759, 1949, KSA.

¹¹⁵ PWD, File No. 1502, Bundle No. 717, 1947, KSA.

the staff towards passengers was insisted on.¹¹⁶ The several measures adopted by the department for regulating the entry into buses, such as the formation of queues, issue of priority coupons etc., were continued.

The department adopted suitable measures to safeguard the articles conveyed as luggage in buses. The following were the salient points.¹¹⁷

(a) The size and weight of article permitted to be conveyed as luggage had been restricted. Unwieldy or fragile and flimsy articles were not permitted as luggage. (b) The conductors were called upon to bestow their personal attention in supervising the loading and unloading operations to prevent any loss or damage during such operations. They also took particular care to see that light articles of luggage were tied on to the railings on the top of buses. (c) Tarpaulins were supplied in all buses that were to be securely spread over the luggage to prevent the latter from falling off or from being exposed to the sun and rain. (d) Valuable and handy luggage was permitted to be conveyed within the buses without causing inconvenience to the occupants of the bus, so that they were always, be within sights of the owners. (e) Strict measures had been taken to prevent pilferage by departmental subordinates or porters and in proved cases of such pilferage the department undertook responsibility for compensating the owner. There was a case recorded that T. T Korah, a passenger had lost some clothes during the travel.¹¹⁸ Therefore, the department was so strict in dealing with passenger's luggage.

C. P Ramaswamy Aiyer outlined Travancore's policy in respect of road development and the spread of medical facilities. The Dewan said that the Government's policy was that, as and when Government took over the maintenance of a particular road or group of roads, the maintenance of that

¹¹⁶ Travancore Administration Report, 1945-46, p. 178.

¹¹⁷ PWD, File No. 2385, Bundle No. 724, 1947, KSA.

¹¹⁸ PWD, File No. 2385, Bundle No. 724, 1947, KSA.

road or roads would cease to devolve on the public works department and would devolve on the state transport department. He referred to the financial success of the transport scheme pointing out that the Nagercoil - Trivandrum service was yielding Rs. 60, 000 monthly. With reference to medical relief, the dewan said the idea was to concentrate on five or six first rate hospitals at important centres with a system of dispensaries to them. ¹¹⁹

No new routes were taken up for the extension of the ordinary transport services as the limited number of controlled vehicles released during the year served only to maintain the services already in existence. Shuttle services connecting important traffic junctions were introduced on the Trivandrum to Thoduvetty, Nagercoil to Kuzhithurai, Kottayam to Changanacherry and Kottayam to Chengannur sections and this arrangement reduced to some extent the crowding on the main line buses. The express service was extended during the year by the introduction of service between Trivandrum and Shencottah, and it proved itself very advantageous to the public in providing conveyance, which took only 3. 5 hours for the journey by the direct road as against more than 6 hours taken by the train. It provided connection to the incoming and outgoing trains between Madras and Shencottah. All the other express services were also continued during the year with slight alterations viz., two extra journeys on the Trivandrum - Nagercoil and Trivandrum - Quilon routes and the bifurcation of the Kottayam to Parur service into the Kottayam to Alwaye and Alwaye to Parur services. ¹²⁰ Government approved the mass petition for issue of permit for bus service on the route, Chengannur and Karuganchal. ¹²¹

¹¹⁹ The Times of India, June 10, 1938, p. 17.

¹²⁰ Travancore Administration Report, 1944-45, p. 176.

¹²¹ PWD, File No. 171, Bundle No. 759, 1949, KSA.

Although the scarcity of materials and labour, especially of new vehicles and spare parts continued to prevail, the department made the best use of all available facilities for maintaining the efficiency of the services and for providing the maximum comfort to the passengers. Most of the buses were equipped with saloon bodies for comfortable travel. A high standard of tidiness was maintained, and the seats were regularly sprayed with insecticides. Waiting rooms were provided at important stations.¹²²

Express and coach services continued to maintain their popularity, So much so, the services in all routes had to be substantially increased. In the Trivandrum - Kottayam and Kottayam - Alwaye routes Express service ran at regular intervals of three hours and the Express service run at regular intervals of three hours and Express coach service was extended to cover Trivandrum - Kanyakumari route also from 1947, onwards. The guide being prepared by the Transport Department was published. The Schedule of Time, Rate of charges and other information required for the passengers were summarized in this publication.¹²³

Lorry Service

A lorry service between Munnar and Cochin for the transport of goods for the Kannan Devan Hills Produce Co., Ltd. was started in 1938.¹²⁴ The distance of the line was 87 miles; and the transport consisted in taking tea for export and bringing back provisions for the estates, totalling about 15, 000 tons per annum.

Lorry services between Munnar and Willingdon Island was undertaken by the State Transport Department, with effect from 1939.¹²⁵ With a view to

¹²² Travancore Administration Report, 1943-1944, p. 171-72.

¹²³ Kerala Kaumudi, October 15, 1941, p. 3.

¹²⁴ Saroja Sundararajan, *Sir C. P Ramaswami Aiyar: A Biography*, Mumbai, 2002, p. 438.

¹²⁵ A. Sreedhara Menon, *Kerala District Gazeeters, Kottayam, Op. Cit.*, p. 258.

transporting the goods of the Kannan Devan Hill Produce Co. Ltd., Munnar. This was done in accordance with a contract entered into between Kannan Devan Hill Produce Company and the Government. A noteworthy feature of the development of parcel traffic was the introduction of lorry service to cope with the increasing volume of parcels that had to be handled.¹²⁶

The Trivandrum- Kottayam route via Kottarakara was nationalized in 1940. The Trivandrum - Kottayam Express Service commenced in 1941. From 1944, the Department undertook to transport all materials required for the Pallivasal Hydro-Electric Project in this District. Lorry services between Alwaye and Munnar on behalf of the K. D. H. P co and P. H. E project accounted for the major parts of good traffic. Food grains transport to Trivandrum from Kottayam and Quilon was an important item of operation.

The lorry service between Munnar and Cochin was continued during the year, but towards the close of the year, the service stopped at Alwaye instead of going straight to Cochin. The goods carried totalled 16, 640 tons against 17, 133 tons in 1940 and the receipts from these amounted to Rs. 3. 34 lakhs against 3. 69 lakhs in previous year.¹²⁷

The food grains were transported from Quilon in gas plant fitted lorries. These arrangements were in effect only for a short period of 10 days from 1948.¹²⁸ Shuttle steamers were also utilised during the shipping season for transporting food grains from Cochin to the Trivandrum port.

Trivandrum District had both privately owned and state owned transport services. The Motor Vehicles Department of the State had two sectors namely the Public Sector and the Private Sector, and both the sectors

¹²⁶ PWD, File No. 366, Bundle No. 744, 1948, KSA.

¹²⁷ Travancore Administration Report, 1940-41, p. 196.

¹²⁸ Travancore Administration Report, 1947-48, p. 178.

functioned as separate wings under the administrative control of the Transport Commissioner.¹²⁹

Lorry road connected Changanacherry and the Ranni Reserve and passed through the villages of Trikodithanam, Changanoor, Pariyaram, Kizhavalpur, Ezhumattoor, Perumpatti and Chettakkal. Government had no objection to issue a temporary private carrier permit in respect of lorry coming 120 wheelbase to be run on petrol.¹³⁰ P. H. E Transport -Transport of materials for 1944 for the P H E transport facilities were widely used.¹³¹

The Passenger Service by Motor, which was in the hands of private enterprise between Trivandrum and Cape Comorin a distance of 52 miles, was taken over by the Travancore Government. The Government ordered sixty lorries and buses for the proposed service. E. G. Salter, Assistant Operating Superintendent of the London Passenger Transport Board who had been appointed Superintendent of Road Transport,¹³² Travancore, arrived to take charge of his duties.

Tolls

Government strongly felt the need for transaction of some kind to meet the huge expenses incurred in the construction and maintenance of roads and bridges and they hit upon the idea of introducing tolls.¹³³ Kuzhithura, where a new bridge was being constructed, was the first place where a toll booth was set up in the year 1881. The Government agency concreted tolls for the first

¹²⁹ A. Sreedhara menon, *Kerala District Gazeeters, Trivandrum, Op. Cit.*, p. 462.

¹³⁰ PWD, File No. 33, Bundle No. 759, 1949, KSA.

¹³¹ PWD, File. No. 597, Bundle No. 646, 1944, KSA.

¹³² The Times of India, September, 24, 1937, p. 14.

¹³³ T. K. Velu Pillai, *The Travancore State Manual Vol. III*, Trivandrum, 1940, p. 474.

four months and later they would be converted by the highest bidder in the auction. The toll booth was abandoned in the year 1895.¹³⁴

In view of the heavy expenditure that Government were incurring on the maintenance of roads and in view of the fact that this expenditure was on the increase year after year, the establishment of toll gates to tax the vehicles etc using the roads in order to realise, as a permanent source of revenue, a contribution towards the amount spent on road maintenance was introduced first in the year 1912. As a result of this measure, toll gates were established from 1912 on the main southern road, the Kottayam - Kumili road and Quilon - Shencotta road. These gates were located at Kuzhithura, Kanjirapally and Punalur respectively. That year and in the next year 1913 the toll collections were conducted departmentally; but the collection of tolls from the beginning of the year 1914, was leased out in open auction, which practice continued.¹³⁵

As the vehicular traffic and more particularly the traffic of the fast moving motor vehicles was rapidly increasing on all the roads in the State and as a consequence the expenditure on the maintenance of roads increasing enormously the system of levying toll on road traffic was extended gradually to other trunk also and now the traffic on almost all the important trunk road was taxed by toll. The distribution of the toll gates in the State were as follows.¹³⁶

¹³⁴ The Travancore Directory for 1939 Part II, Trivandrum, 1938, p. 215.

¹³⁵ *Ibid.*

¹³⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 216.

Table 2. 1

The distribution of Toll gates in Travancore

Name of road	Length of road	Toll Gate
1. Northern Outlet road	361/4 miles	➤ Chinnar toll gate in 37 th mile on the British frontier
2. Main Central road	155 miles	➤ Perumbavoor, 142mile and Muvattupuzha, 131 mile ➤ Ettumanoor, 103 mile ➤ Changanacherry, 86 th mile ➤ Adoor, 59 th mile ➤ Ayoor at 34 th mile with a subgate at Venjaramood 17 th mile
3. Alwaye - Munnar road	71 ³ / ₄ miles	➤ Neriamangalam, 27 th mile Pallivasal 67 th mile.
4. Vaikom - Udayamperoor road	12 ¹ / ₂ miles	➤ At 3 ³ / ₈ miles of the road.
5. Alwaye - Edapally road	8 ¹ / ₂ miles	➤ In the 9 th mile of the road.
6. Alleppey - Aroor road	29 miles	➤ In the 9 th mile of the road Sherthalai 16 th mile with a sub gate at 5 th mile.
7. Kottayam - Kumili road	70 miles	➤ Pulikalkavala 14 th mile ➤ 28 th mile of the road ➤ Kuttikanam, 47 th mile ➤ Vandiperiyar, 60 th mile with a sub gate at Kumili 70 mile
8. Quilon -Alleppey road	53 ¹ / ₄ miles	➤ Neendakara 6 th mile (bridge toll) ➤ Nangiyarkulangara 31 st mile with sub gates at 23 rd mile and 47 th mile.
9. Quilon - Shencotta road	59 ¹ / ₄ miles	➤ Punalur 28 th mile with a sub gate at 3 rd mile near Quilon
10. Trivandrum-shencotta road	64 ¹ / ₂ miles	➤ Nedumangad 11 th mile
11. Trivandrum - Quilon road	44 ¹ / ₂ miles	➤ Paripally 31 st mile with sub gates at 17 th and 42 nd mile.
12. Main Southern road	530 ¹ / ₂ miles	➤ Kuzhithurai 22 mile with a gate at Balaramapuram 9 th mile ➤ Aramboly 51 st mile in the British Frontier
13. Nagercoil - Cape road	13 miles	➤ Suchindram 4 th mile
14. South Travancore Roads	70 miles	➤ Monday market ➤ Colachel ➤ Karingal

Source: The Travancore Directory for 1939 Part II, Trivandrum, 1938, p. 216.

Although one toll gate in most cases consists of one or more main gates and one or more subsidiary or check gates, a vehicle passing through all or any number of these gates the same day need make only one payment at the first gate it crosses and it would be all free passage at all the other gates of the same toll gate the same day if the pass obtained at the first gate is shown. For this purpose, a day was reckoned as commencing from sunrise one day and ending at sun rise next day.¹³⁷

The toll gates were under the control of the officers of the PWD within whose jurisdiction the gates were situated and the leases of toll gates were responsible to them on all matters relating to their management. The following were the vehicles exempted from the payment of toll.¹³⁸

A number of persons and institutions were excepted from paying tolls and they included the vehicles and animals of Royal persons of Travancore and the Resident and Assistant Resident of Madras State and Madras Residency. The list of exemption covers their steam or motor road rollers, hand and bullock carts, cycles, steam or motor tractors, engines and pumps, road rollers and traveller, elephants and their animals. Travancore State Motor cars, motor cars of the Dewan of Travancore, motor cars of Cochin Government, vehicles and animals of Indian Auxiliary force, elephant of Devaswom Department, and Ambulance car of Salvation Army vehicles are animals of PWD gazetted officers and section officers were free from tolls. Vehicles and animals of the Ruler of Sandur and his personal entourage, commandant and Adjutant of Nilgiri Malabar, Battalion Auxiliary Force and the Cochin Police Officers while in inform and duty were also exempted from tolls.¹³⁹

¹³⁷ The Travancore Directory for 1939 Part II, *Op. Cit.*, p. 219.

¹³⁸ *Ibid.*

¹³⁹ *Ibid.*

The tolls levied on 1. Main southern Road 2. Quilon - Shencottah road 3. The Kottayam -Kumili road were intended to meet to some extent the heavy maintenance charges of the whole lengths of these roads.¹⁴⁰ Therefore, the Government sanctioned the right to collect tolls. Travancore government allowed the toll reduction on ordinary bicycle from *chackram* 4 to *chackram* 2 from 1915 onwards. No toll will be levied more than once on any vehicle or animal passing through the same tollgate in the course of 24 hours. When a vehicle or animal passes a tollgate on payment of toll, at whatever time it may be no further toll could be levied for the same vehicle or animal passing the same tollgate within the next 24 hours irrespective of the number of times it may pass the toll gate.¹⁴¹

Mathulla Mappilai, Anchal motor contractor, who carried the mails between Kottarakara and Kottayam, had pay toll for his car in Thiruvajlla and Kottayam municipal toll stations at the rate of 7 *chackram* and 14 *chackram* respectively.¹⁴² He submitted a demand to authorities for getting relaxation from payment of tolls in the above-mentioned toll stations. However, government rejected his request; this event was an example for how Travancore government strictly levied toll.

Every department submitted a detailed report of the list of vehicles to be exempted from the levying of tolls throughout Travancore.¹⁴³ The government granted of exemption from payment of toll to the Ambulance car T. V. R 1883, attached to the roadside dispensary at Pandalam, because the above dispensary was a charitable institution and the ambulance car was used for the purpose of conveying patients to the dispensary. The Salvation Army owned a number of hospitals in various parts of the state. The Ambulance car

¹⁴⁰ PWD, File No. 561, Bundle No. 251, 1911, KSA.

¹⁴¹ *Ibid.*

¹⁴² Development, File No. 1468, Bundle No. 28, 1924, KSA.

¹⁴³ PWD, File No. 838, Bundle No. 405, 1929, KSA.

supplied medicines to hospitals from the major hospital at Nagercoil. The Ambulance car had always been at the disposal of Government in times of serious outbreaks of cholera, malaria etc. ¹⁴⁴

Annual passes allowed to the persons residing in the tollgates at the centre and radius of 3 miles. The person must produce bonafide certificate, as he was the inhabitant of the respective town issue by *tahsildar* of the taluk. Government for these gates sanctioned annual passes: 1. Aramboly 2. Kuzhiturai 3. Nedumangad 4. Adoor 5. Punalur 6. Kumili 7. Ettumanur 8. Muvattupuzha and 9. Perumbavur. ¹⁴⁵

After the floods in 1924 July, the traffic on the Northern Outlet Road was almost destroyed. This was the important outlet, through which carts and cars could be taken directly to low country. A number of articles belonging to K. H. D. P Company and others are being bought by cart and Lorries through this outlet. Government had incurred an expenditure of more than Rs. 30, 000 in restoring traffic temporarily soon after the recent floods. Government estimated a cost of one lakh for the permanent restoration. So that government planned to install toll stations at *Chinnar* 37th mile of the Northern outlet Road and *Thalliyar* 14th mile of the Northern Outlet road after the construction of the road. ¹⁴⁶ The following table shows the scheduled rates fixed at the toll stations. (item wise)

¹⁴⁴ PWD, File No. 531, Bundle No. 510, 1937, KSA.

¹⁴⁵ PWD, File No. 212, Bundle No. 379, 1926, KSA.

¹⁴⁶ PWD, File No. 846, Bundle No. 378, 1925, KSA.

Table 2. 2

Table showing the schedule of rates for all Toll gates

Items	Rupees	Chackrams	Cash
Renard	2	0	0
Motor bus	1	0	0
Motor car	0	14	0
Four wheeled vehicles	0	7	0
Two wheeled vehicles	0	4	0
Riksha or push-push	0	2	0
Motor cycle	0	7	0
Ordinary cycle	0	2	0
Horse loaded or carrying persons	0	2	0
Led horse	0	1	0
Loaded bullock, ass etc.	0	2	0
Elephant	1	0	0
Camel	0	7	0

Source: PWD, File No. 561, Bundle No. 251, 1911, KSA.

With the completion of PHE (Pallivasal Hydro Electric scheme) central Travancore would be in a position to take full advantage of the policy of industrialization inaugurated by the govt. of Travancore.¹⁴⁷ The raw materials produced in the eastern parts of Tiruvalla Taluk and the forest produce of the Ranni reserve would supply the needs of new industries.

Reciprocal arrangement with regard to taxation of motor vehicles, it was proposed by secretary, Indian Roads and Transport Development Association limited, Madras, But Government of Travancore rejected this proposal.¹⁴⁸

In Travancore during 1946-47, the number of taxicab was 330. In 1947 to 48 there were only 186 vehicles of this type.¹⁴⁹ The sharp fall in the

¹⁴⁷ PWD, File No. 39, Bundle No. 558, 1940, KSA.

¹⁴⁸ PWD, File No. 1106, Bundle No. 652, 1944, KSA.

¹⁴⁹ PWD, File No. 615, Bundle No. 746, 1948, KSA.

number of vehicles was because in the interests of public safety, the transport authority thought it was necessary to restrict the operation of old model taxis and accordingly the permits of such vehicles were not renewed on termination of their period of validity. Added to these fresh permits for taxi cabs were not being issued due to the tense petrol position, but the chief petrol rationing authority later consented to provide petrol for 50 cars.

The arches put on the main southern road near Neyyattinkara about Christmas day by the co-operative society were not removed and these arches obstructed traffic. The government therefore directed that in the case of arches not removed within a week, the section officer concerned should do, it at the risk of the party who put them up.¹⁵⁰

Post war Scheme

The following information was received about road construction projects, which constituted an important aspect of Post-war plans in Travancore. In Travancore there were four types of roads such as cement - concrete roads, tar road, metalled road, and roads that were not metalled, which extended to a total length of 3823 miles. The plan was to construct 1080 miles more. It was intended that in the populated areas at least one mile road should be made within one square mile area.¹⁵¹ The new roads fall under four categories:-

(a) National Highways

It was a very important requirement for transport. The network of National Highways connected the capital of main States of India. The National Highway in Kerala contained three roads, which ran parallel from the South of Travancore to the North. One of these roads went through the sea

¹⁵⁰ PWD, File No. 110, Bundle No. 452, 1933, KSA.

¹⁵¹ Kerala Kaumudi, March 3, 1945, p. 5.

coast, another one through the middle of the State and the third one was through the hilly regions of the east.

These roads were built in concrete. The main roads that came under the category will be the part of Mangalore - Kanyakumari road, or Kochi - Coimbatore road or Kanyakumari -Thirunelveli road. Kanyakumari - Thiruvananthapuram road and Thiruvananthapuram - Quilon, Alappuzha, Arur, Edappally road were parts of the National Highway from Mangalore to Kanyakumari.¹⁵²

Aluva-Munnar road, and other roads towards the northern border of the State joined Kochi with Coimbatore. The road from Nagercoil to Aruvanozhi is a part of Kanyakumari-Thirunelveli road. Thus there were 320 miles of NH new roads in the State. The road from Nagercoil to Aruvamozi was a part of Kanyakumari-Thirunelveli roads. The NH roads would be broad by 32 to 40 feet. The breadth of a country road in hilly regions is assessed to be 32 to 42 feet. In hilly regions it will be 26 feet. The concrete portion of these roads was 20 feet wide. The cost of construction of these roads was about 4.43 crore rupees including the construction of bridges, culverts and the cost of acquiring the land.¹⁵³

(b) Tar roads

(a) The roads that connected Ernakulam and Vaikom through the way of Ettumanoor. (b) Kottayam - Kumili road. (c) Alappuzha -Chenganasseri road. (d) Changanasseri -Vazhoor road (e) Quilon- Shencotta road (f) Thiruvananthapuram - Shencotta road. (g) The Road connecting Nagercoil and Colachel through Rajakka Mangalam. All these roads have a combined

¹⁵² *Ibid.*

¹⁵³ *Ibid.*

length of 335 miles. These roads were 32 to 26 feet wide. Its 18 feet breadth is to be built in concrete. The total cost was one and half crore rupees.

(c) District Roads

This category included 587 miles of metal roads and 2800 miles of unmetaled roads. Adding the newly made roads the total length came to 4465 miles. Most of these roads were 16 feet broad. For the construction of bridges and culverts two and a half crore rupees needed to be allotted. These roads connected districts, centres of production and markets. They also joined the main roads and railways.

(d) Village Roads

As part of the post-war reconstruction scheme whereby village and local roads were constructed by means of local effort and local co-operation, technical and financial, taking advantage of the presence in the State of non-official agencies including the demobilised War Personnel.¹⁵⁴ These roads, which connected villages together, reached the nearest district roads.

In pursuance of section 4 of the land acquisition Act (Regulation XI) of 1914, it was notified for the information of the public that it was proposed to take the detailed surveys and levels of Karukutty Idappally Road Via, Alwaye, Alwaye-Munnar Road, Munnar-Chinnar Road, Alleppey-Aroor Road, Quilon-Alleppey Road, Trivandrum-Quilon road, Trivandrum-Cape road and Pravathipuram-Aramboly road in connection with the investigation for national highways in the state.

Muloor and the Literature of the Roads

Muloor S. Padmanabha Panicker had written poems on the theme of the construction of roads even from the beginning of the 20th century. It is

¹⁵⁴ Travancore Information and Listener, Vol. III, No. 7, March 1947, Trivandrum, p. 16.

difficult to proceed in the social history of the roads of Kerala without mentioning the works of Muloor, who was a poet and social activist. His main area of activity was the construction of roads.¹⁵⁵ His biography makes it clear that construction of roads was a pleasant job for him, and its inauguration was a happy occasion for him. His interest in the works had also thrilled his associates. He would reach every site of road construction or foot and try to encourage everyone who was engaged in the task. He had written a number of poems congratulating the workers, and strengthening their minds with new vigour and vitality of hope and courage. Here are a few lines of his famous “road poems”

“O folks! Have you all seen our road,

Like the path to Vaikunta (the abode of Lord Vishnu)

We should call it the Sreekrishna Vilasom.¹⁵⁶

The roads such as Mulakuzha - Kidangoor, Thumbamon - Elanthoor, Thumbamon - Kozhencherry, Kulanada - Elavanthitta, Mulakkuzha - Aranmula, Kuriyanappally - Mezhuveli, Areekara - Thalachira, etc were constructed under his leadership. After completing the road making, he used to conduct an inauguration. In the meeting, he used to recite his poems, which were popular. In 1926 in the inaugural meeting of the road from Thumbamon to Kozhenchery Muloor’s poems challenged the restrictions on man’s freedom to travel. In 1920 eight small boards were placed around the Thirunakkara temple which contained the direction that lower caste people including the Ezhava should not go through those roads. On the third day some Ezhavas removed those boards. About this incident the poet Muloor wrote a poem called “Elegy on the Death of the Eight boards in Thirunakkara

¹⁵⁵ Vinil Paul, ‘Roadkulade Samuhika Charitram’ (Mal.), *Malayalam Research Journal*, Vol. X, No. I, January-April, 2017, p. 12.

¹⁵⁶ *Ibid.*

Road”¹⁵⁷ A careful study of the regional issues related to the construction of roads would reveal the fact that caste interventions and institutions of social reform had played a significant role in them. The work done by the poet Muloor illustrates the part played by the people in social transformation. It also makes us aware of the importance of writing the social history of the process of development in the country.

Water Transport

Water transport system has been considered the oldest means of transport in the World. It is also known as the cheapest mode of transport since the ancient times. It faced decay due to the fast development of road, rail and air transport facilities. Through careful planning many developed countries have made use of it even in recent times. However in India, where inland water transport had played a leading role in the past, it now faces a serious crisis. The geographical and topographical features of Travancore being favourable, they had consider importance in the development of water transport as a means of communication.¹⁵⁸

In the 19th century all the leading commercial centres and towns of Travancore were linked like many villages and towns on the banks of rivers and lakes which developed into markets and commercial centres. All rivers which were useful for inland navigation were connected by facilities for water transport. Moreover customs duty collection offices were also established to control the export of goods through these commercial routes between Cochin and Quilon, which were the major ports of the region.

Many villages and towns arose on the banks of rivers. Several types of *Vallams* or country crafts were in use as a mode of conveyance in Travancore

¹⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 13.

¹⁵⁸ T.K.Velu Pillai, *The Travancore State Manual Vol.III,Op.Cit.*, p.465.

for water communication.¹⁵⁹ The ordinary canoe or *Vallom* sometimes called as a “dug out,” was commonly used by the people for water traffic.¹⁶⁰ At the same time, house boats of the type were also used for leisurely journeys or pleasure cruises on the beautiful backwaters of Travancore.¹⁶¹

It was the policy of the Travancore government not to extend the railway system because of the cheaper backwater communication, which from one end of the state to the other which could increasingly replace all other forms of transport especially in respect of heavy loads. It was for this reason that Travancore did not to have extended its railway beyond a hundred miles and had taken over the ownership and control of the state motor transport system.¹⁶²

During the 1860's the Public Works Department of Travancore could make many improvements in inland navigation. Chief Engineer Collins was the head of the Department in Travancore as well as Cochin.¹⁶³ In 1863 William Barton was appointed Chief Engineer of PWD. Many buildings, roads and bridges built under the supervision of that brilliant Engineer remain as true testimonials of the skill and dedication of that Engineer. He could organize the PWD of Travancore as a large establishment for the welfare of the people.¹⁶⁴

The system of Water communication in Travancore makes use of the natural convenience of the lakes and rivers which were interconnected with natural and artificial canals. The canals were largely filled with natural accumulation of sand and silt through rains and drainage. As they could be

¹⁵⁹ A.Sreedhara Menon, *Kerala District Gazetteers, Quilon*, Trivandrum, 1964,p.411.

¹⁶⁰ Samuel Mateer, *Native Life in Travancore*, London, 1883, p.246.

¹⁶¹ Travancore Information and listener, Vol.III, No.7, March 1943, p.10.

¹⁶² PWD, File No.3472, Bundle No.291, 1942,KSA.

¹⁶³ Travancore Administration Report, 1863-64, p.38.

¹⁶⁴ T.K.Velu Pillai, *The Travancore State Manual Vol.IV*, Trivandrum, 1940, p.153

great danger to water traffic every year huge expenditure was incurred for their maintenance. Rivers also had an important role in effective water communication.¹⁶⁵

Before the development of well built roads and consequent improvement of road transport water communication through rivers and lakes was the chief means of transport for the people. It was Dewan Venkita Rao who first became aware of the necessity of improving water transport by connecting the lakes and rivers with canals for effective water communication. The first canal of that kind was between Channankara towards the south of Lake Anjengo at Thiruvananthapuram.

Rivers of Kerala

Kerala is well known for its water resources and the potential of its 44 rivers.¹⁶⁶ Among them 41 are west flowing while the three tributaries of River Kaveri flow towards the east. Only 4 rivers of Kerala exceed the length of 100 miles, which are Bharatapuzha (156 miles), the Periyar (142 miles), the Pampa (110 miles), and Beypore or Chaliyar (105 miles). It is beyond argument that the rivers of Kerala have also, like all big rivers of the world have contributed to the cultural and historical development of the land.¹⁶⁷

As the country is mainly hilly or mountainous rivers and streams are numerous in Kerala. The majority of the rivers flow towards the west because the land slopes down towards the western direction. They reach the Arabian Sea in the west either directly or through lakes. In the hilly regions the land is almost rocky while the lower regions are sandy. Towards the level grounds rivers flow over muddy areas. The mountainous regions the rivers are not

¹⁶⁵ T.K.Velu Pillai, *The Travancore State Manual Vol.III,Op.Cit.,p.477.*

¹⁶⁶ Rajan Gurukkal and Raghava Varier, *History of Kerala Prehistoric to the Present*, Hyderabad, 2018, p.2.

¹⁶⁷ A.Sreedhara Menon, *A Survey of Kerala History*, Kottayam, 2014, p.18.

navigable as the ground is high and steep. As the rivers approach the level ground the plains their banks are lower. Near the sea coast the banks are filled with clay and are not very steep.

Some large rivers of the state are more than fifteen feet deep during the rainy season. However during the dry season they can be even as shallow as feet. The average depth of such rivers is between 12 feet and 3 feet during rainy and dry seasons. Sudden accumulation of water in the rivers is another feature of these rivers. During the rainy seasons small streams may slightly become wild rushing torrents. However the rising water may soon recede and disappear soon as they flow towards the lakes and the sea. On such occasions the rivers are navigable by boats to about 20 or 30 miles towards their mouths. During the rainy seasons due to the increased depth of water the navigable distance could increase to about 40 to 60 miles inland. The following were the main rivers of Travancore.

The Periyar River

It was the largest river of Travancore. It originates from the highest part of the Western Ghats, and numerous small streams join it. ¹⁶⁸It flows down towards the north and north-west until about 35 miles towards its mouth. It bends down to the South-West for about 20 miles then and continues in north-western direction till it discharges into the lake near Tripunithura. Large *Vallams* and small steam or motor boats used to go freely up to the market landing at Alwaye but were not able to do so except during the hot season. The 1924 flood accompanied as it was by several landslides and bursts of hill sides brought in a disproportionately large amount of silt and

¹⁶⁸ Ward and Conner, *Geographical and Statistical Memoir of the Travancore and Cochin States Vol.I*, Trivandrum, 1863, p.30.

debris. This was seen on all rivers.¹⁶⁹ The Idamala river was the chief tributary of River Periyar. Both these rivers are navigable for small boats for about 60 miles inland. In several places there are ponds near its upper part. Generally the river Periyar is rushes down violently, especially in hilly regions.

The Tamraparni River

The major river of erstwhile Travancore is in Tamilnadu now. It rises from the mountains of north Mahendragiri. It flows southwards towards the sea at Thengai Pattanam. The banks at the hilly regions are rocky and the river bed is narrow. For about 7 miles from its mouth the river is navigable.¹⁷⁰ By means of rafts some more distance can be travelled through. Near its mouth the river Koda joins it.

The Koda River

This is the another main river of Travancore. Flowing down from the Mulanchi mountains this river takes a south and south westerly direction till it joins the Tamraparni river about 14 miles near its mouth.¹⁷¹ Though the river bed is rocky, it is muddy in its banks. The streams that join it are calm and are navigable by means of rafts. Near its origin there are several waterfalls, and two such falls are about 40 feet high.

The Neyyar River

This river which has contributed much to the cultural and social life of the people originates from the Agastiswara hills. It flows down in the southwestern direction through dense forests in the early part. It turns towards the south and discharges down into the sea near Puvar. The water carried down

¹⁶⁹ Report on Land Navigation in Travancore with Special Reference to Improving Rivers for Navigation, Trivandrum, 1926, p.26.

¹⁷⁰ Ward and Conner, *Op.Cit.*, p.27.

¹⁷¹ *Ibid.*

by it forms a small lagoon near there.¹⁷²The banks of this river are high and rocky. Since it flows down rapidly it is navigable for boats for about 8 miles from its mouth only. However rafts made of timber from the forests are floated down from the hills. The river flows down towards the plains after descending a water fall of ordinary size.

The Karamana River

The river Karamana one of the major rivers of Travancore which flows down from the mountain of Agasteenwara. It takes an irregular and winding course towards the south western direction and at last reaches the sea near Puvanturai.¹⁷³The river bed is narrow and rocky, with steep banks on both sides. About 10 miles from it's navigable by small boats. During the rainy season rafts can be used for travelling longer distance. River Killiyar joins it about 3 miles away from the sea. Karamana river passes through the city of Thiruvananthapuram.

The Kallada River

The river Kallada is formed by the union of several streams originating from the valleys of the western ghat. It flows down towards the west and south-west for about half of its source. It is a broad river and the breadth is about 300 yards in some places for about 25 miles from the sea coast it is navigable by boats, but timber cut from the forests are floated down by means of rafts. There are many small waterfalls near the hilly places from where the river originates. The largest falls are called Minmutti falls.¹⁷⁴

¹⁷² *Ibid.*

¹⁷³ T.Foulkes, *The Geography of Travancore*, Cochin, 1878, p.8.

¹⁷⁴ T.K.Velu Pillai, *The Travancore state Manual Vol.I*, Trivandrum, 1940, p.61.

The Achenkoil River or Kulakkada River

This river begins from the Achenkoil pass and takes a north-westerly course down for about 40 miles. It takes a westerly direction for the next 25 miles, and then once again takes the north-westerly direction and ultimately joins the Pamba river. The river banks are low during the later part of its course. The river bed is sandy with a few rocks. The width near its mouth is about 300 yards. For about 40 miles near Pamba, it is navigable by boats. The river has many important towns near it.¹⁷⁵

The Pamba River

Pamba is considered a holy river because the most sacred centre of Pilgrimage in Travancore, Sabarimala is situated near it.¹⁷⁶ It is formed by the union of three sources such as Kallar, the Kakkandar and the stream of Pamba, which join together near Ranni. For about 25 miles the United Pamba river flows in a westerly direction, and then takes a north-westerly course. The River flows into the Vembanad lake by two different mouths. This river is highly beneficial to the people of Travancore for agricultural purposes.¹⁷⁷ In the hilly regions of the east Pamba river flows violently over a rocky bed, but on the plains it flows down gently, and is navigable for about 52 miles from its mouth by boats. The river Kulakkada joins it about 25 miles above its mouth. Other tributaries also join it like river manimala.

The Meenachil River

Several mountain streams flowing from Kodiattur and Kodamurti hills unite to form the Meenachil river. The course of this river is generally in the

¹⁷⁵ Adoor K.K.Ramachandran Nair, *Gazetter of India, Kerala State Gazetteer Vol.I, Cochin*, 1986, p.761.

¹⁷⁶ J.John Kattakayam, *Nammude Rajakudumbam* (Mal.), Quilon, 1939, p.4.

¹⁷⁷ K.Mammen, *Kerala Culture Its Genesis and Early History*, Trivandrum, 1942, p.13.

south-westerly direction. It discharges into the Vembanad Lake.¹⁷⁸ The banks of this river are high and narrow. The river is sandy and it is navigable for small boats for about 26 miles from its mouth. Timber from the forests is floated down by rafts through this river.

The Muvattupuzha River

Originating from the mountain of Arakulam this river gets strengthened by the contribution of several tributaries. The town by its side is famous centre of trade for hill products. The river flows in a north-westerly direction for about 34 miles. After flowing towards the west for next 10 miles it turns south west and discharges itself into the Vembanad lake.¹⁷⁹ The banks are high near 10 miles of its mouth. For the early 30 miles the river bed is rocky. For about 43 miles inland the river is navigable by boats. The current of water is very strong in the higher regions. Towards the last 28 miles the river is very calm. The length of this river is 141 km. The water drained is spread over an area of 1.55 4 sq. km and 45 villages.¹⁸⁰

Backwater of Travancore

One of the unique features of Travancore is the chain of continuous lagoons and lakes which are enriched by numerous streams and rivers that originate from the Western Ghats. This network of rivers and lakes facilitate water communication and transport from the north to the south of Travancore.

The lakes or backwaters called *Kayals* are inlets of water from the sea. The geographical peculiarity of the state is that there is a chain of backwaters running parallel to the sea on the western side.¹⁸¹ This system of lakes extends from the south to the north, from Thiruvananthapuram to Parur and further

¹⁷⁸ T.K.Velu Pillai,*The Travancore state Manual Vol.I,Op.Cit.*,p.60.

¹⁷⁹ A.Sreedhara Menon, *Kerala District Gazetteers,Kottayam, .Op.Cit.*, p.262.

¹⁸⁰ Adoor K.K.Ramachandran Nair,*Op.Cit.*,p.61.

¹⁸¹ V.Nagam Aiya,*The Travancore State Manual Vol.I,Trivandrum,1989*,p.22.

from Cochin to Ponnani. This natural system of lakes and backwaters of Kerala covers a total area of about 237 ½ sq. miles of which 157 ½ sq.miles areas is in Travancore.¹⁸² The outlets to the sea which connects the lakes to the sea, if permanent is called *Azhi*, and if temporary are called *Pozhi*. These lakes have a major role in enhancing the industrial and commercial development. For instance industries like fish culture, tourism, coconut fibre and coir manufacture, etc. are helped by the presence of the backwaters. The major lakes of the south are the Vembanad lake, the Kayamkulam kayal, The Anchuthengu (Anjengo) lake, Kadinamkulam lake, The Veli kayal, Edava and Nadayara kayals, etc.¹⁸³ With the development of road and railway water transport through these lakes and backwaters declined. However in the commercial and economic life of the people and the state they still play a prominent part.

The Vembanad Lake

The Vembanad lake is the largest lake in Travancore.¹⁸⁴ The River Pamba, one of the largest river of the State discharges itself into this lake. Thrikunnapuzha and Arattupuzha, two important centres of coir industry, are situated by its side. The Karumady canal and Totappally are part of it. Kayamkulam lake, the Chavara canal, which is 16.64 km long, the Ashtamudi lake, and Panmana *kayal* are linked to the Vembanad lake so that continuous water transport is possible. The Kayamkulam lake extends from Karthikappally to Panmana to a distance of 30.58 km.¹⁸⁵

¹⁸² *Ibid.*

¹⁸³ A.Sreedhara Menon, *Kerala District Gazeteer, Trivandrum, Op. Cit.*, p.466.

¹⁸⁴ S.Ramanath Aiyar, *Progressive Travancore*, Trivandrum, 1923, p.9.

¹⁸⁵ A.Sreedhara Menon, *Kerala District Gazeteer, Alleppey*, Trivandrum, 1975, p.301.

The Sasthamkotta Lake

The Sasthamkotta lake in Quilon district is the largest fresh water lake in Travancore. Situated on the right side of river Kallada this lake has an area of 3.7 sq. km.¹⁸⁶ It's depth is about 14.3 metres. No river enters this lake and the lake is protected by a bound made by earth which is about 1.6 km long.

Ashtamudi lake

This lake is called *Ashtamudi* because it has eight branches, each of which is known by different names.¹⁸⁷ This lake extends from Quilon to the north for about 16 km. The width of the lake is about 15 km. Each branch has an average width of about 3 km. The Kallada river enters this lake. Ashtamudi lake is connected to the sea at Neendakara, which is a major fishing port of Kerala.

Kadinamkulam Kayal

This small lake connects Anchuthengu *Kayal* (lake Anjengo) to Veli Kayal by the canal of Anchuthengu. It makes possible continuous water communication from Thiruvananthapuram to Shoranur. Canals like Parvati Puthanar, Shoranur Canal, etc play a significant role in it.¹⁸⁸ The other mains *kayals* were Paravur *kayal*, Edava and Nadayara *kayal*, Veli *kayal* etc.

Canals of Travancore

The construction of numerous canals became necessary for uninterrupted water transport through the rivers and lakes of Travancore. Generally the geographical position of the lakes here is parallel to the sea coast. The rivers of Travancore flow generally at right angles to the lakes and

¹⁸⁶ Adoor K.K.Ramachandran Nair, *Op. Cit.*, p.71.

¹⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, p.70.

¹⁸⁸ A.Sreedhara Menon, *Kerala District Gazetteer, Trivandrum, Op. Cit.*

backwaters. Therefore the natural position of the lakes and rivers in Travancore is said to be favourable to the development of water transport. A series of manmade canals help the inter connection of the chain of lakes and rivers so that the water transport is possible without break from Thiruvananthapuram to Tirur.

The lakes and backwaters of Travancore had to be connected with each other for continuous communication through water. The idea of connecting them together by means of canals was undertaken by Venkita Rao, who was Dewan of Travancore during 1821 to 1829. The work of linking the canals was executed during the reigning period of Queen Parvathi Bai. Canals were constructed to connect Kadinamkulam Lake with Thiruvananthapuram and Quilon with Paravoor in 1824.¹⁸⁹ There were many early attempts to connect lake Veli with Paravoor lake. For instance King Marthanda Varma had attempted to construct a canal from Veli lake to Paravoor Kayal.¹⁹⁰ The canal has a length of 11 $\frac{3}{4}$ miles. The work was started in 1823 and completed in 1826. The Paravur canal which connects Edava and Paravur lakes has a length of 2 miles. During this period Quilon canal that connects Paravur lake with Ashtamudi lake and Chavara canal with lake were Panmana constructed. Similarly the canal for commercial purposes which connects Alappuzha with the lakes which is 3 $\frac{1}{2}$ miles long was also constructed.

AVM Canal

The Anantha Victoria Marthandam Canal (AVM Canal) was an ambitious project under taken by the Travancore Government in 1860.¹⁹¹ The

¹⁸⁹ P.K.Balakrishnan,*Jathivyavasthithiyum Keralacharithravum* (Mal.), Kottayam, 2016, p.201.

¹⁹⁰ K.N.Ganesh,*Keralathinte Ennalekal* (Mal.),Thiruvananthapuram,2011,p.74.

¹⁹¹ On 4th June 1860, Utram Thirunal Marthanda Varma inaugurated the project at a village, Maudacud, in the presence of Collins, the civil Engineer.Vide,Cover File No.16415,Bundle No.32,1860,KSA.

project aimed at connecting Thiruvananthapuram with Cape Comorin by means of canals for extending water communication to the extreme south of the state.¹⁹² The work was undertaken with British supervision and in 1867 the part between Puvar and Kolachal could be completed. However, other parts like the construction of the tunnel at Varkala could not be completed. A few years later the part from Thiruvananthapuram to Thiruvallom was completed.

The link of lakes and canals was almost continuous from Thiruvananthapuram to Ponnani. The major barrier of the route was at Varkala.¹⁹³ The work of tunnel making started at Varkala in 1867 under British engineering supervision. It was a difficult work in those days. However the construction of two tunnels one of 281.6 metres (924 feet) and the other of 720.6 metres (2364 feet) were completed. The first tunnel was opened for traffic in 1877. And the latter was completed and opened to traffic in 1880.¹⁹⁴ As a result Thiruvananthapuram, the capital of Travancore could be connected with commercial ports like Alleppey and Cochin.¹⁹⁵

The West Coast Canal

This canal was a major link that helped uninterrupted water transport from Thiruvananthapuram in the south to Hosdurg in the north. It passed through Quilon (Quilon) and Karunagappally Taluks. The canal called Thiruvananthapuram – Shoranur Canal was part of it. It ended at the 59th and started from the 28th mile. The part from the 28th to the 40th mile, i.e., from Paravur to Quilon was navigable by country *valloms* or boats. But the

¹⁹² A.Sreedhara Menon, *Kerala District Gazetteer, Trivandrum, Op.Cit.*, p.466.

¹⁹³ C.R.Markham, 'On the Inland Navigation of Travancore; An account of the Alipee Mud-Bank and the Warkallay Barrier', *Journal of the Royal Geographical Society of London*. Vol.36, 1866, p.195.

¹⁹⁴ A.Sreedhara Menon, *Kerala District Gazetteers Trivandrum, Op.Cit.*, p.467.

¹⁹⁵ R.Gnanaselvam, *Op.Cit.*, p.147.

distance from 40th mile to 59th mile i.e., from Quilon to Ayiram thengu was navigable by motor boats also. This route of water transport was through Ashtamudi lake, Chavara lake, Koil thottam lake, Panmana lake and Vatta kayal.¹⁹⁶

The two divisions of the west coast canal such as the Cochin-Alleppey section of 44 miles and Alleppey-Quilon section of 46 miles were in the Alleppey region.¹⁹⁷ The former was more important because it met the needs of the commercial centres like Cochin, Ernakulam, Alleppey and Kottayam. This division included the Vembanad lake region extending to Alleppey along Shertala and Ambalapuzha Taluks.

With this canal Alleppey town became directly accessible to Vembanad lake, which was only 3 miles away from Kottayam on its eastern fringe. The Alleppey-Changanassery canal which passed through the Kuttanad area also had commercial importance. These canals of commercial importance passed through the middle of the Alleppey town. They provided transportation facilities to the numerous coir factories which were situated on the banks of these canals.¹⁹⁸

These inland water ways or canals played a major role in water transport system of the state since they connected commercial centre and factory cites. They also connected interior places to the west coast canal which connected the ports. The following were the major canals of Travancore.

¹⁹⁶ A.Sreedhara Menon, *Kerala District Gazetteers, Quilon, Op.Cit.*, p.417.

¹⁹⁷ A.Sreedhara Menon, *Kerala District Gazetteers, Alleppey, Op.Cit.*, p.303.

¹⁹⁸ *Ibid.*

Poochakkal Canal

This is a small canal having a length of only 2 km which connected Vembanad lake with Kuthiathodu. During summer season loaded country boats used to get stuck up for want of water. Moreover there was another hardship such as the Poochakkal bridge which had to be lowered and raised to allow the boats to pass beneath it.¹⁹⁹

Kottayam - Vaikom canal

It is a major canal having the length of 25.7 km from Vembanad lake. It passes through Kari river and Kaipuzha river. It joins River Meenachil near Kottayam and provides connection from Kottayam to Alappuzha and Cochin. This canal has several branches such as (i) the canals that end near Vaikom Road railway station (ii) Kaduthuruthi canal (iii) Karuppanthara canal (iv) Neendur canal and (v) Atirampuzha Canal. All these canals have great commercial importance.²⁰⁰

Kottayam - Changanassery Canal

This canal which is 19.3 km long begins from Kottayam Cutchery and passes through Kodoor river, Pallom and Kurichy. It ends at Changanassery town. This canal connects the market and trading centres of Changanassery with Alleppey.²⁰¹

Alleppey - Changanassery Canal

This is a man made canal built along the side of the Alleppey - Changanassery road, with connects the M.C. road with Quilon - Alleppey road. This canal is 54.9 metre wide and 13.8 metre deep. It connects

¹⁹⁹ *Ibid.*,p.305.

²⁰⁰ A.Sreedhara Menon, *Kerala District Gazeeters,Kottayam,Op.Cit.*,p.262.

²⁰¹ PWD,File.No.135,Bundle No.435,1932,KSA.

Alleppey's rivers and lakes, and crosses the Pamba river at Kidangara and stretches from Perunna to Monkombu.²⁰²

Alleppey – Thalavadi canal

This 35.4 km long canal links Thalavadi near Pamba with the lake Vembanad. It passes through places such as Kainakari, Chennamkari, Nedumudi, Kandankari and Edathua. This canal is highly beneficial to water transport and this was regular passenger boat service through this route. Alleppey is also connected to Shertallai by a canal.²⁰³

The Government of Travancore was interested in the preservation of the banks of the canals and lakes. Nobody was allowed to construct walls on canal banks without permission of the authorities. Those who violated these rules were brought before the law.²⁰⁴

The general control and direction of water traffic was regulated by The Public Canals and Public Ferries Act. The establishment of public ferries and the registration and licensing of vessels were also under this Regulation. In M.E. 1089 detailed navigation rules were passed. In the same year the Regulation was applied to Trivandrum- Shoranur Canal, and the three major canals of Alleppey, which are the Wadai canal, the commercial canal, and the west junction canal. It was also applied to the Kottayam canal which connected to Vembanad Lake to Kottayam. Hence all boats that were operating on these canals were to be registered under the Regulation.

²⁰² A.Sreedhara Menon, *Kerala District Gazetteers, Alleppey, Op.Cit.*, p.305.

²⁰³ PWD, File No.1126, Bundle No.430, 1931, KSA.

²⁰⁴ The conservancy of all Roads, Canals, Channels, Tanks and other such public works, the construction, repair and maintenance of which devolve on the Department of public works is vested primarily in the offices of that Department, without detriment to the functions which any special conservancy officer, and officers of Revenue and Police have hitherto exercised or may lawfully exercise in respect of such works. Vide, Travancore Land Revenue Manual Vol.V, Trivandrum, 1915, p.666

The water transport route through lakes was maintained and governed by the rules framed under the Travancore Public Canals and Public Ferries Regulation VI of 1096.²⁰⁵ As per the above Regulation and rules all stream boats, motor boats, country boats or *valloms* were to be licensed and registered by the following were exempted. (i) Vessels belonging to the Palace and the Travancore Government (ii) Vessels which were licensed or registered in Malabar with Madras Act II of 1890. (iii) Vessels licensed or registered in Cochin under the Cochin Regulation I of 1092 as amended by Regulation X of 1095 (iv) Vessels belonging to the British Government (v) Vessels or less than one ton registered tonnage.²⁰⁶

Since the rivers and lakes of Travancore were connected by canals to the same in Cochin and Malabar water communication and commercial transport had great scope among these states. The administration of canals in Cochin and Malabar were governed by the Acts and Rules framed by these Governments. However there was mutual understanding among the three states about this. Therefore the vessels registered or licensed in one state needed no other registration or license in the other states. These were the following conditions (a) The vessels had to be registered or licensed in the state in which the owners reside or in which they have their main place of business (b) The vessels do not operate for service exclusively within the limits of one territory in which they should be licensed in that State. The vessels which are to be licensed within a state as per rules would be allowed one month's time to take license or registration from the states to which they belong. The inspection certificate as to the fitness by boats issued by one state

²⁰⁵ Travancore Administration Report, 1925-26, p.119.

²⁰⁶ The Travancore Directory for 1943 Part I, Trivandrum,1942, p.406.

would be recognized by the other States. The punishments given to the crew by one state should be enforced in the other states also.²⁰⁷

The backwaters of Travancore, Cochin and Malabar are interconnected and there was considerable commercial intercourse among these states.²⁰⁸ Thiruvananthapuram - Shoranur Canal which is 148 miles in length was the main water communication route in the state. An amount of Rs. 45,000/- was spent in 1947 for post war improvements to this canal.²⁰⁹

The authorities and the Governments were aware of the importance of the cheapest possible route for traffic from Trivandrum to Cochin. So they tried to improve the navigable canals. It was recognized that the water ways would be many times cheaper than rail or road traffic, especially for heavy traffic.

Bridges

Being a state of many rivers and canals Travancore needed a number of bridges for road and rail traffic. In all roads that went across rivers and canals bridges were essential.²¹⁰ Hence for improving road transport the construction of bridges became necessary.

One such bridge built using brick and mortar was across the River Karamana in Trivandrum. The famous ruler of Travancore Swathi Thirunal laid its foundation stone and it was opened for traffic in 1853 by his successor King Uthram Thirunal. Another important bridge built during that period was the hanging bridge at Punalur. It was designed by the famous Engineer Albert Henry of Scotland. The construction of this hanging bridge was begun in 1872

²⁰⁷ The Travancore Almanac and Directory for 1944 Part I, Trivandrum, 1943, p.340.

²⁰⁸ T.K.Velu Pillai, *The Travancore State Manual Vol.III,Op.Cit.*, p.483.

²⁰⁹ PWD,File No.1985,Bundle No.721,1947,KSA.

²¹⁰ Kondoor Krishna Pillai, *Travancore And Its Ruler*,Changanacherry,1941,p.149.

and was completed in 1877.²¹¹ It was the second hanging bridge in India, the first being the Howrah bridge in Calcutta. The construction of the bridges helped greatly the development of road transport. One of the earliest bridges built of mortar and brick in the Trivandrum district was that over the Karamana river during the reign of ruler Swathi tirunal in 1853.²¹² Before 1900 the use of cement and reinforced concrete was unknown in Travancore.²¹³

The Sinclair Periyar Bridge

The first bridge in Travancore constructed using reinforced concrete was the Sinclair Periyar Bridge, a few miles below the Periyar Dam²¹⁴

The Kuzhithura Bridge

This bridge at Kuzhithura is also a memorial of the Engineering skill and dedication of the British. Barton was the Chief Engineer of Travancore during the 1860's. Built in 1893 the bridge was built on wooden platform, which was replaced by steel flooring in 1893. Its strength was tested in September 1911 by Barton for the use of steam cars and motor buses. The heavy loads of the forest department were also carried over this bridge, after checking its strength and capacity.²¹⁵

The Neriamangalam Bridge

This was built across the Periyar river at the 20th mile along the Muvattupuzha- Munnar road. It forms an important link in the line of

²¹¹ T.D.Sadasivan, *Kollam Charithrathile Nazhikkallukal* (Mal.), Thiruvananthapuram, 2012, p.114.

²¹² A.Sreedhara Menon, *Kerala State Gazetteers, Trivandrum, Op.Cit.*, p.469.

²¹³ Travancore Administration Report, 1925-26, p.111.

²¹⁴ T.K.Velu Pillai, *The Travancore State Manual Vo.III, Op.Cit.*, p.485.

²¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p.486.

communication with the High Ranges.²¹⁶ The construction of this bridge was a different task and its completion on 2nd March 1935 was considered an achievement of the Travancore Government. This bridge provided an outlet to the High Ranges so that hill products could be brought easily to the western coast.²¹⁷

The Thottappally Wooden Bridge

This bridge across the T S (Thiruvanthapuram –Shorunur) Canal was opened on 7th September 1939. Its carrying capacity was tested to be over 20 tons.²¹⁸ During the 2nd world war period of 1943-44 the management of the coastal transport was entrusted to the Steam Navigation Company. The operation of the vessels belong to the water transport department were handed over to the company.²¹⁹ The boat services were divided under different project divisions such as Alwaye, Kottayam, Quilon, Trivandrum, Southern and Kodyar. Separate rates were also fixed for hilly tracts and plain country areas.²²⁰

Ferries

Ferry services were also operated as a part of the internal navigation system.²²¹ A ferry across a public canal was known as a public ferry. The canal which the public or a section of the public had a right to use was called a public canal.²²² In ferries goods, animals or passengers were conveyed

²¹⁶ *Ibid.*

²¹⁷ *Ibid.*,p.489.

²¹⁸ PWD, File No.1264,Bundle No.570,1940,KSA.

²¹⁹ Travancore Administration Report 1943-1944, p.171.

²²⁰ PWD, File No.214, Bundle No.373, 1924, KSA.

²²¹ Ferry means a place at which goods, animals or passengers were conveyed across a channel by means of vessels, including any ship, barge, boat,raft,timber, bamboos,or floating materials propelled in any manner.Vide, Regulation VI of 1096 (1921),July 21, Government of Travancore,Trivandrum,KSA.

²²² PWD, File No.1389,Bundle No.576,1909,KSA.

across using a ship, boat, barge or raft. Government had conducted free ferry service in certain places. There were also the services of junghars available for conveying buses or motor cars across rivers and canals.

The ferries were the only measure to cross the water ways, which had no bridges across them. Hence people used to make frequent representations to the Government for the building of bridges, or the granting of ferry service.²²³ In 1912 the Government granted free passage to school students over the ferries. Anchal and postal mails were also exempted from the payment of fare in the ferries.²²⁴

In 1936 the Government of Travancore sanctioned a ferry service across Mithrapuzha Kadavu in Pamba river in response to the memorandum received from the residents of Mangalam, Vazha Mangalam, etc.²²⁵ Similarly the people living in the islands of lake Ashtamudi called Perumangalam, Vattanthuruthu and Clathuruthu were also granted the use of ferry service.²²⁶ The Quilon division of the lake was supplied a new ferry and the use of old junghar boats in 1936. In the same year all the roads or paths maintained by the PWD, which were not connected by bridges were sanctioned ferries.²²⁷

There were three classes of ferries before 1934 (i) The Ferries which were operated between roads or paths maintained by the PWD. (ii) Those which were across water ways maintained by the PWD. (iii) Those that did not come under both these groups.²²⁸ The ferries coming under Kottayam division were grouped into four clauses (a) those working though out the year

²²³ Travancore Administration Report, 1928-29, p.158.

²²⁴ PWD,File No.1389,Bundle No.576,1909,KSA.

²²⁵ PWD,File No.1053,Bundle No.501,1936,KSA.

²²⁶ PWD,File No.403,Bundle No.510,1937,KSA.

²²⁷ PWD,File No.1054,Bundle No.501,1936,KSA.

²²⁸ PWD,File No.760,Bundle No.498,1936,KSA.

with more than one employee (b) these working throughout the year with one employee (c) those working for a period between 6 month at one year with only one employee (d) those working for less than 6 months a year with only one employee.²²⁹

The Government had authorized persons to bring goods, animals and passengers by means of such ferry services.²³⁰ All vessels used by such persons were licensed and government fixed the fees payable for such licences and the tolls leviable upon passengers, animals, vehicles and goods conveyed across such ferries. The school going students were exempted from tolls.²³¹ A notification of the toll was exhibited to public view in English and Malayalam on each side of the ferry.

The water transport Department aimed at the standardization of the fares. Except in Trivandrum, a fare of eight cash per mile was adopted on all routes. In Trivandrum town water transport fare was 12 cash per mile. Later a parcel service was also started as a part of the water transport service. At all

²²⁹ PWD,File No.1389,Bundle No.576,1909,KSA.

²³⁰ The total number of ferries maintained in the state at Government cost is 338, of which 74 are in Alwaye Division, 101 in Kottayam Division, 126 in Quilon Division, 32 in Trivandrum Division and 5 in Nagercoil Division.43 places, *junghars* were provided for the Transport of vehicles. Alwaye Division: 1.Chiranallur crossing in Kothamangalam pakuthy of Kunnatanad Taluk 2.Thannipuzha crossing 3.Periyar crossing 4.kuzhikandam crossing 5.Kumbanad crossing 6.Choodanthuruthu crossing 7.Cheriyapally crossing 8.Murinjapuzha crossing 9.Poothotta crossing 10.Thattakad crossing 11.Piravom crossing 12.kalampur crossing and 13. Chalakkalthodu crossing. Kottayam Division: 1.Mallappally crossing 2.Pulikeezhu crossing 3.Lalam crossing 4.Mutholi crossing 5.Aroor Mukkom crossing (This is maintained at the cost of Travancore and Cochin governments) 6.Chengada crossing 7.Erattupettah crossing 8.Nagampadom crossing. Quilon Division: 1.Kottayathukadavu 2.kallukadavu 3.Vadasserikara ferry 4.Ranni crossing 5.cherukolepuzha crossing 6.kozhencherry crossing 7.perinad crossing 8.kumbazha crossing 9.kaipattur crossing 10.Kozhipalam crossing 11.Kollakadavu crossing 12.Arattukadavu crossing 13.Pannaikadavu crossing 14.Kolkal crossing 15.Kunnathur ferry 16.Muttathu crossing 17.Rockwood crossing 18.Arattupuzha ferry 19.Valiaperumpuzha crossing 20.Arattukadavu crossing 21.ittynayarkadavu crossing.Trivandrum Division: 1.Poovar crossing.Vide,The Travancore Directory for 1944 Part I,Trivandrum,1943,p.341.

²³¹ Regulation VI of 1096 (1921), July 21, Government of Travancore, Trivandrum, 1922,KSA.

important station agents were appointed for receiving and sending parcels from the consignors to the consignees. There were 21 Agencies operating during the year 1937-38, and about 13,000 parcels were sent during the year.²³² The water transport services were highly beneficial to the wholesale food grain merchants of Travancore. From Cochin the stock for distribution was transported to the southern parts by inland water routes up to Kottayam and from these by lorries to Trivandrum.²³³

Boat Service

In the history of water transport steam vessels have a great role, as they were used for passenger service through definite routes.²³⁴ To make possible the safe passage of boats at night through lakes and canals, especially at dangerous places near big rivers, where the flow of water would be powerful in rainy storms lights were installed.²³⁵ They were called Munro lights to perpetuate the memory of Colonel Munro who was the Resident Dewan of Travancore after Velu Thampi. These lights were made of wrought iron, in the shape of a tower having the height of 25 feet. The lamps had reflectors which could transmit light to a distance of seven miles across the lake between Alleppey and Kottayam. The contribution of these lamps was completed in 1878-79.²³⁶

Boat Services were introduced in Alleppey by private operators from Cochin from 1900 onwards. The Cochin Alleppey route was the first that was taken up for service. At the outset large size Steam Boats having 5 to 6 feet of draught were introduced when Motor Boats were not in existence. Later on, steam boats were replaced by Motor boats of 3 to 3 ½ feet of draught and they

²³² Travancore Administration Report, 1937-38, p.228.

²³³ Travancore Administration Report, 1945-46, p.170.

²³⁴ The Travancore Directory for 1943 Part I, Trivandrum, p.408.

²³⁵ V.Nagam Aiya, *The Travancore State Manual Vol.III*, Trivandrum, 1906, p.232.

²³⁶ *Ibid.*, p.233.

were operating in almost all the water routes in the State. Alleppey was one of the most important trade centres in Travancore. Alleppey - Ernakulam, Alleppey - Vaikom, Alleppey - Shertallai, Alleppey- Kottayam, Alleppey - Athirampuzha via Kumarakom, Alleppey - Changanacherry, Alleppey - Quilon, Alleppey - Quilon, Alleppey-Kayamkulam, Alleppey - Chenganoor, Alleppey- Pulikeezh, Alleppey- Thalvadi, Alleppey - Mannar. The above mentioned were the main boat routes that started from Alleppey.²³⁷

Government also sanctioned the maintenance grant for the petromax light at the Kayankulam boat jetty being increased from Rs 123 to Rs 200 per annum 1939 onwards.²³⁸ The life span bridge at Poochakal had been opened to traffic in 1938 and a petromax light is quite necessary at this place. The light at Aroor mukkam crossing, there were ferry and Junghar service at this crossing and a petromax light was an urgent necessity for the safety of the passengers and ferry men.²³⁹ Two T.I.C pattern lights at *Chengadam* crossing, one on each side, are highly necessary with the commencement of motor traffic in Sherthalai Arukutty road as the existing two lights at Chengada at the sites marked in the tracing are of no advantage to this crossing since they were put up far way.²⁴⁰

Nationalisation of Water Transport means the exercising of the right of the State to monopolise the water routes and the Services hitherto in the possession and enjoyment of private individuals and Corporations respectively and to make them State owned and State manage.²⁴¹ Passenger transport on the back waters was operated by a number of independent and ill-

²³⁷ Survey Report on Water Transport in Travancore Vol. II, p.15.Vide, PWD, File No.8438,Bundle No.814,1950.

²³⁸ PWD, File No.1395, Bundle No.529, 1938, KSA.

²³⁹ Development, File No.1248, Bundle No.260, 1941,KSA.

²⁴⁰ PWD, File No.779, Bundle No.542, 1939, KSA.

²⁴¹ Survey Report on Water Transport in Travancore Vol. II, p.1.Vide,PWD,File No.8438,Bundle No.814,1950.

organised concerns with the sole object of making profits without any regard for comfort, convenience and safety of passengers very similar to the conditions prevailing in Travancore in road Transport operations of private individuals. Passenger transport being essentially a public utility service was operated by Government or a concern responsible to the public. It was not very desirable that a public utility service of such vital importance should be in the hands of independent owners whose sole object would be to exploit and profiteer.

The Travancore Government took an initiative in the year 1944, they launched into a scheme of Marine Transport and purchased four Seaworthy country crafts each having a capacity of 400 tons. This was done at a time when inconvenience and difficulties were experienced for transporting Food Grains by sea from Indian Ports on account of the War situation by which shipping facilities could not be regularly procured. Though the vessels were purchased and operated successfully at the outset the purpose for which the purchases were made was not fully served on account of seasonal difficulties for the safe operation of the Vessels. One of the Vessels was wrecked even during the first voyage and the other Vessels were compelled to be detained beyond Cape Comorin at Leepuram which was a safe Natural Harbour, due to unfavourable wind and tide. Meanwhile, the War was over and fresh facilities for Steam ships for quick means of transport were obtained. The Scheme for the operation of country crafts for purposes of Marine Transport was, therefore, temporarily suspended and the Vessels were handed over to a private concern for operation.²⁴²

The rates of fares were not authorized or prescribed by the Government. Owners of the vessels for passenger service prescribed list or fares which were submitted to the Executive Engineer. Hence fares changed

²⁴² *Ibid.*

for the same centres by different boats might be different. But it could not exceed the rate sanctioned by the Executive Engineer. The rate of fares could be changed after intimating it to the authority seven days in advance. There were strict regulations to control such traffic. Vessels were prohibited from embarking or disembarking passengers from places other than recognised jetties. Inspection of vessels was conducted before certificates of fitness were issued. The number of passengers or quantity of goods considered fit to carry was fixed. Overloading of passengers or goods was liable to punishment.²⁴³

The Government spent large amount of money for improving the navigation routes, especially between Quilon and Alleppey. For tying up the boats wooden trestles while anchoring were put up in lakes between Alleppey and Kottayam which helped boatmen a great deal. It also marked out the lines for boats to pass through. The rules for granting license to passenger boats were strictly enforced. The licenses for steam vehicles and country crafts were valid for only one year, while the licenses for rafts were to be renewed once in Six weeks.

The Government of Travancore took special attention on the development of coastal transport also. The water traffic in Travancore state was controlled by The Travancore Steam Navigation Company. Later it controlled the same in entire Malabar Coast also on November 24, 1944.²⁴⁴ The Bombay Scindia Navigation Company held 50% of the shares. The remaining 50% of shares was held by the Travancore Government. The company used a flag which was a variant of the Travancore State flag. It had the red shell in a white background which could be recognized from a long distance.

²⁴³ Regulation VI of 1096 (1921), July 21, Government of Travancore, Trivandrum, 1922, KSA.

²⁴⁴ A.Sreedhara Menon, *Triumph and Tragedy in Travancore, Annals of Sir CP's sixteen years, Op.Cit.*, p.103.

A passenger by name of Krishna Pillai, who had purchased Ticket No.4627, suddenly breathed his last, when the boat neared Mangoor church side. The death of the passenger occurred in the motor boat 'Lawn' belonging to Messers P.M Abraham and Sons on 1941. But in the enquiries conducted by the Inspector of police Karinagapally it was shown that the question was a natural one.²⁴⁵ The Death of Mahakavi Kumaran Asan, the famous poet of Malayalam was due to the tragic boat disaster on Pallana River in the year 1924.²⁴⁶ The incident that occurred on Wednesday, the 16th of January has been considered a dark chapter in the history of water transport in Travancore. The steam boat that started its voyage from Quilon at night to Alleppey called "Redeemer" capsized between Thrikkunnappuzha and Thottappally at Pallana river. The boat which was licensed to carry 95 people had boarded more than double that number. The great poet of Malayalam was one among them.

Ports of Travancore

Ports can be considered as centres of cultural transfer where goods and people interact between land and countries beyond the sea. It is also the meeting place between ocean transport and inland systems of transport. A port is essentially an economic concept; but a harbour, was a physical one. The location of ports and harbours does not always synchronize. As Murphey has rightly observed: 'most ports have poor harbours and many fine harbours see few ships'. A harbour is the sheltered area of deep water. Some degree of shelter, natural or artificial, is essential for port development.²⁴⁷

Colonial ports were the symbols as well as the immediate instruments of the grand colonial design in Asia. They reoriented the introverted economic

²⁴⁵ PWD, File No.31, Bundle No.609, 1942, KSA.

²⁴⁶ M. Jayaraj, *Malayala Achadi Madhyamam: Bhoothavum Varthamanavum* (Mal.), Calicut, 2016, p.127.

²⁴⁷ Indu Banga, *Ports and Their Hinterlands in India*, New Delhi, 1992, p.10.

systems of the Asian countries and focused them on to seaport. The term port cities are being increasingly used by geographers and historians, though as an 'image' and not as a well developed concept. It has been pointed out that most scholars either deal with ports rather than port cities or else discuss the city as a whole, relegating the port to a completely subordinate position so that the so called 'port city' is robbed of its maritime character and becomes little more than a city that happens to be on a shore line.²⁴⁸

An important feature of the Ports of Travancore is that they are favourably situated in the trade routes between Australia, Europe and America.²⁴⁹ A ship traveling from Colombo through the trade route had to deviate only a mile to reach Colachel, 14 miles to Trivandrum, 23 miles to Quilon, 45 miles to Alleppy and 80 miles to reach Tuticorin.²⁵⁰ The Ports of Malabar also had the convenience of natural backwaters so that cheap transport of export articles such as coir, corpa, coconut oil, tea, coffee, rubber, ginger, pepper, cardamom etc could be made available.²⁵¹

The term 'hinter land' is used in the books on geography and history of ports to refer to the area near the ports. The hinter lands of Ports are studied from several perspectives, such as in terms of the quantity of exports, imports, transport links and the flow of cargo. All such studies point out that the hinterland navigation and transports were well developed.²⁵² In this the process of connection of the rivers and lakes by canals was important. To provide such an uninterrupted water communication the Government of

²⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, p.25.

²⁴⁹ Travancore Administration Report, 1932-33, p.172.

²⁵⁰ Travancore Administration Report, 1927-28, p.152.

²⁵¹ S.N.Haji, *Economics of Shipping, a Study in Applied Economics*, Bombay, 1924, p. 293.

²⁵² Indu Banga, *Op.Cit.*, p.17.

Travancore had taken initiatives even during the reign of the ruler Ayilyam Thirunal (1860- 1880).²⁵³

Quilon

Quilon was a well developed centre of trade and commerce, as recorded by Marco Polo in his travelogues. This port town was connected by backwaters to Alleppey .It was connected to Alleppey by road and to Shencotta by rail, during the 19th century.

Quilon was one of the oldest towns of the Malabar Coast. Its natural situation and consequent commercial importance made it the centre of attraction of every foreign power and subjected it in the past to great political troubles. With the opening of Railway Quilon found it in direct and easy communication with the town of the Madras presidency and was likely to regain the former position as an important commercial centre. Cotton spinning and weaving and the manufacture of tiles were its chief industries.²⁵⁴

Water transport and communication received more importance in this region because it was rich in the convenience of rivers and lakes. ²⁵⁵The geographical features of the land and the deep lake opening towards the sea protected by Varkala and Tangasseri landscapes provided safe harbour facilities to the ships and large boats that anchored in this port. The proximity of canals and the availability of road and rail facilities also helped the development of this port. The colonial powers had recognized the commercial and military importance of these port countries ago. They considered it a

²⁵³ A.Sreedhara Menon, *Kerala District Gazeeters, Quilon, Op.Cit.*, p.417.

²⁵⁴ The Travancore Almanac and Directory for 1922, Trivandrum, 1921, p.V.

²⁵⁵ A.Sreedhara Menon, *Kerala District Gazetteer, Quilon, Op.Cit.*,1964,p.407.

convenient port of the western coast protected on three sides by the Varkala jetty, Tangasseri Port and the Quilon shore.²⁵⁶

Alleppey

Alleppey or Alappuzha was the most well developed commercial centre in the Travancore state. It was well known as the 'Venice of the East' as it had uninterrupted activities of foreign trade from the later 18th century onwards.²⁵⁷ It was famous as an industrial centre, especially in activities connected with copra, coir and coconut products. Among them the manufacture of mats from coir, hydraulic bailing of coir yarn and coir fibre etc were well established.²⁵⁸ These commercial and industrial activities were helped immensely by its extensive canal system, the network of back waters, and the development of water transport and communication.

Alleppey was the principal port of Travancore.²⁵⁹ At the beginning of the 19th century East India Company was able to control Travancore and consequently its export trade. The Commercial Department became headed by a British 'Commercial Agent' which was stationed at Alleppey.²⁶⁰ The Alleppey Shipping and landing Fees Committee, working under the control of the Principal Port Offices purchased the tug Alleppey for handling cargo work and to help the dispatch of steamers. In 1945-46, the Administrative Report of Travancore shows that steam ships from and to Europe, America, China Eastern Ports and Australia had called at the Port. They had anchored in addition to the usual streamers that reached there. The most common items imported were Rice, Paddy, Clothes, machinery, hardware, oil, cement,

²⁵⁶ PWD, File No.386, Bundle No.769, 1948,KSA.

²⁵⁷ The Travancore Almanac and Directory for 1932, Trivandrum, 1931, p.VI.

²⁵⁸ The Travancore Almanac and Directory for 1934, Trivandrum, 1933, p.VI.

²⁵⁹ Travancore Administration Report, 1930-31, p.167.

²⁶⁰ Hans Schenk, 'Alleppey 1762 -1984; Changes Counter Changes And Also Continuity', *Journal of Kerala Studies*, Vol.IX, Part 1-4, March- December 1984, p.143.

metals, European manufactured goods, Tobacco from Jaffna, Salt etc. The major Export items were coir fibre, coir yarn, mats, coir ropes, teen, coconut oil, rubber, mineral sands, etc. During that period (1945-46) an amount of 5,60,000 Rupees was sanctioned for the improvement of the harbour.²⁶¹

In 1932 the canal which connected Changanachery town with Alleppey port town was opened.²⁶² The charcoal made from coconut shell was required in large quantities, especially during the period of the Second World War. It was regularly shipped from Alleppey port in large quantities. The uniform rate of 5 *annas* was fixed per candy as boat line for the transport of charcoal to the ships at Alleppey.²⁶³

Colachel

This southern most port in the state of Travancore had great historical importance. The shipping operations were carried on in the natural break water formed under the shelter of rocks.²⁶⁴ Many steamers from foreign countries had visited this port for transporting Monazite, Ilmenite and Zircon sand. As a commercial centre Colachel lost its importance due to the decline of coffee industry. The Scottish company which had established this industry closed down in the 1880's.²⁶⁵

Manakudy

The seashore towards the south of the Manakudy Lake, and regions of East Manakudy and places near the West Manakudy Roman Catholic Church were famous for the manufacture and shipment of salt.²⁶⁶ The port facilities

²⁶¹ Travancore Administration Report, 1945-46, p.198.

²⁶² PWD,File No.137,Bundle No. 435,1932,KSA.

²⁶³ Development, File No.678,Bundle No.258,1941,KSA.

²⁶⁴ Travancore Administration Report, 1945-46,p.164.

²⁶⁵ Travancore Administration Report,1882-83,p.73.

²⁶⁶ The Travancore Almanac and Directory for Part I, Trivandrum,1944,p.353

near Munambom Chowkey and the river bank nearby were used for the shipment of salt from the salt factories and the gunny bags used for their transportation.²⁶⁷

Trivandrum

Valiathura Port at a distance of about one mile from Trivandrum was close to the shore with deep water.²⁶⁸ Here steamers could anchor about 4/10 of a mile away from the shore. There is a pier built with a red light at the end, which could be seen five miles away in clear weather. The Valiathura Port was just two miles away from the city. The depth of the sea near the shore, the sandy coast and the surrounding coconut palms etc are its unique features. It was intended to serve the capital and the surrounding hinterland.²⁶⁹

Piers

The old Pier at Alleppey which was constructed by Pierce Leslie and Co. in 1882 became useless for shipping activities because of the resources of the sea.²⁷⁰ Hence for shipping an extension of the Pier was necessary. The works of improvement, extension and repairs were entrusted to the same company. Later the whole pier was renewed in 1910 at a cost of Rs. 3, 17,54, Another Pier at Valiathurai was constructed. The cost of which was one lakh rupees, and the materials removed from the old Pier at Alleppey were used here. The hero Pier was 756 feet long with three hand cranes for handling cargo and large Godowns.²⁷¹

²⁶⁷ *Ibid.*

²⁶⁸ The Travancore Almanac and Directory for 1922, Trivandrum, 1921, p.9.

²⁶⁹ A.Sreedhara Menon, *Kerala State Gazetteers, Trivandrum, Op.Cit.*, p.469.

²⁷⁰ Ulloor S Parameswara Aiyer, *Progress of Travancore Under H H Sree Moolam Tirunal*, Trivandrum, 1998, p.473.

²⁷¹ The Travancore Almanac and Directory for 1932, Trivandrum, 1931, p.VI.

The development achieved in inland navigation was a fore runner to many socio-economic changes in the lives of the people. Farmers, industrials and merchants were highly benefited by this. Near canals and jettis trade centres developed which grew up into commercial centres or markets. All major trade centres were connected by inland water transport routes. However by about 1930's this traditional system of navigation in Travancore had deteriorated due to a number of reasons. The development of the roads and the railways was a prominent reason for it. The colonial Government of Travancore found it necessary to have well made roads for its commercial and administrative requirements. They found that for quick and efficient military management also good roads were necessary. For quick movement of men and materials roads and railways were more convenient. Hence road transport became the chief means of communication in Travancore during the 1940's. The result was that inland navigation was forgotten. There were also no attempts to plan or modernize the water transport system.

Railway

Good, efficient and cheap transport facility is crucial for socio-economic development. Whether transport facility on its own can spur growth is a matter of debate, but that its absence impedes growth is universally accepted. Some have even gone to the extent of advocating that transport capacity should be created ahead of demand.

Madhav Rao (1828-91), who had been the Dewan of the princely states of Travancore 1858-72, Indore 1873-75 and Baroda 1875-82. Wrote:- "What a glorious change the railway has made in old and long neglected India! The young generation cannot fully realize it. In passing from the banks of the Tambrapurny to those of the Ganges, what varied scenes, what successive nationalities and languages flit across the view! Tamil, Telegu, Canarese, Marathi, Guzerati, Hindustani, Bengali - populations which had been isolated

for unmeasured ages, now easily mingle in civilized confusion. In my various long journeys it has repeatedly struck me that if India is to become a homogeneous nation, and is ever to achieve solidarity; it must be by means of the Railways as a means of transport, and by means of the English language as a medium of communication. ”²⁷²

Transport links the means of production and production centres both within and outside the country. Low transport cost reduces the cost of the product. Of the two main land based means of transport roads and railways, the latter has many advantages over road. Railways offer better energy efficiency, least cost and are least polluting. The per unit operating cost of rail is considered to be higher than only one mode of transport, i. e. water. Further, for a given level of traffic cost of constructing transport facility is said to be six times lower in rail compared to road. Its social cost with respect to damage or destruction to the environment is also significantly lower. Road, however, scores in terms of lower terminal handling costs, flexibility of operation and door-to-door service. For short distances and for higher value goods, road has been found to be more advantageous. For low traffic volumes, also road is preferred to rail²⁷³. According to Lord Macaulay, “excepting only the inventions of the alphabet and the printing press, no other inventions have done so much for the moral and intellectual progress of man as those which serve to a bridge distance and improve the means of communication. The opening up of a vast area of impenetrable forest land by means of this railway is also worthy of note”.²⁷⁴

British India was an unsatisfactory business place for the merchants and manufacturers of the Victorian era. The trade was meagre; it needed

²⁷² Ian J Kerr, *Engines of Change: The Railroads That Made India*, New Delhi, 2012, pp. 3-4.

²⁷³ K. B Verma, *Indian Railways: Strategy for Reforms*, New Delhi, 2016, p. 18.

²⁷⁴ Ulloor. S Parameswara Aiyer, *Op. Cit.*, p. 501.

introduction of two of the principal achievements of the industrial revolution, the steam ship and the steam railway.²⁷⁵ A group of merchants in Manchester, England conceived the earliest idea of railway system in India in the 1830s. They looked upon India as a source of cheap raw material, particularly cotton, as well as a huge market for British manufactured goods, mainly cotton textile. However, not much came out of it until the incorporation of East India Railway Company in 1845 as a joint stock company. About 90 percent of the capital of the company was owned by British interest and the entire capital of the company was in the form of equity rather than debt. However, the private investors were hesitant in investing in a railway system in a land, which was too distant, largely unknown to them and politically uncertain. As it so happened, the East India Company was also keen for a railway system in India as it saw in it great commercial and military advantage. However, EIC did not have the financial wherewithal to undertake such a venture on its own. Rowland Macdonald Stephenson, promoter of the East Indian Railway company submitted his first proposal for the construction of rail lines in 1844. He outlined six major rail routes for the Indian sub continent. Stephenson's efforts from 1844 to 1849 resulted in financial guarantee and liberal government support for railway companies. The EIR Company and Great Indian Peninsular Railway company were formed in 1849 and they pioneered construction of rail lines originating from Calcutta and Bombay respectively²⁷⁶. Of these the first and most important were the lines from Bombay (the GIPR) and from Calcutta (the EIR) Each could claim to be the first railway in India, although the GIPR ran the first train.²⁷⁷

Therefore, it encouraged the railway company to finance, construct and manage a railway system in India. Many rounds of negotiation followed

²⁷⁵ R. R. Bhandari, *Indian Railways: glorious 150 years*, New Delhi, 2006, p. 1.

²⁷⁶ *Ibid.*

²⁷⁷ J. N. Westwood, *Railways of India*, London, 1974, p. 10.

culminating into signing an Agreement on 18 April 1849²⁷⁸. Railways were first introduced to India in the year 1853 from Bombay to Thane²⁷⁹. The railways in India were a group of privately owned companies. The military engineers of the East India Company, later of the British Indian Army, contributed to the birth and growth of the railway in India. In South India, the Madras Railway Company opened the first line on July 1, 1856, covering a distance of about hundred kilometres between Veyasarpady and Waljah Road (Arcot).²⁸⁰ Twenty-five years later India had an extensive network of trunk lines. Fifty years later, in 1900, trains steamed through most parts of India along railways whose trunk and branch lines extended over 25, 000 miles of track. Nonetheless, the building of these railways remains a great and largely untold story of nineteenth-century India: a story of individual and collective effort, danger and quiet heroism, hardship and accomplishment.²⁸¹

The question of having Railway communication with Travancore was under discussion from the year 1873, when the matter was brought forward by the Madras government in a letter to the Travancore government.²⁸² The subject of the introduction of Railway in Travancore became a matter of serious concern and discussions about it were held in 1876. On March 3, 1876 the Chief Engineer of Travancore State, Barton submitted a Memorandum to the Government dealing with the need of introducing Railway in Travancore²⁸³ showing the necessity of introducing Railway in the state. The Travancore Branch, otherwise known as Tinnevely - Quilon Railway is a line which was being built to connect Tinnevely, a terminus of the South Indian Railway and

²⁷⁸ K. B Verma, *Op. Cit.*, p. 18.

²⁷⁹ Sandeep Chopra, *History of Indian Railway*, Allahabad, 2014, p. 9.

²⁸⁰ Rashmi Srivastava, *Development of Railways in Northern India*, Lucknow, 2010, p. 6.

²⁸¹ Ian. J. Kerr, *Building the Railways of the Raj: 1850-1900*, Delhi, 1997, p. 1.

²⁸² Report on the Project for the Railway construction Survey of 1899-1900, Railway Company Ltd, Travancore Branch, Tamil Nadu Archives Library, Chennai, p. 1.

²⁸³ V. Nagam Aiya, *The Travancore State Manual Vol. III*, Trivandrum, 1906, p. 233.

the headquarters of the Tinnevelly District, with the port of Quilon on the West Coast in Travancore territory. The reconnaissance and partial survey of an extension of the South Indian Railway from Tinnevelly to Quilon on the west coast had been completed and the project was still under consideration.

²⁸⁴ In 1895, the route was finally decided. ²⁸⁵

The proposal for the Northern route was accepted by the Madras Government and S. I. R Company was asked to submit the proposal to the consideration of both Governments. A comprehensive survey was conducted and the total cost for the route was estimated as a crore of rupees for a distance of 106 miles. The Executive Engineer of Quilon division was asked by the Government of Travancore to prepare a feasibility study for a train service from Quilon and Shencotta. The Executive Engineer made changes in the proposed line and cut down the estimate to six lakhs. The Dewan favoured a northern route to further trade interests where as the Engineer favoured a Southern route prepared the plan and estimate accordingly.

The main advocates of southern route including William Logan claim superiority for the southern route²⁸⁶ over the northern one what he describes as “a political and humane standpoint”, and he remarked in this connection that “Trivandrum, the capital of the state would not long remain outside the pale of railway communication”. His argument runs as follows:

(a) The existing trade from Tinnevelly to Travancore through Aramboly was of a local and stationary character, being limited by the demand for local consumption and its neighbourhood. (b) There was no prospect of this trade expanding in any material degree for want of an outlet at Trivandrum, in the

²⁸⁴ Administration of the Madras Presidency, 1882- 83, p. 150

²⁸⁵ Administration of the Madras Presidency, 1888 - 89, p. 126.

²⁸⁶ Papers Relating to the Travancore Railway Vol. I, Kerala State Archives Library, Thiruvananthapuram, 1934, p. 373.

absence of a port and in consequence of the canal north of Trivandrum being incapable of carrying any heavy traffic owing to the tunnels. (c) The outward trade to Tinnevely, through the same pass is confined to a few articles such as the produce of the cocoanut tree, fish, tamarind, jaggery and timber produced in very limited quantities in south Travancore and to small quantities of pepper, areca and ginger brought down from places north of Trivandrum. (d) The country between Tinnevely and Aramboli on the Travancore frontiers a dry, poor, uncultivated and sparsely people tract not producing or capable of producing any traffic. (e) Although the country between Kottar and Trivandrum, which the proposed line through the southern routes would connect, is well cultivated and contains a large population the goods traffic over this, and indeed over the whole line, would for the reason already stated be always limited. (f) Trivandrum is at the extreme south end of the inland water communication approached by a narrow canal, and too far away from the busy trade in the north to influence it much, if at all, one way or the other. (g) The engineering difficulties, which according to the report of the south Indian railway officers turned the balance so much in favour of the southern line, were very greatly reduced.²⁸⁷

The importance of the Northern route explored by Valentine, he points that²⁸⁸

(a) On the other hand, Quilon, at which the line through the northern route would terminate, is a port with facilities for constructing a harbour such as no other place in southern India possesses according to competent judges. (b) Quilon is within easy distance, by water of nearly all the principal centres of trade in the country, and situated on an extensive system of water communication which affords facilities for transporting goods and passengers

²⁸⁷ *Ibid.*

²⁸⁸ *Ibid.*

for 100 miles and more to the north of it, and 40 miles to the south in boats which carry as much as 15 tons at about rs. 10 for 100 miles. (c) Though the intermediate traffic between Shencottah and Quilon is at present small, it is capable of development, and the with the valley of the Tambrapani at one end, and central and north Travancore and Shereingal and Trivandrum taluks at the other end, traffic both in goods and passengers will always be large. (d) The bulk of the produce exported to Tinnevelly viz, coconuts, coconut oil, copra, arecanuts, ginger, pepper etc., is grown in much greater profusion in the country about Quilon and to the north and north east of it than in the south. (e) Cloths, rice, pulses, cattle and other articles produced in the Tambrapani valley can be imported into north Travancore cheaper and in much larger quantities by a line through that valley into North Travancore than by a light railway from Ambasamudram to Tinnevelly thence by the proposed metre gauge line through Aramboly to Trivandrum and thence north through the canal with its tunnels. (f) Quilon is already the seat of a cotton spinning mill and a trade in cotton and yarn has sprung up between it and Tinnevelly which with the facilities afforded by a railway is likely to expand as fuel and labour are cheap and more mills may be established with profit. (g) Owing to the existence of perennial streams, a plentiful supply of the raw materials, facilities of water communication and other natural advantages, North Travancore is better adopted for such industries as paper manufacturers, saw mills, oil mills etc. (h) There is abundance of wasteland along the northern route which would be taken up for tea as both the soil and elevation are said to be adopted for its cultivation. (i) Land for the railway along the northern route will cost little or nothing while it will have to be dearly paid for in the south. (j) Fuel for the railway is obtainable almost on the spot all along the northern route, while in the south it will have to be brought from considerable distances so also timber for the works.²⁸⁹ (k) Quilon being

²⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 374.

the central and head depot for timber, timber from the hills is floated down to it in rafts from nearly all parts of the country. This article which is in great demand in Tinnevely and Madura can therefore be easily carried by rail through the northern route, while to bring it to Trivandrum would be both difficult and expensive owing to the tunnels.²⁹⁰

The Southern line, forward by the consulting Engineer would benefit both Trivandrum and Quilon. The Travancore official was strongly opposed to William Logan through facts and figures supported him. The selection of the route was the prerogative of the Travancore Government and once it took the final decision the Governor in council would recommend in to the Government of India.

Dewan Ramiengar (1880-1887) was sturdily in support of northern route from Koilpatti to Quilon through Shencottah, which would be one of the most advantageous to Travancore. To strengthen his argument he pointed out that “a railway through the comparatively small extent of territory known as southern Travancore would not benefit to any considerable extent, the trade of the country North of Quilon, where all our staples are grown, where our emporiums of trade, such as they are, exist in which our chief trade routes East and West converge, and where the bulk of our export and import trade is carried on.”²⁹¹ Puckle, the then collector of Tinnevely also concurred with him in this view. There were conflict of interest between the Government of India and Secretary of State who favoured the southern route and the Travancore Government and SIR Company opposed it and through the contract was given to SIR company it would not start construction as Travancore Government refused to provide the necessary capital.

²⁹⁰ *Ibid.*

²⁹¹ Report on the Project for the Railway construction Survey of 1899-1900, Railway Company Ltd, Travancore Branch, Tamil Nadu Archives Library, Chennai, p. 7.

The matter came up for recommendation in 1895 and in 1898 practical measures were taken towards the construction of the new line. A Survey of ghat section was ordered by Madras Government as sanctioned Rs. 13, 000/- and entrusted. Theodre Mitchell, Executive Engineer SIR Company, with the task of survey and construction²⁹² and Government of India sanctioned Rs. 7 lakh for this Work. SIR Company issued debentures on the guarantee of the Government of India for raising funds for the new line.

The total length of the line under construction is 103. 33, 46. 75 miles on the British side and the remainder within the state. Lands required for 23 miles 19. 6 chains of the line and 13 sites were acquired and handed over to the railway authorities during the year and the compensation for the lands acquired amount to Rs. 6, 101. Special arrangements were also made for acquiring the lands required for the portion of the Cochin Railway passing through Travancore territory. A considerable portion of the land required was already acquired and handed over to the railway authorities.²⁹³

The acquisition and handing over of lands for the Quilon Railway having been mostly completed during the year, the special establishment provided for the purpose was established. The total area handed over was 1898:42 acres, out of which, compensation was paid for 510:62 acres: the rest being *sirkar* lands were handed over free. A sum of Rs. 58, 013 was paid on account of guaranteed interest for the debentures issued by S. I. R company.

²⁹⁴

The first train of Travancore started its trip from Quilon. The first railway line in the State was Quilon - Shencottah. Though it was decided to start the journey from Shencotta to Quilon due to the monsoon rains, and land

²⁹² T. K. Velu Pillai, *The Travancore State Manual Vol. III, Op. Cit.*, p. 491.

²⁹³ Travancore Administration Report, 1899-1900, p. 65.

²⁹⁴ Travancore Administration Report, 1901-02, p. 26.

slide many parts of the railway line were covered with earth. Sree Mulam Thirunal, the King of Travancore was very particular that the train should start running at the time and day already decided. So the parts of the train were dismantled and brought to Quilon beach by small ships from Thoothukkudi by sea. The parts were loaded in Bullock carts were re assembled at the Railway ground. As desired by the king the train started running on the date and time already decided. Thus the first train in Travancore started its historical journey from Quilon to Punalur on June 1, 1904. That the same year from Shenchottah - Punalur line was opened on November 26, 1904.²⁹⁵ It is said that the villagers were frightened to see the first train running. The people on seeing the train ran away in fear. The villagers who saw it running at a great speed with a terrible sound and bitter smoke thought it was a monsters creature and called it *Dhooma Sakautasuran*.²⁹⁶

The centre of the station building of the present terminus of the South Indian Railway at Tinnevely, is taken as the zero point from which the mileage is reckoned. The total length of the line from the zero at Tinnevely station to the end of the Quilon station yard is 108. 27 miles. The entire length of the line 50. 33 miles were in British territory and 57. 94 in Travancore.²⁹⁷ The original estimate for the line was Rs. 1, 01, 62, 018 for 103. 33 miles but this had increased considerably, the actual amount spent being Rs. 1, 57, 71, 766 for 108. 27 miles, Rs. 45, 06, 129 for the British section and Rs. 1, 12, 65, 637 for the state section.²⁹⁸

²⁹⁵ T. D. Sadasivan, *Op. Cit.*, p. 53.

²⁹⁶ *Ibid.*

²⁹⁷ South Indian Railway Co. Ltd, Travancore Branch, Report on the Project for its construction survey of 1899-1900, Tamil Nadu Archives Library, Chennai, p. 16.

²⁹⁸ T. K Velu Pillai, *The Travancore State Manual Vol. III, Op. Cit.*

The Railways was another field of investment for British capital in the state. The Secretary of state for India availed of a loan to finance the railway line from Shencottah to Quilon. The Government of Travancore guaranteed two and half percent to five percent interest for the amount spent on the construction of the line.²⁹⁹ The government of Travancore financed the extension of Railway line from Quilon to Trivandrum by availing a loan and partly from the surplus revenue of the state.³⁰⁰ The Government of Travancore borrowed 14.2 million rupees from the Secretary of State for the construction of the Shencottah - Quilon line and the amount spent on the construction of the Quilon - Trivandrum line was 5.5 million rupees.³⁰¹ The total length of the Railway line was 110.5 miles. The South Indian Railway company operated and managed the line. The net receipts of the entire line were not sufficient to the payment of the guaranteed interest. As per the agreement, if the company did not obtain a minimum rate of return it has to the right receive compensation from the Government of Travancore.³⁰² The guaranteed interest which the state Government had to pay debenture holders of Shencottah - Quilon Railway for the first five years (1902-1907) alone amounted to Rs. 86, 297. Between 1902 and 1913 the government of Travancore remitted Rs. 2271956 as the interest to the South Indian Railway company in fulfilment of the terms of agreement between them for twelve years. To cross over the financial liabilities, Travancore started a 'Sinking Fund'³⁰³ for the payment of the debenture loan used for the construction of the

²⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 492.

³⁰⁰ Travancore Administration Report, 1928-29, p. 163.

³⁰¹ Travancore Administration Report, 1921-22, p. 78.

³⁰² Travancore Administration Report, 1920-21, p. 78.

³⁰³ The Sinking- Fund which had accumulated to over half a crore of rupees was set free and placed at the disposal of the Government. The Government thus got a sudden accession of wealth at a time of acute financial stringency. This large fund is intended as a reserve against emergencies; and it may be utilized for nation building purposes. Vide, Kondoor Krishna Pillai, *Op. Cit.*, p. 153.

Tinnevelly - Quilon railway and it had ever been setting a part a sum of two lakh rupees every year to the credit of the fund.

The Shencottah - Quilon Railway line passes through a rocky and mountainous region and the cost of construction was very high. The line goes through the peripheral part of the state and was mainly intended for goods traffic, and connected to the Madras port. The line was not a commercial success. From the financial point of view, the terms of the Railway agreement were not favourable to the state. The absence of proper Government control over the operation of the line was harmful to the interests of the state. This factor combined with the high working expenses brought considerable loss of revenue to the state.

The line as far as Shencottah was opened towards the close of the year under report, while the portion from Punalur to Quilon was nearly completed. A sum of Rs. 2, 34, 122 was paid during the year on account of guaranteed interest on debenture bonds raised by South Indian Railway Company.³⁰⁴ The railway from Shencottah to Quilon continued to work at a loss. The guaranteed interest paid by the state for the year was Rs. 2, 38, 269 against Rs. 2, 18, 787 in 1906-07.³⁰⁵

The railway line from Shencotta to Quilon was not profitable one and is paid an interest of Rs. 1, 78, 12 as against Rs. 2, 38, 269 in 1907³⁰⁶ and the interest paid during the year was Rs. 1, 70, 971 as against Rs. 1, 88, 054 in 1909-10.³⁰⁷ A new line consisting of 39. 15 miles was proposed for the State of Travancore³⁰⁸ and the Secretary of state for India sanctioned from

³⁰⁴ Travancore Administration Report, 1902-03, p. 28.

³⁰⁵ Travancore Administration Report, 1906-07, p. 25.

³⁰⁶ Travancore Administration Report, 1907-08, p. 28.

³⁰⁷ Travancore Administration Report, 1909-10, p. 41.

³⁰⁸ Administration of the Madras Presidency, 1911-12, p. 60.

extension of line from Quilon to Trivandrum and requisition of land for their extension was complete in 1913-14.³⁰⁹

The cost of the extension including rolling stock and compensation for the lands to be acquired were to be met by the state. In the year 1914-15, the lands required for the Quilon to Trivandrum Extension of the Tinnevely to Quilon Railway were acquired and handed over to the South Indian Railway Company. The line from Shencottah to Quilon did not make any profit.³¹⁰ In 1912 the extension work was concluded the line was thrown open for traffic on 1 January 1918.³¹¹ The total interest on the loans for the building of the line for Shencotta and Quilon was Rs. 1, 54, 739 as against Rs. 1, 61, 886 in 1919.³¹²

The net amount received from Shencottah-Trivandrum line in 1922 was not enough for the payment of the guaranteed interest on the capital raised in Britain and for the construction of the Shencottah to Quilon section owing to increased rate of interest on the loans and owing to the high working expenses on the state section of the Railway.³¹³

Travancore Government was eager to open Railway line between Quilon and Ernakulam. Travancore government sanctioned Rs. 3000 to G. Marilni, the chief engineer as his personal remuneration to cover the expenses incurred by him for the survey period from January 1925 till the end of June 1925.³¹⁴ The line from Shencottah to Trivandrum brought in a total income of Rs. 1, 65, 817 as against Rs. 2, 51, 694 in 1925.³¹⁵ The railway line from

³⁰⁹ Travancore Administration Report, 1913 -14, p. 48.

³¹⁰ Travancore Administration Report, 1914-15, p. 52.

³¹¹ T. K Velu Pillai, *The Travancore State Manual, Vol III, Op. Cit.*, p. 494.

³¹² Travancore Administration Report, 1919-20, p. 64.

³¹³ Travancore Administration Report, 1921- 22, p. 78.

³¹⁴ PWD, File No. 1931, Bundle No. 399, 1928, KSA.

³¹⁵ Travancore Administration Report, 1925-26, p. 115.

Shencottah to Quilon brought in a total project of Rs. 26, 498 as against a net loss of Rs. 10, 796 during the year before.³¹⁶

The subject of railway extensions in Travancore which has been a matter of complaint for over twenty-five years now received the attention of the Travancore Government. The planting communities and export and manufacturing merchants were much handicapped in the greater expansion of their trade on account of this long felt need. It is understood that the Government have taken up the immediate question of railway construction from Quilon to Trivandrum.³¹⁷

This government met the capital outlay on the Quilon to Trivandrum section while the extension from Chakai (old terminus of the Quilon - Trivandrum line) to Thampanur was constructed by the state and handed over to the South Indian Railway for being worked as part of the Quilon to Trivandrum section.³¹⁸ Two new stations on the Chackai to Thamapanur railway extension being named as “Trivandrum Pettah and Trivandrum Central” in 1930.³¹⁹

The total length of the Railway line in the state was 98 miles excluding the portion of the Cochin to Shoranur railway running through the Travancore territory in the Alwaye Public works division. The Shencottah section was worked under a guarantee in respect of interest on the capital spent on the section by the British Government. The capital required for the Quilon - Trivandrum (Chakai) line was met by this government. While the extension from Chakai to Trivandrum central was constructed by the State and handed over to the South Indian Railway for working as part of the Quilon -

³¹⁶ Travancore Administration Report, 1930-31, p. 162.

³¹⁷ The Times of India, April 10, 1925, p. 3.

³¹⁸ Travancore Administration Report, 1947-48, p. 120.

³¹⁹ PWD, File No. 1411, Bundle No. 424, 1930, KSA.

Trivandrum (chakai) section.³²⁰ Chakai - Thampanur Railway extension central station buildings at Thampanur.³²¹ Government sanctioned for providing new steel pale fence in place of the existing platform wire fence at the Varkala, Kadakavur and Chirayinkil stations on the Quilon -Trivandrum Railway.³²²

The working on the Quilon -Trivandrum railway section had been completed with the exception of the Kazhakuttam -Trivandrum central, the old Trivandrum station and the closing of the Chakai siding block station.³²³ The Chakai to Trivandrum extension opened for passenger traffic from 4^t November 1931.³²⁴ Waiting rooms were provided at Varkala, Pettah and Trivandrum Central. Retiring rooms were provided in the Trivandrum Central Railway Station.³²⁵ Twenty one books of concession certificate forms for season's tickets to students were issued in 1930.³²⁶ Under the agreement, the Government had no control in the matter of the appointments on the Travancore branch of the south Indian Railway. The South Indian Railway Company however, employed a fair number of Travancoreans all over their system.³²⁷ The lengths of the branch within Travancore were 97. 6 miles. The length of whole line within South India Railway Company Co. ltd was 2, 782 miles.

The estimate and plans of the Trivandrum - Nagercoil line were received by Government. All the important and major works on the extension were completed and the line was handed over for working to the south Indian

³²⁰ Travancore Administration Report, 1944-45, pp. 119-120.

³²¹ PWD, File No. 835, Bundle No. 445, 1929, KSA.

³²² PWD, File No. 372, BundleNo. 402, 1929, KSA.

³²³ PWD, File No. 1126, Bundle No. 502, 1936, KSA.

³²⁴ PWD, File No. 1610, Bundle No. 433, 1931, KSA.

³²⁵ A. Sreedhara Menon, *Kerala District Gazeteers, Trivandrum, Op. Cit.*, p. 465.

³²⁶ PWD, File No. 1811, Bundle No. 427, 1930, KSA.

³²⁷ PWD, File No. 368, Bundle No. 495, 1936, KSA.

Railway Company on the 1st July 1932.³²⁸ The survey for a Railway line from Quilon to Ernakulum has been started in progress. A coastal line from Quilon to Cochin via Alleppey was also under consideration.³²⁹

The Shencotta-Trivandrum line incurred a loss of Rs. 52, 124 as against a loss of Rs. 73, 567 during the previous year. Total expenditure of the year was Rs. 1, 23, 708.³³⁰ A project of Rs. 5013 was registered in 1934 as against a loss of Rs. 52, 124 during the year before.³³¹

The Shencottah section worked under guarantee in respect of interest on the capital spent on the section by the British Government. The capital required for the Quilon -Trivandrum (chakai) line was met by this government while the extension from chakai to Trivandrum central was constructed by the State and handed over to the South Indian Railway for working as part of the Quilon - Trivandrum (chakai) section.³³²

The South Indian Railway Company operated the entire line. The Secretary of State for India availed of a loan to finance Shencottah-Quilon line and the interest on the loan was paid by the Travancore Government. The extension from Quilon to Trivandrum was built by a loan availed of Travancore Government and excess revenues.³³³

The Quilon to Shencottah section worked under a guarantee in respect of interest on the capital spent on that section by the British Government. The capital required for the Quilon -Trivandrum (chakai) line was met by the Government while the extension from Chakai to Trivandrum central was

³²⁸ Travancore Administration Report, 1931-32, p. 164.

³²⁹ Travancore Administration Report, 1924-25, p. 65.

³³⁰ Travancore Administration Report, 1932-33, p. 163.

³³¹ Travancore Administration Report, 1933-34, p. 154.

³³² Travancore Administration Report, 1944-45, p. 120.

³³³ Travancore Administration Report, 1928-29, p. 163.

constructed by the state and handed over to the south Indian Railway for working as part of the Quilon-Trivandrum (chakai) Section. The working of the Travancore Railway was, consequent on the acquisition of the whole South Indian Railway system by the Government of India from 1st April 1944, taken up by them from that date³³⁴ to facilitate rail journey, the government sanctioned M/S Burmah shell oil storage and distributing company, Madras had been allotted a site to erect a kerb side petrol pump at the central station yard at Trivandrum.³³⁵ The forest department agreed to supply permanent way materials and girders and it also provide hard wood sleepers.³³⁶ Waiting rooms were provided at Varkala, Pettah and Trivandrum Central. Retiring rooms are provided in the Trivandrum Central Railway Station.³³⁷ Twenty one books of concession certificate forms for season's tickets to students were issued in 1930.³³⁸

Travancore government approved the estimate of Rs 78, 6251 for constructing three metre gauge bogie brake van and third class carriages during 1936-37 in replacement of three old carriages in the Travancore Railway.³³⁹ For prevention trespass, appoint state police force in the premises of the ruler railway station at Quilon.³⁴⁰ Travancore government approved to construct a Railway police station at Quilon.³⁴¹

Railway functioned equally as a carrier of goods. It also served as a source of Revenue. Officials were appointed to prevent smuggling and goods

³³⁴ Travancore Administration Report, 1943-1944, p, 117.

³³⁵ PWD, File No. 1404, Bundle No. 445, 1932, KSA.

³³⁶ Travancore Administration Report, 1928-29, p. 162.

³³⁷ A. Sreedhara Menon, *Kerala District Gazeteers, Trivandrum, Op. Cit.*

³³⁸ PWD, File No. 1811, Bundle No. 427, 1930, KSA.

³³⁹ PWD, File No. 942, Bundle No. 500, 1938, KSA.

³⁴⁰ PWD, File No. 736, Bundle No. 456, 1933, KSA.

³⁴¹ PWD, File No. 1026, Bundle No. 385, 1927, KSA.

were listed and duties imposed. The dutiable articles include.³⁴² (i) copra (ii) coconuts (iii) Dessicated coconuts(iv) coir (v) cables, tarred and untarred (vi) coir fibre (vii) cocanut husk, green or soaked (viii) punnac (ix) arecanuts with and without husk (x) jaggery (xi) palmyra fibre, raw (xii) Laurel oil (xiii) Lemon grass oil (xiv) Hides, tanned and untanned country buffalo (xv) elkskin (xvi) goat skin (xvii) sheep skin (xviii). deer skin (xix) squirrel skin (xx) ginger dry (xxi) Tamarind (xxii) Turmeric (xxiii) pepper (xxiv) Fuel (xxv) Firewood (xxvi) Characoal (xxvii) Tea (xxviii) mango and jackwood planks.³⁴³

Alleppey, Quilon, Trivandrum and Colachel, were important ports of Travancore. Railway was not directly connected with these ports. However, railway passes near to the ports of Quilon and Trivandrum, benefiting trade circles.³⁴⁴

South Indian Railway proposed to open an out agency at Nagercoil, situated at a distance of 49 miles from Tinnevelly junction. The railway passengers were now free to travel in any of the buses of Nagercoil - Tinnevelly services. The main service providers were the pioneer motor service, Nagercoil, who owned eight buses and the reliance motor union ltd, Nagercoil who owns twenty three buses.³⁴⁵

The railway plays a vital part in the economic development of the District. It connects Trivandrum City directly with Cochin Harbour and facilitates the flow of trade. The Trivandrum - Shencottah (Metre Gauge) railway line in the Madurai Division of the Southern Railway that runs from Trivandrum City to the border of the Madras State over a distance of 99 miles

³⁴² PWD, File No. 1299, Bundle No. 502, 1936, KSA.

³⁴³ PWD, File No. 736, Bundle No. 456, 1933, KSA.

³⁴⁴ Development, File No. 3509, Bundle No. 291, 1942, KSA.

³⁴⁵ PWD, File No. 954, Bundle No. 480, 1935, KSA.

links it with Madras State beyond the Ghats. This is in the Mayyanad-Trivandrum Central Section of the Madurai Division of the Southern Railway.³⁴⁶

There was survey conducted for a light metre guage line of railway connecting Munnar in the high range with the Cochin state Railway via Anamalais district³⁴⁷. It was stated that in 1949 the Travancore Government was undertaking the survey for a railway line (1) from Quilon to Ernakulam with branches from the two stations thereon, Mavelikkara and Ettumanoor, respectively (2) to Cochin via Haripad, Ambalapuzha, Alleppey and Arukutty, and (3) to Mundakayam via Kanjirapalli. A statement, which has been prepared for information of the members of the Sri Mulam Assembly indicates that this main line and its two branches will be respectively 96, 62 and 32 miles in length and further shows that Government has in contemplation two other lines, (4) one of 17 miles from Thripunithura to Thodupuzha via Kothamangalam and some suitable point in Periyar Valley, where it to touch the proposed new cart road to Munnar, and (5) the other, 46 miles in length, from Trivandrum to Nagercoil via Mulakamudu, Colachel and Rajakamangalam. As a preliminary to the above programme the Quilon-Trivandrum line was to be extended 2. 5 miles to Tambanur, in the centre of Trivandrum town.³⁴⁸

Jurisdiction over railway lands in Travancore was going back to the Travancore Government with effect from May 2 1940 by the Crown Representative.³⁴⁹ The State authorities took charge and the Travancore police will hereafter be on duty on railway lands in Travancore, including stations and trains. It is understood that the Travancore Government had

³⁴⁶ A. Sreedhara Menon, *Kerala District Gazeteers, Trivandrum, Op. Cit.*

³⁴⁷ PWD, File No. 1866, Bundle No. 505, 1936, KSA.

³⁴⁸ The Times of India December 23, 1949, p. 10.

³⁴⁹ The Times of India, May 2, 1940, p. 15.

strongly pressed for the change of jurisdiction, as in their view, the absence of State jurisdiction over railway lands situated in State territory had resulted in considerable administrative inconvenience, especially in dealing with illegal activities. It is stated that control by State authorities of such activities carried on sometimes by persons from within railway premises has been difficult and involved delays. It is expected that these delays will be eliminated as the result of the present change of jurisdiction.³⁵⁰

Monorail

The monorail ran from Munnar to other top stations along the Kundale Valley Cart road. The monorail had a simple truck platform. It had a big wheel running on the road and a small wheel running on a single rail. In the beginning such trucks were pulled by bullocks. Passenger carriages were also fitted to this platform. They had chairs for the passengers and canvas covering for shade. The monorail was used to transport hill produces from top to down stations. On their return journeys they carried essential articles to the top. The average speed of the monorail was between four and six miles per hour.

Every day, tea was taken from the factories of Munnar by bullocks. They brought the cargo to the monorail top station. Then the cargo was taken to the ghat road at the bottom by the rope way. There was a godown called Suppan Chetty at the foot hill where the tea was stored. From there bullock carts carried them to Ammanaikannoor railway station. From there trains carried them to Tuticorn for shipment.³⁵¹

Kundale Valley Light Railway

The light rail replaced the monorail in 1908. The new system was called the Kundale light Railway. It was also called KDHP and Company

³⁵⁰ *Ibid.*

³⁵¹ Sulochana Nalapat, *Op. Cit.*, p. 76.

Stream Train. Another link was added in the indigenous transport chain. The railway was eventually opened for traffic in 1909 and even had first and second class accommodation.³⁵² The establishment of the new system took a year and a half for completion. A map current in 1919 showed only two railway lines in Kerala. One was the Shencotta to Quilon line and the second Kannan Devan railway. This train was mainly used to move boxes of tea from Mattupetty to Munnar. Until 1924, the railway station at Munnar was also used as storages for tea and rice. In the flood of 1924, when a big land slide blocking a road burst, the water gushed into Munnar, flooded the town, damaged the road and destroyed the rail track and the whole railway was rendered useless. In the history of Munnar, top station was completely destroyed by the cyclone.

Excise commissioner completed the arrangements sanctioned by Government for the collection of customs revenue at top station Kundale valley rope services.³⁵³ Moreover, in 1900, the first ropeway planned by Davidson and constructed by Gideon and William Kemlo was opened. In the meantime, the Kotagudi - Bodi road was laid and tea was transported in bullock carts to Kodaikanal Road Station and from there by rail to Tuticorin.

Ropeway

Because of the devastating flood transport in 1924, Munnar were skint, so in 1925, the initial stage of the rope way construction was started. The construction was planned in phases. The first stage was from the top station to Chetturrai estate. The second from Sothuparai to Mattupetty, and the last Mattupetty to Munnar. Excise commissioner completed the arrangements sanctioned by Government for the collection of customs

³⁵² S. Muthiah, *A Planting Century: The First Hundred Years of the United Planters' Association of Southern India 1893 - 1993*, Madras, 1993, p. 68.

³⁵³ Development, File No. 1811, Bundle No. 59, 1930, KSA.

revenue at top station Kundale valley rope services³⁵⁴. Moreover, in 1900, the first ropeway planned by Davidson and constructed by Gideon and William Kemlo was opened. In the meantime, the Kotagudi-Bodi road was laid and tea was transported in bullock carts to Kodaikanal Road Station and from there by rail to Tuticorin.

The power used for the ropeway came from Pallivasal power house. The 14.5 mile ropeway with hangers carrying 400 lb loads, could, at full capacity carry 25 tons a day. The ropeway which cost a little over 760000 was opened on December 3, 1926. In 1930, the old top station- Kotagudi ropeway was replaced by a modern one and both ropeways served the High range well till modern roads thrust their way through the hills and motor transport made the slow ropeways outmodeled.³⁵⁵

Air Transport

Aeroplanes being the fastest means of conveyance, the construction of a landing ground for aeroplanes at Trivandrum was begun and completed during 1935. Air transport was first introduced into Trivandrum with the inauguration of the Bombay -Trivandrum airmail service on October 29, 1935. It was run by the Tata Sons Limited in Cooperation with the Travancore Government.³⁵⁶

By the inauguration of the air service between Trivandrum and Bombay, while it took close on 54 hours by rail to reach Travancore, the journey by aeroplane took only about eight hours.³⁵⁷ This was a landmark in the trade history of Travancore. Travancore government had appointed Kanji

³⁵⁴ *Ibid.*

³⁵⁵ S. Muthiah, *Op. Cit.*, p. 71.

³⁵⁶ A Sreedhara Menon, *Kerala District Gazetteers, Trivandrum, Op. Cit.*, p. 470.

³⁵⁷ The Times of India, November 5, 1935, p. 4.

Dwarkadas³⁵⁸, a trade agent in British India. This was the right step towards the easy exchange of commodities between Travancore and other parts of the country. The service, in conjunction with the Karachi - Madras service of those days provided connection with the then Imperial Airways Service. The Indian Air Lines Corporation later operated two regular services connecting Trivandrum with other parts of the country.

The air service, which was a seasonal one, was not operated during the monsoon due to the lack of ground clearance and the lack of clear vision during that season. When the nature of the terrain along the route or climatic conditions were suitable air flights were operated with the help of radio communication and radio direction finders or radio beacons of approved type.³⁵⁹ At such Aerodromes there were installed suitable radio telephone apparatus were installed for communication between the Aerodrome control and aircraft operating on or in the vicinity of aerodrome. Wind direction indicators were also installed. A metrological office was situated at the airport to give spot weather and route forecast to aviators desiring such information. A separate fire fighting unit is located at the airport to deal with aircraft accidents. An ambulance was always kept in readiness. The Aerodrome officer of the civil aviation department, Government of India, was the person in charge of the Aerodrome.³⁶⁰

The Aerodrome at Trivandrum is situated at Shankumugham within the city limits adjoining the beach. There were three concrete runways making it possible for aircraft to land and take off in six different directions. The civil aviation department is considering the possibility of extension of one of these runways for future jet operations. Proper drainage was provided to ensure

³⁵⁸ *Ibid.*

³⁵⁹ PWD, File No. 1414, Bundle No. 654, 1944, KSA.

³⁶⁰ A. Sreedhara Menon, *Kerala State Gazetteers, Trivandrum, Op. Cit.*

round the year operations. The airfield is also provided with proper barbed wire fencing. The hangar attached to the aerodrome was a steel structure 69 x 60 with asbestos cement sheet roofing and walls were constructed on the northern edge of the landing ground. Fire extinguishers, five buckets and first aid kit with necessary tools were kept in readiness inside the hangar.³⁶¹ Unused portions of the landing ground were marked by red flags. In this airport there were three cement concrete runways permitting landing and takeoffs in six different directions. The Civil Aviation Department considered the possibility of extension of one of these runways for future jet operations. Proper drainage was provided to ensure round the year operations.

Twenty-six aeroplanes both chartered and mail planes landed and took off from the Trivandrum aerodrome during the flying season between October 1935 and April 1936. During the flying season between October 1936 and April 1937, thirty-four planes landed and took off from the aerodrome. During the flying season of 1937-38, besides the mail planes fifteen special planes also landed and took off flight from the aerodrome. During the 1937-38 seasons, the service performed fifty flights covering a distance of 40300 miles and fifty-two passengers.³⁶² Night air mail service between Madras, Bombay, Calcutta, Delhi and Nagpur.³⁶³

The Maharaja presented the fighter planes Travancore, costing nearly one and half lakh of rupees to the Royal Air Force of the Government of India during the Second World War.³⁶⁴ It was necessary for Travancore to provide themselves with passports when they proposed to travel outside India. They had to apply to the Resident for the Madras state for the grant of such

³⁶¹ The Travancore Directory for 1939, Part II, Trivandrum, 1938, p. 106.

³⁶² *Ibid.*

³⁶³ PWD, File No. 337, Bundle No. 757, 1949, KSA.

³⁶⁴ Travancore Administration Report, 1940- 41, p. 10.

passport. ³⁶⁵ Such applications were referred by him to the Travancore Government, in regard to the antecedents, character and financial condition of the applicants. When the Travancoreans were stranded in foreign places, Travancore government had to bear the repatriation charges. ³⁶⁶

In order to organize air services on regular basis an aerodrome was constructed on priority basis. In February 1944 the Travancore Government approved the proposal that as part of the reorganization of air service an aerodrome capable of accommodating high powered and heavy aircraft, be constructed at nearby Kazhakuttam where a large extend of land was available to Government without acquiring any buildings or cultivated land. It could service all the purposes of a modern aerodrome. However, this proposal was not pursued.

In April 1945, a sum of three lakh rupees was provided in the budget for the construction of an aerodrome at Shankumugham beach in Trivandrum as part of post war reconstruction plans and it was decided that the work would be completed on priority basis. At the same time negotiations were conducted with Tata Sons for organizing air service on regular basis. In May 1945, the Government of India agreed to take over the Cochin -Trivandrum air route. Madras - Banglore - Cochin -Trivandrum air service by Messers Air India limited has been sanctioned. There levied landing and housing fee but government at Trivandrum for Air India. They requested to get exemption from the fee but government rejected it. ³⁶⁷ With this, the responsibility of scrutinizing the plans and estimate for the new aerodrome was much on the Government of India. The construction of the aerodrome was completed in co operation with civil aviation department of the Government of India. A

³⁶⁵ The Travancore Directory for 1942, Part I, Trivandrum, 1941, p. 432.

³⁶⁶ The Travancore Directory for 1946 Part I, Trivandrum, 1945, p. 336.

³⁶⁷ PWD, File No. 2116, Bundle No. 722, 1947, KSA.

scheme for the conversion of the Trivandrum aerodrome into a fully equipped airport with modern facilities for all kinds of planes and heavy aircraft to land and take off with ease was sanctioned. This work, started during the year 1946 shows that the Travancore government was very much pro active to the steps taken for modernizing the facilities.

The eight buildings noted in the survey report, were an obstruction to the landing of planes. Government took immediate steps for disposing it.³⁶⁸ Government sanctioned thirteen thousand and one hundred rupees for the annual maintenance of the Aerodrome and attached building for this purpose from 27th September 1947 onwards.³⁶⁹

In order to create and encourage air mindedness among the younger generation a flying club at Trivandrum was established on the same lines as those that were functioning in Madras, Delhi, Bombay etc. The Flying Club was inaugurated at Trivandrum on the 10th October 1946 and thirty seven members joined the club.³⁷⁰ There was agreement signed between Travancore - Cochin government and Tata Air lines in 1946. By this, they would operate Bombay - Madras - Bangalore - Cochin - Trivandrum service thrice in a week and after they will provide this service in a daily basis.³⁷¹

It was subsidized by central and state governments. Travancore Aircraft (VT-AYK) was handed over to Messers Air India Ltd at Madras on 5th March 1947.³⁷² After this transfer of aircraft, it provided its service from Madras as operated by Messers Air India Ltd.

³⁶⁸ PWD, File No. 1711, Bundle No. 719, 1947, KSA.

³⁶⁹ PWD, File No. 2561, Bundle No. 726, 1948, KSA.

³⁷⁰ PWD, File No. 1015, Bundle No. 847, 1949, KSA.

³⁷¹ Kerala Kaumudi, 1946, May 17, p. 3.

³⁷² PWD, File No. 1649, Bundle No. 794, 1949, KSA.

System of Transport is the most important motivating force in a country's path towards progress. The transport system in Travancore grew up along with the historical development of the state. From the establishment of the Public Works Department in 1860 water and road transport entered a new stage of development. Well constructed roads connected every nook and corner of the state and made them suitable for vehicle transport. The examples are Kottayam - Kumili road, M. C. road, M. S. road, etc. Water transport system had great scope for development in Travancore because of the presence of many lakes, rivers and navigable canals. Water transport in Travancore progressed from country boats to steam boats. A. V. M. Canal, Varkala Barrier, T. S. Canal all are illustrations of this progress. The ports of Travancore provided scope for international trade. The railways, started in the beginning of the 20th century also contributed much to the far reaching changes that occurred in this state, though there was the self interest of the British colonial Government behind it. The introduction of Air transport had only lesser influence on the life of the people, but it highlighted the state's progress. All these systems of transport unitedly could work together in Travancore under the far sighted administration of the State Government. In fact the development of transport systems in Travancore became the motivating power of the state.

CHAPTER-III

INTRODUCTION OF MODERN COMMUNICATION SYSTEM AND IT'S EXPANSION

The need to communicate with others is one of the natural impulses of human beings. For speedy and effective communication with others man had endeavoured to find new modes of communication. Even in the dawn of human history, it can be found that human beings had been engaged in innovative means to evolve methods to communicate with people living in distant places. In the history of Travancore the role of communication in the development of the state is extremely important. In the course of the administration of India, the British colonial Government had established new methods of communication. They were interested in introducing such reforms in Travancore also. Travancore was a state, which had its own system of communication such as the Anchal service. It also had the British Postal service. The invention of telegraph could revolutionise the history of the world. It could also add a new chapter of communication in Travancore. Though the telephone arrived only in the 20th century, this new system could achieve an astonishing development here. With the advent of the Radio all modern systems of communication became a part of the lives of people this chapter outlines the growth of all these new systems of communication in Travancore.

Anchal Service

As a part of the colonial intervention in the erstwhile Princely State of Travancore, the British colonial masters tried to modernise the existing system of administration. One such attempt was the reforming of the postal

service. *Anchal* or *Unjel*¹ was the Indigenous postal service existed in Travancore. The term *Anchal* was derived from the Latin word ‘Angelus’ which means messenger. While we trace the history of the *Anchal* postal system, we find that its development was slow but steady, and to some extent it was the need of the age. Travancore was one of the few states, which had its own postal service. The *Anchal* department was one of the oldest departments in the state, even before the introduction of the penny postage in England.² *Anchal* history can be mainly divided into two stages. The early stage started from the beginning of the 19th century and it ended in the 1860’s and the later one commenced after 1860’s. The former stage was exclusively confined to the service of the government while in the later one, i. e. after 1860’s; the department was kept open for the public. Though it was started as mere mail carrier form, later the department developed much and had its roots all over Travancore. The *Anchal* service played a pivotal role in the life of travancoreans and had its lasting impacts in all walks of life.

Regarding its importance, Adam Smith, the prominent economist, opined that “the postal service is the only mercantile project which has been successfully managed by every sort of Government.”³ *Anchal* service was an indigenous postal department of Travancore, as stated earlier. Even during the reign of Martanda Varma, *Anchal* system was existed in Travancore in a

¹ The term ANCHAL is derived from the urdu word UNGEL which means message, narrative or story. Vide, N. S. Mooss, *The Travancore Anchal*, Kottayam, 1973, p. 40.

² The Penny post is one of the several postal systems in which normal letters could be send for one penny. It started in 1840 during the Victorian Age in England. In 1856 it became compulsory to pre- pay postage in Britian. It was stated that the fee being one D (one penny) for letters or Two D (two pennies) for, if the letter was collected from the writer and delivered. Rowland Hill was believed to be the father of the penny postal service. vide, Rowland Hill, *The Life of Sir Rowland Hill and The History of Penny Postage*, Vol. I, London, 1880.

³ Ullor S Parameswara Aiyer, *Progress of Travancore Under H. H. Sreemoolam Tirunal*, Trivandrum, 1998, p. 503.

rudimentary form⁴. The extension of the kingdom called for an efficient postal service, a *variola* dated march 1755 A. D provides detailed information regarding the distance between the stage stations and the time taken for despatch. ⁵ The *Chellamvaka* records also contain reference to the transmission of letters by *Anchal* during the year 1760-61. ⁶ It was reorganised in a systematic manner at the time of Dharma Raja (1758-1798), the successor of Martanda Varma. During his reign, the *Anchal* service was improved and established on better principles, ⁷ as stated earlier. There were two Anchal divisions in Travancore state in 1790, one extending from Thovala to Varkala, and other from Quilon to Paravur. Each of these two divisions were under the administrative control of *Melvicharippu* or Superintendent. ⁸ In addition to these two divisions, the Anchal service had connected the main stations of the state in the interior parts with the seat of the Government.

The Main functions of the department included activities such as (a) despatching vegetables from certain nearby places to the palace of the colonial administrators, (b) sending flowers to the main temples in the capital, (c) communication of official messages and conveying instructions of the court etc. In short, it functioned as an important message between the ruler and the ministerial officers of the state. ⁹

In Travancore before the introduction of paper for correspondence, there were two types of cadjan letters in vogue. In those days letters or

⁴ A. P Ibrahim Kunju, *Rise of Travancore: A study of the life and times of Martanda varma*, Trivandrum, 1976, p. 110.

⁵ *Ibid.*

⁶ T. K. Velu Pillai, *The Travancore State Manual Vol. III*, Trivandrum, 1999, p. 280.

⁷ P. Shungoonny Menon, *A History of Travancore from the Earliest Times*, Madras, 1878, p. 209.

⁸ A. Sreedhara Menon, *Kerala District Gazetteers Quilon*, Trivandrum, 1962, p. 421.

⁹ T. K. Velu Pillai, *Op. Cit.*

messages were written on pieces of *Cadjan* and covered in covers of china paper or shenkotta paper.¹⁰ The address was written on the covering. There were also letters written on long pieces of cadjan rolled from one end with the address written as well exposed Anchal office, and the rolls to a particular station were strung together. These garlands shaped strings were thrown to a gunny bag and the sealed bags were handed over to the Anchal runner who ran, carrying it to the next Anchal office.¹¹

In 1814 the government of Travancore issued a proclamation directing all judicial institutions to send all communications to petitioners plaintiffs and defendants by letters through the Anchal service. In 1818 another proclamation was issued granting permission to land owners to send written complaints to the centre of *Huzur Cutchery* through free service of the Anchal department.¹² In 1848, Anchal the department was thrown open to Government servants and petitions from members of the public were carried free.¹³

In 1860-61 private covers posted were allowed at the rate of one *Chackram* per cover without considering its weight and the distance.¹⁴ Though the department was started in a profitless service sector, in due course the department became a quasi-commercial one and a source of revenue to the government. All the *Anchal* offices issue money orders while Insurance work and savings Bank business is run through selected offices.

¹⁰ V. Nagam Aiya, *The Travancore State Manual Vol. III*, Trivandrum, 1996, p. 210.

¹¹ In the olden days, the anchal runner used to take difficult jungle paths and countryside shortcuts to run to the post offices with the letters. They carried the bell to give signal to people to give way. Even the railway gates were kept open for the anchal runners.

¹² Nagam Aiya, *Op. Cit.*, p. 210.

¹³ Travancore Administration Report, 1938-39, p. 214.

¹⁴ T. K. Velu Pillai, *Op. Cit.*, p. 490.

The number of *Unjell(Anchal)* or Native post, at the end of 1864-65, was 54 and the average of the distances between them was almost 500 miles covering the entire state. The number of private letters carried by the *Unjell* establishment was rapidly increasing, and therefore attention was invited to the following statement.¹⁵

Table 3. 1

Table of year and number of private letters carried

Year	Number of private letters carried
1861-62	57000
1862-63	64000
1863-64	74000
1864-65	82000
1865-66	1, 01, 000
1866-67	1, 24, 000

Source: Travancore Administration Report from 1861-62 to 1866-67.

From the table it is clear that the private correspondence of the country as far as it was conveyed by the *Unjell*, had in the last five years more than doubled. It shows the popularity of the Anchal postal system in Travancore. The bulk of letters carried by the *Unjell*, however, consisted of official correspondence, records, accounts etc. For example, during the year 1866-67, when the grand murajapom ceremony took place, it necessitated a great deal of correspondence between the subordinate officials.¹⁶

¹⁵ Travancore Administration Report, 1866-67, p. 66.

¹⁶ According to the advice of the learned Brahmins to expiate the sins incurred by war and conquest, the maharaja Martanda Varma, instituted the religious ceremonies of *Bhadradeepam* and *Murajapam* in Sree padmanabha Swami temple at Trivandrum. The first *Murajapam* was celebrated in 926 M. E (1751 A D) and it cost two lakhs of rupees. The *Murajapam* festival celebrated every sixth year for forty days was attended by the whole Brahmin community who were entertained at an exorbitant cost. Vide, N. K. Bhaskaran, 'The Malayali Memorial', *Journal of Kerala studies*, Vol. III, March-December, 1981, p. 227.

In Travancore, express mail service was introduced in 1861. It was a system of carrying express mails at the rate of one *anam* per mile.¹⁷ It seems that there was no express service during the night for want of safety. However in later period, a night service was introduced for carrying express mail by special messengers.¹⁸ Moreover, the distinction between Letter and *Bhanghy* mails was for the first time introduced during this year. The distinction was not being strictly observed owing to a large number of heavy official packages delivered at the central office. Normally the letter mails were very often overloaded, which somewhat affected the speed of the mail on the northern road¹⁹. It was employed through a carrier (in his shoulder) using a sort of bamboo pole or yoke from one place to another.

The Travancore *Anchal* Department permitted the public to post their letters in 1036 M. E. (1860-61) at *Anchal* Offices. A charge of one Chackram was imposed for this purpose irrespective of weight and distance, as stated earlier. The letters handed over to the *Anchal* Offices were entered in a register, and separate receipts were issued. In the initial stage, as the volume of letters was very limited, the need for letterboxes did not arise. As the volume of letters increased, the need for letterboxes might have been felt. Thus, pillar type letterboxes were first erected on the streets at important places for the convenience of the public in 1888-89. Letterboxes were placed in public places and other central positions and were intended for the reception of unregistered articles of the letter mail. These were cleared at intervals and, if, outside the *Anchal* office, *Anchal* men or other subordinates were deployed to clear the contents. In the case of letterboxes placed at the Railway stations, the *Anchal* men or runners of the *Anchal* offices to which the boxes were attached handed over the contents to railway sorters. The

¹⁷ V. Nagam Aiya, *Op. Cit.*, p. 257.

¹⁸ N. S. Mooss, *Op. Cit.*, p. 79.

¹⁹ Travancore Administration Report, 1882-83, p. 89.

hours at which, and in the case of letterboxes placed in rural localities, the days on, which the letter boxes were cleared, were marked on them, and the boxes were kept locked²⁰. Different types of letterboxes were erected of which the pillar type was the most commonly seen on the streets. Another type was also common, which had more or less a helmet type of canopy. These were of light construction and rather small and found tied to a pillar or a window in the veranda of public buildings for the convenience of the public. Different models of pillar type letterboxes were found such as round and hexagonal. ‘Travancore *Anchal*’ was embossed on pillar-boxes in English and some boxes were bilingually marked both in English and Malayalam. The state emblem ‘Conch shell’ was embossed on all post boxes.²¹

An officer of the *Anchal* Department forwarded articles of the letter and parcel mails on *Anchal* Service through *Anchal* free of charge, it superscribed “On *Anchal* Service” or “T. A. S” and duly franked. Such Articles were subject to the ordinary rules governing the transmission of each class of articles²². Unlike the red painted Post Office letterboxes of today, the *Anchal* post boxes were all painted deep green to enable the public to distinguish them easily. These pillar type post boxes are still used by the Indian Postal Department in some parts of the state of Kerala after painting them Red. There were also instances of some of the pillar boxes were removed for want of public use. For example, the pillar-box placed at Ramapuram (Palai in Kottayam district) in 1891 had to be removed as it was found to be little availed of by the public.²³

²⁰ The Travancore Anchal Manual Vol. III, Trivandrum, 1937, p. 5.

²¹ Mohanachandran Nair, ‘Travancore Anchal Boxes’, *Ananthapuri stamp bulletin*, Vol. I, June 2016, Issue IV, p. 3.

²² The Travancore Anchal Manual Vol. III, Trivandrum, 1937, p. 14.

²³ Travancore Administration Report, 1893-94, p. 106.

Stamp

In 1064, M. E. (1888-89) the adhesive postage stamps and post cards were introduced at *Anchal* Offices and public began to use these facilities.²⁴ After the introduction of adhesive postage stamp and cards, the *Anchal* department could extend more modern facilities to the public just like their mail communications were properly prepaid. Entering into register and issuance of receipts were discontinued for ordinary letters and people were allowed to post it in the provided places. In the year 1890 in Travancore sealed envelopes of one *chackram*, three *chackram* and four *chackrams* were introduced for the use of the public. The system of reply cards was introduced in 1891.²⁵

The practice hitherto followed of charging paid articles posted in any post office outside Travancore and transferred from any British post office within Travancore for delivery through the *Anchal* was abolished as a measure of relief to the public.²⁶ To afford additional facilities to the public, the price of letter card was reduced from 1 *chackram* to $\frac{3}{4}$ *chackram*.²⁷ The postage of parcels was in the interests of the public reduced from 4 to 3 *chackram* for the first 20 *tolas*²⁸ and 2 *chackrams* for every extra 20 *tolas* or fractions thereof.²⁹ Twelve cash embossed envelopes were introduced during the year, but subsequently, the twelve cash rate of postage was abolished, and the postage on letters up to one *tola* was fixed at one *chackram*.³⁰ Half

²⁴ Travancore Administration Report, 1888-89, p. 72

²⁵ T. K. Velu Pillai, *Op. Cit.*, p. 260.

²⁶ Travancore Administration Report, 1893-94, p. 108.

²⁷ Travancore Administration Report, 1903-1904, p. 31.

²⁸ The primary standard of weight is the Tola equivalent to 180 grains Troy or one British Indian rupee. Vide, The Travancore Almanac Directory for 1922, Trivandrum, 1921, p. 653.

²⁹ Travancore Administration Report, 1904-05, p. 32.

³⁰ Travancore Administration Report, 1911-12, p. 48.

chackram-embossed covers were introduced during the year and the issue of four cash service stamps was sanctioned in the same year.³¹

In commemoration of the Investiture of Sri Chithira Thirunal, new Anchal stamps of pictorial designs with different values of chs. 3 *kasu* 10, and *kasu* 6 respectively, were issued for sale for 3 months from the 20th Tulam 1107.³² A new set of Anchal stamps called “Investiture Commemoration Stamps 1107” of the denominations of 6 *kasu*, 10 *kasu* and 3 *chackrams*. The stamps were of pictorial design and bore pictures like the following. Six *kasu* stamps. (a) A picture of the front view of Sri Padmanabha swami temple at Trivandrum-green colour inset in black. (b) Ten cash stamps having the picture of the state chariot drawn by six horses in blue colour inset in black and (c) Three *chackrams* stamps, the bust of the ruler purple coloured inset in black.

During the year, the standardisation of various printed forms in use in the department was effected. This secured uniformity of forms and minimised wastage³³. Arrangements were there during the year for sending stamps and cards through delivery peons to the doors of likely Purchasers.³⁴

In the year 1939, Ten denominations of ordinary stamps were in use. There was a conch in each stamp, and the value was given in English and Malayalam. (I) 6 *kasu* (II) 8 *kasu* (III) 12 *kasu* (IV) 1 *chackram* (V) 1. 5 *chackram* (VI) 2 *chackrams*, (VII) 3 *chackrams* (VIII) 4 *chackrams* (IX) 7 *chackrams* and (X) 14 *chackrams*.³⁵

³¹ Travancore Administration Report, 1914-15, p. 53.

³² Travancore Administration Report, 1931-32, p. 243.

³³ Travancore Administration Report, 1935-36, p. 244.

³⁴ Travancore Administration Report, 1933-34, p. 236.

³⁵ The Travancore Directory for 1939 Part II, Trivandrum, 1938, p. 322.

Four stamps were issued on 29-3-1937 by Travancore Government to commemorate the Temple Entry Proclamation of 1937.³⁶ They were printed in four different colours. The stamp had pictures of famous Travancore Hindu shrines, which attracted crowds of pilgrims from all over India. The denominations of the stamps were printed in white, in Malayalam and English. The left-hand portion had a picture of His Highness the Maharaja in his robes of state, while another portion was reserved for a picture depicting the importance of the proclamation. The conch, the special symbol of Travancore was also found on the stamps and occupied a prominent place.

8 *kasu* cards, 8 *kasu* stamps and one chackram covers were newly introduced in 1943. The eight cash cards were the existing design with the words ‘ plus two *kasu*’ printed below. The printing was in geranium colour. The stamps were in the existing six cash design printed in royal red with ‘eight cash’ over printed in black in the sanserif type. The covers were in the existing design with the word ‘plus four cash’ printed below. The printing was in magenta colour. Even though there were heavy rise in the price of paper and other printing materials, Travancore *Anchal* postal rates were the cheapest in the world as compared to British Indian and Cochin postal rates. For example, the rate for single card was six *kasu*, for a letter, not exceeding one *tola* was twelve cash. The value of a cover was twelve *kasu*, and that of a card was six *kasu*. In British India, the corresponding rates were one and a half *annas* and pies and in Cochin six pies and four pies.³⁷

The collection of used *Anchal* stamps both service and ordinary and their sale to the public (philatelists) were introduced in the year 1943 and 1,

³⁶ Mohanachandran Nair, ‘Temple Entry Proclamation’ *Ananthapuri stamp bulletin*, Vol. I, Issue XII, February 2017, p. 20.

³⁷ Development, File. No. 3161, Bundle No. 312, 1943, KSA.

05, 310 washed stamps were accordingly sold in public auction for Rs. 201 and the amount was added to the revenue department.³⁸

Hundi Service

The introduction of '*Hundi*' or money order system was introduced in Travancore in the year (1077 M. E) 1901- 02.³⁹ It was an improved forms of the British Indian system of the money order form with the provision for the payee to communicate with the remitter.⁴⁰ The Hundi is on order granted by the *Anchal* office for the payment of a sum of money through the agency of the *Anchal* office. A remitter is a person who sends money-using hundi. A payee is a person named in a *hundi* to whom the money is to be paid. The amount for which a single *hundi* was issued must not exceed Rs. 500 and no person was allowed to obtain several *hundies* in a single day.⁴¹

The *hundi* comprised inland hundies, foreign hundies, revenue hundies, revenue remittance hundies and value payable *hundies*.⁴² It is shown as 'V. P' for value payable *hundies*, C for foreign *hundies*, R for revenue *hundies*, G for Government Revenue Remittance *Hundies*.⁴³

A system of revenue *hundi* was introduced during the year 1909-10, with a view to affording convenience to the tax payers to remit their taxes without going to the revenue offices as an experimental basis. This proved a success as in the commencing year itself. The government could collect an amount of Rs. 15, 135 from 2740 tax payers.⁴⁴ The system of sending Travancore *Hundies* to the Cochin State for delivery and *vice versa* came into

³⁸ Travancore Administration Report, 1942-1943 p. 168.

³⁹ Travancore Administration Report, 1901-02, p. 26.

⁴⁰ N. S. Mooss, *Op. Cit.*, p. 92.

⁴¹ The Unrepealed Regulation of Travancore I of 1064(1899), Trivandrum, 1934, p. 288.

⁴² Travancore Administration Report, 1935-1936, p. 242.

⁴³ The Travancore Anchal Manual Vol. III, Trivandrum, 1937, p. 72.

⁴⁴ Travancore Administration Report, 1909-10, p. 41.

force with effect from 1912-13. The maximum amount of *hundi* is one *anna*. The statement of accounts of the two states under this system is being done monthly. Each state levies its own rate of commission on the hundies issued by it and the total commission earned by the two states was equally distributed between the two states. For conversion and proper adjustment of accounts, all transaction between the states was conducted through a central *Anchal* office in each state. In the Travancore state, Alwaye was the Central *Anchal* office, and in the Cochin state, Ernakulum *Anchal* office was the central office. Since the Cochin state was dealing in British Indian currency, a fraction of cash conversion was always calculated and adjusted in favour of the Travancore state. For example, if the conversion ended in a fraction of cash one full cash was realised from the party who issued money orders to the Cochin state. On the other hand, if the payment ends in fraction of cash the party had to forego that fraction of a cash. Duplicate statements of hundies paid were being exchanged monthly by the two states for audit purposes, and the monthly accounts were settled in accordance with the statements prepared in the respective account offices of the states.⁴⁵ The statements referred to above were written separately, one for ordinary hundies and other for Value payable hundies.

A *hundi* was currently kept till the close of the calendar month. If the payee had received the hundi within a stipulated period, the hundi would become void and the amount of it would be transferred to a 'void *hundis*' account under debt head deposits and advances not bearing interest. However, if the payee or remitter or the heirs of either of them subsequently applied for payment, the amount of the *hundi* was paid to him or them under the authority of the chief account officer provided that the application was within three years from the date of the issue of the *hundi*. If within that time no such

⁴⁵ The Travancore Directory for 1939, Part II, Trivandrum, 1938, pp. 332-350.

application has been made and if any such application had been made within that time was not pending disposed of the amount of the *hundi* had to be created by the government.⁴⁶

The Government approved the period of custody of *Anchal hundi* cash accounts being reduced from ten to five years during 1933.⁴⁷ Not all *Anchal* offices were *hundi* offices as the upper limit amount of a *hundi* would surpass Rs. 500. The hundies also functioned as state life insurance hundies, pension payment hundies and vehicle tax hundies. The *hundi* system grew in popularity, and the working of the department showed a steady advance from year to year,⁴⁸ the table illustrates as follows.

Table 3. 2
Working of the Hundi service
in Travancore from 1901-02 to 1947-48

Year	Number of Hundis	Total value (in lakhs)
1901-02	33, 212	5, 48, 295
1906-07	91, 142	11, 28, 870
1911-12	1, 58, 226	19, 68, 969
1916-17	2, 51, 148	31, 21, 979
1921-22	2, 99, 772	37, 88, 959
1926-27	341, 304	45, 29. 268
1931-32	44, 3576	39. 86
1936-37	4, 96, 717	37. 65
1941-42	579, 475	53. 13
1947-48	802, 662	1, 19, 59, 534-2-2

Source: Travancore Administration Report from 1901-02 to 1947-48.

Department and Non departmental offices.

Anchal offices were of two types, Departmental *Anchal* office and Non-Departmental office. Departmental *Anchal* office was under the direct

⁴⁶ Development File No, 81, Bundle No. 65, 1934, KSA.

⁴⁷ Development, File No. 168, Bundle No. 107, 1933, KSA.

⁴⁸ Travancore Administration Report, 1902-1903, p. 29.

control of the government. It enjoyed the privilege of direct transactions with the palace and functioned as a savings bank. If an *Anchal* office was not housed in a government building, the government hired private building on rent.

Non-Department

With a view to extend the benefit of the *Anchal* service to localities where it was not feasible to open regular departmental offices, the darbar had resolved to open non-departmental offices, and place them in charge of person to whom a small remuneration was allowed in view of the work they did. Three such offices were opened in 1092M. E (1916-1917).⁴⁹ Non – Departmental *Anchal* offices were either experimental or permanent. They were placed in charge of masters who were not full-time officers and did not belong to pensionable service. They were paid a monthly salary of Rs 10, but were not eligible for any leave with allowances.⁵⁰ There were 181 non-departmental *Anchal* masters in the state in 1944. Regarding the representations received from several non-departmental *Anchal* masters, government-sanctioned Rs. 3 per mensem as dearness allowance at the time of war. The life of non-departmental *Anchal* masters was so miserable as they had to work all days throughout the year during second world war.⁵¹ All *Anchal* offices both Departmental and Non Departmental had transactions of all types of *Anchal* business except delivery, savings Bank and Insurance.⁵²

Village delivery system was introduced in the year 1922.⁵³ The introduction of experimental village *Anchal* offices at certain stations to serve as feeders to the main offices in the districts was a new feature. These offices

⁴⁹ Travancore Administration Report 1916-17, p. 58.

⁵⁰ The Travancore Anchal Manual Vol. I, Trivandrum, 1937, p. 1.

⁵¹ Development, File No. 2086, Bundle No. 325, 1944, KSA.

⁵² The Travancore Directory for 1939 Part II, Trivandrum, 1938, p. 342.

⁵³ Development, File No. 265, Bundle No. 19, 1922, KSA.

had been placed under the charge of village schoolmasters who were granted a small extra allowance for this additional duty.⁵⁴

To protect the pillar-boxes from the attack of wild elephants and from unauthorised interference, it was necessary to house them in suitable masonry structures provided with C. I doors and lock. The laying of the electric cables protected the pillar boxes. It is evident that during 1938-39 one such cable was almost completed between Pallivasal and Neriamangalam.⁵⁵

The opening of 'dead letter' office and the necessary rules based on the British code was passed to take effect from 1893-94. The measure was expected to facilitate and satisfactory disposal of the rejected and unclaimed articles which had long accumulated in the Anchal office.⁵⁶

Table 3. 3
Number of Anchal offices and Letter boxes in Travancore from 1892-93 to 1947-48

Year	Number of Anchal offices	Letter box
1892-93	83	75
1897-98	95	127
1902-03	138	174
1907-08	175	165
1912-13	198	278
1917-18	213	326
1922-23	237	333
1927-28	270	432
1932-33	325	482
1937-38	364	563
1942-43	375	615
1947-48	463	683

Source: Travancore Administration Report from 1892-93 to 1947-48.

⁵⁴ Travancore Administration Report, 1897-98, p. 89.

⁵⁵ PWD, File No. 1133, Bundle No. 547, 1939, KSA.

⁵⁶ Travancore Administration Report, 1893-1894, p. 108.

The above table shows the increased growth of the letterboxes and new Anchal offices opened in different parts of Travancore.

Value Payable Anchal articles

The Value Payable system was introduced about the middle of 1907. In this year 6, 668 articles were received and delivered.⁵⁷ Registered articles transmitted through Anchal service (value payable) could not exceed Rs. 500. Value payable Articles could be posted at any *Anchal* office with a payment. (Both within Travancore and Cochin State). The value payable hundies had to be issued as soon as the amounts were realised by the *Anchal* men and in case of a holiday it had to be despatched in the very next day⁵⁸. The system of accepting unregistered value payable articles for transmission through *Anchal* service was abolished with effect from 1925⁵⁹ and the registration of all value payable articles made compulsory from 1927 onwards.⁶⁰

The mutual arrangements between *Anchal* postal service, and Cochin postal service was started in 1912. The work of the *Anchal* department, which had established adjustments with the *Anchal* department in the neighbouring state of Cochin, was connected to the British postal Department, which had under its charge during 1929, nearly 100 post offices and 32 Telegraph offices.⁶¹

⁵⁷ Travancore Administration Report, 1906-07, p. 26.

⁵⁸ The Travancore Anchal Manual Vol. III, Trivandrum, 1937, p. 26.

⁵⁹ Travancore Administration Report, 1924 -25, p. 65.

⁶⁰ Development, File No. 2103, Bundle No. 65, 1927, KSA.

⁶¹ Travancore Administration Report, 1928-29, p. 164.

Savings Bank

The Savings bank was introduced as an experimental measure, with effect from the 1088 M. E (1912-13)⁶² in the *Anchal* offices at Nagercoil, Trivandrum, Quilon, Kayamkulam, Alleppey and Pathanapuram⁶³ Karukachal.⁶⁴

Savings bank business is done through the state treasuries and important *Anchal* offices. The treasuries held the bulk of the 'security' deposit of savings bank and also recieved 'fixed' deposits on fixed rate of interest. The rate of interest was fixed to 4 percent per annum⁶⁵. Small savings scheme, the sale of National Defence certificates etc were introduced in 19 *Anchal* offices situated in the municipal towns all over the state.⁶⁶ The following table illustrates the growth of number the number of savings bank and a progressive closing balance.

Table 3.4
Working of the Anchal Savings
Bank in Travancore from 1912-13 to 1947-48

Year	Number of offices	Closing Balance
1912-13	6	Not available
1922-23	72	12, 59, 993
1932-33	123	36. 94 lakhs
1942-43	160	2, 19, 168, 125-5-5 lakhs
1947-48	166	4, 29, 46, 027-19-4

Source: Travancore Administration Report from 1912-13 to 1947-48.

⁶² Travancore Administration Report, 1912-13, p. 49.

⁶³ Development, File No. 1411, Bundle No. 28, 1923, KSA.

⁶⁴ Development, File No. 84, Bundle No. 67, 1928, KSA.

⁶⁵ Travancore Administration Report, 1925-26, p. 175.

⁶⁶ Travancore Administration Report, 1944-45, p. 175.

Transit Anchal service

In Travancore, the transit *Anchal* service was started during 1869-70, was mainly passing through *Anchal* runners, boat service, motor bus, and car and by train. The boat transit service, the pioneer in this field, was started during 1869-70 in connection with the *Anchal* department.

The boat transit was also established for carrying tapals and passengers. *Anchal* department in the commencing year itself, it took 11, 656 passengers, and the fare collected was nearly 5, 000 Rupees.⁶⁷ The *Anchal* department sanctioned the subsidiary boat mail service to private enterprises. For example, from Moncompu to Alleppey and between Alleppey and Changanerry⁶⁸ the contract was given to private individuals.

During rainy seasons, *Anchal* men attached to the Aranmula, Haripad and other waterlogged areas adjacent to *Anchal* offices were given an additional allowance of Rs. 2 per mensem.⁶⁹ Therefore, government sanctioned boat allowance for six months. Similarly, The contract for conveyance of mails in motor cars between Nagercoil and Thadikarankonam for a period of three years was sanctioned to the proprietor, pioneer motor company⁷⁰. At the same time, *Anchal* authorities refused to pay the compensation to the contractor for the carriage of *Anchal* mails between Kottarakkara and Kottayam on account of toll charges paid to the municipalities of Thiruvella and Kottayam as these tolls were established after the contract was entered.⁷¹ Moreover, *Anchal* motor service was extended

⁶⁷ Travancore Administration Report, 1869-1870, p. 72.

⁶⁸ Development, File No, 1424, Bundle No. 280, 1942, KSA.

⁶⁹ Development, File No. 1962, Bundle No. 188, 1937, KSA.

⁷⁰ Development, File No. 2235, Bundle No. 120, 1933, KSA.

⁷¹ Development, File No. 1468, Bundle No. 28, 1924, KSA.

between Kottayam and Poonjar in addition to the existing Ettumanoor, Poonjar Anchal motor service.⁷²

The conveyance of *Anchal* mails between Kottayam and Mundakkayam given to the motor Transport and Aerial Rope way company, Kottayam for a period of 3 years from 17th August to 1921 to 16th August 1924. They got the contract another three year from 1924 for a subsidy of 150 per month.⁷³

The State Transport Bus service was inaugurated by the authorities on the 20th February 1938. Regular bus service from Trivandrum commenced from the morning of the 21st February 1938. Soon after, an *Anchal* mail service was also been introduced in conjunction with the passenger service. By this arrangement, *Anchal* mails were carried in the buses to various places on the routes wherever there were no Railway lines. In order to facilitate the carrying of the mails, special enclosures were also constructed in the mail buses.

The transport department was given special privileges to have its own correspondences post free through the *Anchal*. To denote this special privilege, cards and covers were stamped “On State Transport Service” with the help of rubber stamps before posting. The palaces and allied institutions, as also the *Anchal* department were privileged to continue to have their mail communications post free till the integration of the Native states of Travancore and Cochin, which took place on 1st July 1949.⁷⁴

The contract for the conveyance of *Anchal* mails between Kottayam and Mundakkayam was continued with the motor transport and aerial ropeway company for a further period of three years on the monthly subsidy

⁷² Development, File No. 2059, Bundle No. 169, 1936, KSA.

⁷³ PWD, File No. 2250, Bundle No. 58, 1926, KSA.

⁷⁴ N. S. Mooss, *Op. Cit.*, pp. 116-17.

of Rs. 150.⁷⁵ And the contract for carrying *Anchal* by the motor between Mundakayam and kumili was given on a subsidy of Rs. 299 per mensem for three years from 1927-28 onwards.⁷⁶ During this period motor mail service was introduced between Muvattupuzha and Devikulam and therefore the post of the runner at Nelimattam, the place situated between the said taluks, was abolished.⁷⁷

In order to avoid the existing delay in the mail service between Muvattupuzha and Devikulam, an additional *Anchal* carriage service was given to K. N. Sankunny Pillai, managing director of the Kottayam - Alwaye motor union ltd, Kottayam, who was the contractor and agreed to run the additional service free of subsidy.⁷⁸ The contract for conveyance of Anchal mails between Trivandrum and Nagercoil to messers kripon and company for a period Rs. 106 per month to government sanctioned.⁷⁹ Anchal motor service between Pala and Thodupuzha was introduced and the contract was given to the Pala-Thodupuzha motor union ltd, Pala in 1936.⁸⁰ The introduction of an Anchal motor service between Chengannur and Konni was statred in 1936 and the contract was given to the central Travancore motor syndicate Ltd owned by P. E Abraham and P. G. Thomas Pathanamthittafor a monthly subsidy of Rs. 10 on the distinct understanding that the contract will be terminated at any time without previous notice.⁸¹

Kottiyam, Chatanoor, Paravur lies in between Trivandrum and Quilon bus route and hence mails were conveyed through the state transport bus. By this act, the department could save Rs. 18, by the abolishment of two runners

⁷⁵ Development, File No. 1762, Bundle No. 64, 1927, KSA.

⁷⁶ Development, File No. 2341, Bundle No. 66, 1927, KSA.

⁷⁷ PWD, File No. 532, Bundle No. 390, 1928, KSA.

⁷⁸ Development, File No, 1898, Bundle No. 305, 1933, KSA.

⁷⁹ Development, File No. 1957, Bundle No. 188, 1937, KSA.

⁸⁰ Development, File No. 2150, Bundle No. 239, 1936, KSA.

⁸¹ Development, File No. 2982, Bundle No. 177, 1936, KSA.

in the specific place. The quickness of the despatch was another impact for this act.⁸²

T. V. Mathew, Queen Anne motor service, Kothamangalam agreed to carry the mails free of subsidy, between Mamala and Perumpavur. By the introduction of motor mail service, quick transmission of *Anchal* articles became possible in the above mentioned *Anchal* offices. It also accelerated the importance of perumpavur as a business centre.⁸³

The Travancore *Anchal* Department maintained a Railway Mail Service running from Trivandrum to Shencotta on the border. The *Anchal* mail vans connected to the outgoing trains were detached at Shencotta and again connected to the incoming trains when they reach shencotta from Madras. *Anchal* articles posted on this Railway mail service were bearing the inscription “T. R. A. S. /IN” or “T. R. A. S. /OUT”. The abbreviation word “IN” indicates that the marking was applied to incoming mails, and the word “OUT” to outgoing mails.⁸⁴

Though South Indian Railways played a pivotal role in the *Anchal* department by despatching articles from Trivandrum to other destinations via Quilon, Alleppey and Cochin, it took too much of delay. In order to avoid such delay in despatching articles, additional bus service was provided. Therefore, the government sanctioned the introduction of an additional mail service from Quilon to Alleppey by bus and the contract was given to joint motor service, owned by G. Chidambra Iyer. And was ordered that necessary petrol and tyre and other essentials should be allowed in this regard⁸⁵. The

⁸² Development, File No, 2783, Bundle No. 239, 1939, KSA.

⁸³ Development, File No. 2256, 1943, Bundle No. 306, KSA.

⁸⁴ N. S. Moss, *Op. Cit.*, 1973, pp. 56-57.

⁸⁵ Development File No. 1969, Bundle No. 324, 1944, KSA.

following table illustrates different types of transit service existed in Travancore from 1919-20 to 1947-48.

Table 3. 5
Different Types of Anchal Transit service from 1919-20 to 1947-48

Year	Runners	Boat	Motorbus	Railway	total
1919-20	1016 7/8	Not available	125	110. 5	1252 3/8
1929-30	932 5/8	18	329. 5	110. 5	1390 3/8
1939-40	773	18	735	99	1625
1947-48	750. 5	35. 75	998. 25	99	1825. 75

Source: Travancore Administration Report from 1919-20 to 1947-48.

Anchal Insurance

Insurance system was introduced in 1921.⁸⁶ Registered letters, value payable articles and registered parcels might be insured up to the value of Rs. 100 authorised by the *Anchal* superintendent to accept such articles for the insurance, provided that in no case such value exceeded the real value of the contents of the article. Prepayment of all charges on insured articles was compulsory. If an uninsured Article manifestly contained any object of value such as coin, bullion, precious stones, jewellery, currency notes or any portion thereof was found, in the course of transmission, it was either be intercepted and returned to the sender or forwarded to destination and delivered to the addressee subject to the payment of a fee of Rs. One. The payment of this fee was not to impose any liability on Government. A system of accepting Fidelity Bonds of the National Insurance Company, Calcutta.⁸⁷

The numbers of Letters, Cards, Newspaper, Parcels and Packets issued through Anchal department were divided into six heads. (1) Service. It consists of registered letters and unregistered letters and Cards. (2) Private. It

⁸⁶ Travancore Administration Report, 1921-22, p. 80.

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*

comprises registered letters and other registered articles, unregistered articles and *Anchal* cards. (3) Registered Newspapers (4) Parcels (5) Packets and Book posts (6) Value payable articles. The following table shows the multifarious functions or the services of the department throughout the state.

Table 3. 6
Number of Anchal Letters, Cards, Newspapers,
Parcels and Packets Issued in Travancore from 1927-28 to 1940-41

Particulars	1927-28	1929-30	1932-33	1935-36	1938-39	1940-41
1. Service (a) Registered letters and other registered articles	550, 586	5, 84, 848	695, 904	7, 30, 916	8, 53, 211	8, 65, 692
(b) Unregistered letters and cards	2, 906, 423	2, 891, 530	3, 997, 229	41, 40, 440	49, 64, 239	51, 13, 898
2. Private (a) Registered letters and other registered articles	446, 330	547, 337	518, 353	4, 91, 355	6, 13, 442	6, 17, 440
(b) Unregistered letters	7, 631, 696	8, 340, 636	8, 148, 221	86, 54, 466	93, 34, 052	93, 48, 075
(c) Anchal cards Total of Letters, other Registered Articles and Anchal Cards	5, 869, 161	6, 314, 792	5, 641, 188	58, 33, 443	60, 41, 673	65, 56, 603
Total	17, 404, 196	18, 679, 143	19, 000, 895	1, 98, 50, 620	2, 18, 06, 617	2, 25, 01, 706
3. Registered newspapers	1, 917, 459	2, 081, 391	2, 221, 566	14, 99, 944	16, 37, 105	16, 28, 689
4. Parcels	64, 125	60, 991	60, 692	85, 819	1, 57, 253	1, 61, 289
5. Packets and book posts	57, 186	60, 188	67, 698	57, 409	73, 985	77, 035
6. Value payable articles	91, 441	95, 905	30, 515	24, 811	23, 756	18, 427
Grand Total	19, 534, 107	20, 977, 618	21, 381, 366	2, 15, 18, 603	2, 3698, 716	2, 43, 87, 146

Source: The statistics of Travancore from 1927-28 to 1940 -41.

Recruitment

The following measures were introduced for the first time by the department for the selection and recruitment in 1922. They were (1) A departmental examination was introduced for the recruitment of clerks and masters, and the first examination was held in 1922. The *Anchal* test examination was conducted by the board from 1938 onwards on regular basis. From 1940 onwards, the recruitment of volunteers to the *Anchal* department was undertaken by the Public Service Commission on the basis of merit and seniority.⁸⁸

Regarding the question of promotions to the higher grades (Rs. 40 and above) of appointments in the *Anchal* department, graduates and non-graduates with a working knowledge of English were to be promoted in the ratio 2:1.⁸⁹ In case there were no graduates in the lower grades, duly qualified under graduates were also promoted to fill up the vacancies. However, there are certain exemptions. For example, N. J Mathew was exempted from the *Anchal* test and age limit by considering his meritorious past service in the non-department as *Anchal* master at Thazhakara at Mavelikara.⁹⁰ The same exemption was also extended to G. Vasudevan Pillai, P. F. Chack, M. R. Ramakrishna Pillai and P. M Sarada on various grounds.

For the preparation of question papers for the *Anchal* test examination, government sanctioned a remuneration of Rs. 15 for setting a question paper of one hour duration and Rs. 20 for setting a paper of two hours duration and chackram 7 and chackram 10 each respectively for valuing the answer books⁹¹. The *Anchal* department examination was held in abeyance as in the

⁸⁸ Development, File No. 1995, Bundle No. 168, 1936, KSA.

⁸⁹ Development, File No. 1312, Bundle No. 112, 1933, KSA.

⁹⁰ Development, File No. 2118, Bundle No. 101, 1933, KSA.

⁹¹ Development, File No. 3379, Bundle No. 197, 1937, KSA.

previous year, as there were a good number of candidates who had not been absorbed in the department.⁹² After 1940, *Anchal* men and runner volunteers were also regularly recruited by the public service commission it was sanctioned in 1940.⁹³

Upgradation and Degradation

In consideration of the volume of the business the *Anchal* offices were either upgraded or downgraded. New offices were created, and old ones were closed down based on the requirement of the public. For example, Thuravoor was a place of several flourishing private and public institutions, the non-departmental *Anchal* office at Thuravoor was upgraded into departmental one with the savings bank. At the same time, the departmental *Anchal* office at puttanakad was degraded from departmental to non-departmental one as it functioned at a loss to the government.⁹⁴ Since there was no savings bank business in this office, the needs of the public could adequately be met by a non-departmental *Anchal* office.

The same process of upgradation took place in the *Anchal* offices at Thodupuzha, Arakulam, Muhamma, Vilkri, Kumaracoil, Thiruvithamcode, Aranmula, Alleppey etc. and degradation was happened to Kavalam, Pallam, Pattanakkad, East Kallada, Piripancode etc. Similarly, Ettumanur *Anchal* office was elevated to IVth grade *Anchal* office with four other sub-offices namely Kuravallangad, Manjoor, Kidangur and Athirampuzha and a cash balance of rupees 2500 from 2000.⁹⁵

Another feature of *Anchal* service was that individuals, ready to deposit a sum of Rs. 250 were permitted to start new ventures under

⁹² Travancore Administration Report, 1929-30, p. 251.

⁹³ Development, File No. 875, Bundle No. 248, 1940, KSA.

⁹⁴ Development, File No, 1387, Bundle No. 321, 1944, KSA.

⁹⁵ Development, File No. 872, Bundle No. 69, 1927, KSA.

government supervision. If the new venture failed, the government recovered a substantial amount from the deposit. Accordingly, Thomas Mathew, a resident of Melukavumattom was granted to open a non-departmental *Anchal* office as an experimental measure for one year with an *Anchal* master for Rs 14 and an *Anchal* man and runner for Rs. 12 each with a contingent expenditure of chackrams Rs 7 per mensem.⁹⁶ Such an experiment was applied in the case of Fr. Zacharias Punnapadam, Vicar, St. George's church, Thottacad.⁹⁷ But a sum of Rs. 95 was recovered from the guarantee amounts deposited by the promoters of the experimental office towards the loss sustained by the government in working their office.⁹⁸

A floating population of about 3, 000 men consisting of contractors, Labourers, shopkeepers etc felt it necessary to open a new departmental *Anchal* office at Kundale near to Munnar.⁹⁹ While the experiment at Kangazha *Anchal* office failed due to the loss after two years of service.¹⁰⁰ So the office was closed down.

Prohibited Articles.

The Transmission by *Anchal* of the following articles was prohibited. (i) Anything that was contraband or anything on which duty is owing to the government. (ii) Opium, otherwise than on Government accounts, all alkaloids of opium, bhang, ganja, sidhoo or other preparations of hemp (iii) Arms, ammunition or military stores (iv) cigarettes, snuff, beedies, all kinds of produce of the cocoanut tree, all other hides or skins, sugarcane products, pepper and tea.¹⁰¹ If any *Anchal* article manifestly contained obscene

⁹⁶ Development, File No. 3550, Bundle No. 329, 1944, KSA.

⁹⁷ Development, File No. 1956, Bundle No. 132, 1934, KSA.

⁹⁸ Travancore Administration Report, 1935-1936, p. 65.

⁹⁹ Development, File No. 2486, Bundle No. 285, 1942, KSA.

¹⁰⁰ Development, File No. 1255, Bundle No. 63, 1927, KSA.

¹⁰¹ The Travancore *Anchal* Manual Vol. III, Trivandrum, 1937, p. 25.

printings, photographed, or if it was observed that any lettercard or other contained marks or designs of an indecent, obscene, seditious, scurrilous, threatening or grossly offensive nature; such articles had to be forwarded to the office of the *Anchal* superintendent to be destroyed forthwith.

In any case, in which an Anchal Master had good reason to suspect that the contents of any Anchal article were likely to injure the mails or harm the person or any one engaged in the Anchal service, he was directed to detain the suspected articles and to refer the case at once for the attention of the Anchal superintendent. It is also noted that though the mutual arrangement was started between Travancore and Cochin. *Anchal* service, for the time being it was prohibited for the member of Travancore army by the Travancore government especially during the war period to prevent the possible leakage of information. But on the request of the central government that Indian troops who had relatives in these two states did use this service particularly in reply to letters received by this means, Travancore government instructed to make necessary arrangements for letters to or from military personnel found in the state *Anchal* mail being forwarded to Cochin station.¹⁰²

Holidays

The common hours of attendance in the *Anchal* superintendent's office was from 11 am to 5 pm except in the case of subordinate officials. The government set the hours of business of the departmental *Anchal* offices from 7. 30 am to 10. 30 am and also from 12. 30 pm to 5. 30 pm. The business hours of the non-departmental Anchal offices were fixed about local convenience and were conspicuously notified in the Anchal offices.¹⁰³

The Anchal Offices were granted holidays on all sundays, ruler's birthday, Vishnu, ThiruOnam, Maha Navami, Ramzan and Good Friday. The

¹⁰² Development, File No. 3692, Bundle No. 315, 1943, KSA.

¹⁰³ The Travancore Anchal Manual Vol. I, Trivandrum, 1937, p. 5.

only work that was done in these holidays was the receipt and despatch of mails and the delivery of only paid unregistered articles. In working days there was more than one delivery and there was one delivery on holidays.¹⁰⁴

Other services

The *Anchal* offices also functioned as public call stations. Telephone public call offices were opened in the following 10 *Anchal* offices between Trivandrum and Cape Camorin. It was situated in places like Balaramapuram, Neyyattinkara, Kaliakavilai, Kuzhithurai, Mulgummodu, Thuckalai, Villikiri, Suchindram, Kottaram and cape camorin. The working hours of the public call offices were the same as those of the *Anchal* office. In addition to the trunk call fees, there was a levy of two *annas* to be paid for the use of the public call office phone. The total number of *Anchal* offices doing telephone work at the close of the year was 30 in 1943-44 against 29 at the close of the previous year.¹⁰⁵ In later years, twenty-four hours service was guaranteed in all telephone public call offices except Alwaye.

If a subscriber wanted to make a call from a distance, his call would be booked in the public call office, and a messenger would be sent to the party as early as possible. For such calls, a messenger fee of two *annas* was charged. Urgent telephone calls during the closed hours of the office were arranged for, and in this case, a late fee of eight *annas* was charged. There was also the facility for trunk booking and any complaint of delay in putting trunk calls by the operator had to be immediately reported to the telephone Engineer to the Government, Trivandrum.¹⁰⁶

Government had sanctioned the opening of public call office at Kottayam with the assistance of two operators.¹⁰⁷ Telephone facility was

¹⁰⁴ The Travancore Anchal Manual Vol. III, Trivandrum, 1937, p. 4.

¹⁰⁵ Travancore Administration Report, 1943-44, p. 170.

¹⁰⁶ PWD, File No. 1873, Bundle No. 556, 1939, KSA.

¹⁰⁷ Development, File No. 2038, Bundle No. 557, 1939, KSA.

installed in Quilon and Kottayam *Anchal* offices. However the *Anchal* masters were not allowed the free usage of telephone.¹⁰⁸

The *Anchal* service functioned as a stockist and supplier of medicines like quinine, chlorodyne etc. Chlorodyne was a medicine used to treat cholera, Quinine is a medicine used to treat malaria and babesiosis. A sum of Rs. 1299 was collected during the financial year 1899-1900 from the sale of both medicines.¹⁰⁹

The department attended the sale of almanacs, calendars and public service forms. During the year arrangements were made for earlier delivery of mails throughout the state and special arrangements were made for the speeding up of mails from Trivandrum to Cochin.¹¹⁰ In addition to the sale of almanacs and calendars, public service forms, lottery ticket for the war purpose fund and yarn ration book were also undertaken by the department.¹¹¹

Postage Due Markings of Travancore Anchal.

Postage due (*Kuli* in Vernacular Language) in Travancore Anchal was marked on the face of all unregistered postal articles, which were unpaid or not affixed with the adequate stamps. This was not intended to be a postal cancellation marking. The use of this marking was to write the Postage due chargeable on the postal article that passes through the *Anchal* Office.¹¹²

¹⁰⁸ Development, File No. 697, Bundle No. 246, 1940, KSA.

¹⁰⁹ Travancore Administration Report, 1899-1900, p. 65.

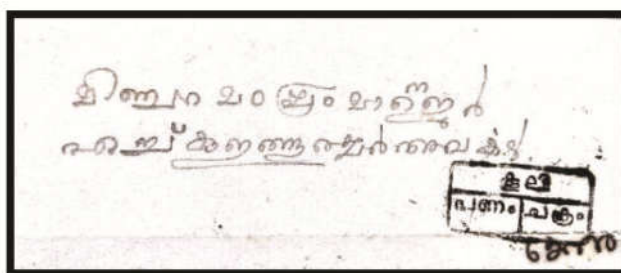
¹¹⁰ Travancore Administration Report, 1940-41, p. 195.

¹¹¹ Travancore Administration Report, 1941-1942, p. 168.

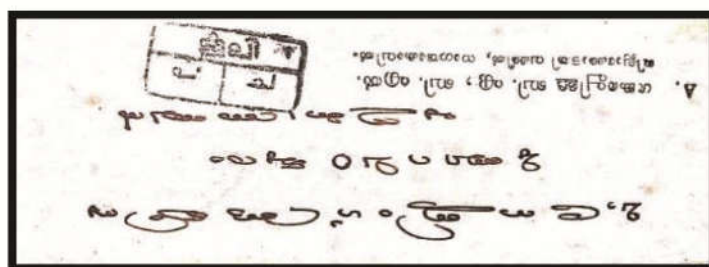
¹¹² Mohanachandran Nair, 'Postage Due Markings of Travancore Anchal', *Ananthapuri stamp bulletin*, Vol. I, April 2016, Issue II, pp, 4-5.

Two sections of *Kuli* or the Postage due stamps are found. One is the Vernacular section, and the other is the English section. Under the Vernacular section, two types of postal markings existed.

Type I: - This was a rectangular type postal marking having three columns. In the top column, the inscription read as *KULI* in vernacular meaning tax or charge. The bottom column was again divided into two boxes. The bottom left box read as *PANAM*, and the bottom right box reads *CHACKRAM* (both the coinage systems prevailed in Travancore)



Type II: - This was similar to Type I, but the inscription in lower boxes varied. Instead of *PANAM* only “PA” (abbreviation of *PANAM*) is inscribed in the bottom left of the box and *CHA* (abbreviation of *CHACKRAM*) in the bottom right box.



Type III: - Under English section, only one type of postal marking is found. This is also rectangular having three boxes. In the upper box reads “POSTAGE DUE” in two lines. In the bottom left box inscribed “CHs”

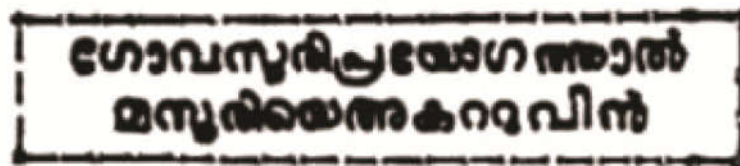
(abbreviation of CHACKRAMS) and “CA” (abbreviation of CASH a coin prevailed in the state equivalent to 1/16 of Chackram) are seen inscribed.



The size of the rectangle often varies in each type. The lower two boxes provided in the postal marking were to write the postage due. The concerned clerk in the *Anchal* office often wrote the amount of postage due either in the left box or the right box and sometimes outside the box.¹¹³

Slogan Postal Markings of Travancore

Slogan postal markings are generally used for official propaganda purposes. Most probably, these slogan markings were first introduced in Travancore in the year 1109(1933-34). There are three types of Travancore slogan postmarks; two of them being in Malayalam, the regional language of the state, and the other one in English.¹¹⁴



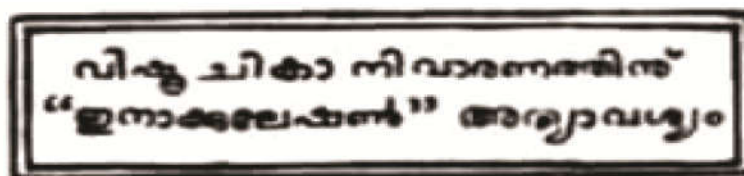
Type 1

¹¹³ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁴ N. S. Mooss, *Op. Cit.*, p. 186.

Type I. This was a vernacular type of slogan postmark employed in Travancore in connection with the vaccination campaign introduced to carry on an intensive drive against small pox in 1109(1933-34). It contains the words “GOVASURI-PRAYOGATTAL/MASURIYE AKATTUVIN” in two lines within a linear rectangle of dotted lines. These words when translated would read “ERADICATE SMALL POX BY THE APPLICATION OF COW POX”, which in substance means the same as “prevent Small pox by Vaccination”.

The earliest example seen was on a cover dated 9 march 1934 and the latest was on a cover dated 9 November 1935 from Trivandrum to Quilon and from Chirakadavu to Quilon respectively. ¹¹⁵

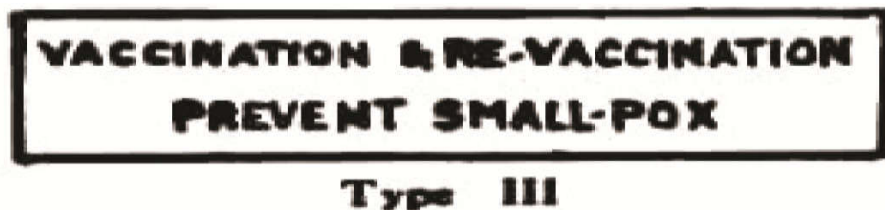


Type II

Type II. This is also a Vernacular type of slogan postmark. It contains the words “VISUCIKA NIVARNATTINU/ INAKKULESAN ATYAVASYAM” in two lines within a linear rectangle. The inscription when translated would read “INOCULATION ESSENTIAL FOR PREVENTION OF CHOLERA”. In other words, it means, “Prevent cholera by Inoculation”. One example has been and it was on a Travancore service Anchal card posted at Mekkamandapam to Kuzhithura. There was an epidemic of Cholera in 1111, M. E (1935-36) in Travancore, which caused more than 11, 000 attacks and 6000 deaths and most probably this slogan postmark was introduced to

¹¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 187.

educate the people about the necessity of resorting to inoculation to prevent further spreading of the disease.



Type III. Among the slogan postmarks of Travancore, this is one English type and it contains the words “VACCINATION & RE-VACCINATION/ PREVENT SMALL POX” in two lines and it was on a Travancore Service Anchal Card from Shencottah to Trivandrum dated 1934.¹¹⁶

The officers of the *Anchal* department were categorised in the following hierarchical manner

Anchal Superintendent

The Head of the department was the *Anchal* superintendent¹¹⁷. The main duties of the *Anchal* superintendent were following: (a) To make any appointment on the sanctioned establishment of the Department ‘permanent’ or temporary, the pay of which did not exceed Rs. 50 per mensem (b) To transfer all officers except *Anchal* inspectors (c) To fine all subordinate up to Rs. 5 at a time and (d) To dismiss, degrade, suspend, discharge, retire under the rules or accept the resignation of, any officer whom he is competent to appoint.¹¹⁸

The *Anchal* superintendent had to inspect all the offices in detail once at least every year and should spend not less than 130 days in camp. The

¹¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 188.

¹¹⁷ K. P Sreedhar, *Travancore Today*, Trivandrum, 1936, p. 69.

¹¹⁸ Development, File No. 588, Bundle No. 201, 1938, KSA.

Anchal superintendent's office (excluding the Dead Letter office) consisted of an *Anchal* Inspector in charge of the office and the following staff. (1 head clerk, 1 head accountant, 35 clerks including the store keeper and typists, 1 duffadar, 6 peons, 1 packer). The Dead letter office consisted of one head Clerk, One assistant clerk and a mochee. ¹¹⁹

The *Anchal* superintendent inspected 168 *Anchal* offices during the year, most of which were surprise inspections. ¹²⁰ *Anchal* superintendent had the duty to enquire each service of the *Anchal* department. ¹²¹ The department underwent further reorganised during the year, the main features being the abolition of the post of manager in the *Anchal* Superintendent's office, raising of the number of *Anchal* inspectors from 8 to 9, one of them being put in charge of the Superintendent's office to do the manager's duties, the classification of Inspectors into two grades and the fixing of their salaries at Rs. 100-5-125 and Rs. 75-4-95 respectively and putting the *Anchal* masters into six grades. ¹²²

The office was divided into General and Account sections, which were under the immediate control of the Head clerk and the Head Accountant respectively. The general section was subdivided into General correspondence, Liability, Establishment, Pension, Contingency, Administration, Records and stores; and the Account section dealt with savings Bank, *Anchal*, *Hundi*, and Value Paid articles. ¹²³ The Head clerk supervised and checked the work of all clerks in the section placed under him. He saw that the files and papers received from the office of the inspector were distributed promptly to the respective clerks and that the work was carried on

¹¹⁹ The Travancore *Anchal* Manual Vol. I, Trivandrum, 1937, p. 2.

¹²⁰ Travancore Administration Report, 1942-43, p. 168.

¹²¹ Development, File No. 745, Bundle No. 319, 1944, KSA.

¹²² Travancore Administration Report, 1920-21, p76.

¹²³ The Travancore *Anchal* Manual Vol. I, *Op. Cit.*

expeditiously and according to rules. The Head clerk kept a notebook in which all important orders and decisions of the Government and the Superintendent affecting the department, were noted. ¹²⁴ Government sanctioned and authorised *Anchal* superintendent to appoint low grade workers if found necessary in 1933. ¹²⁵

The Anchal inspector

For the Administrative purposes, the *Anchal* department in the state was divided into Eight *Anchal* divisions. Each division was under the control of an *Anchal* Inspector who was immediately subordinate to the *Anchal* superintendent. The *Anchal* inspector is the chief officer of the *Anchal* Division, and all *Anchal* masters, clerks, *Anchal* men, runners, etc. of the concerned division. ¹²⁶

Government delegated the following powers to Anchal inspectors which included the granting of leave to departmental *Anchal* masters for an amount of Rs. 20 and below. ¹²⁷ The inspectors ordinarily inspected all Head offices once in two months and all sub-offices and Non- Departmental offices once in three months. The Inspectors Tour programme had to be submitted to the superintendents before the 5th of each month. ¹²⁸ The *Anchal* Inspector was expected to see that all complaints either received from the public direct or through the superintendent's office for the enquiry were thoroughly and promptly investigated. *Anchal* Inspector controlled and supervised the establishment of the *Anchal* superintendent's office. *Anchal* Inspector offices in Travancore are divided into two. viz (a) Head Office (b) sub-offices (Departmental and Non Departmental). A head office transacted every class

¹²⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 7.

¹²⁵ Development, File No. 1898, Bundle No. 115, 1933, KSA.

¹²⁶ Development File No. 588, Bundle No. 201, 1938, KSA.

¹²⁷ The Travancore Anchal Manual, Vol. II, Trivandrum, 1937, p. 1.

¹²⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 10.

of *Anchal* business except Insurance. Similarly; a sub-office also transacted every class of *Anchal* business except insurance and savings Bank. Selected sub-offices were, however, allowed to do savings bank and insurance work on certain conditions.

Every Inspector had to keep a sketch map of his division showing the positions of the *Anchal* offices, *Anchal* mail lines and marking the locations where the letterboxes were placed. The different classes of offices that is, Head offices, Sub-offices, Non-departmental offices, were distinguished on the map by special signs. Rivers and streams that are crossed by *Anchal* Mail lines were also shown in the map, and the places where bridges or ferries existed were marked on it. These maps were always being kept corrected up to date.¹²⁹

The unauthorised communication to the Press or to any person not entitled to receive any information, regarding official measures and official matters (whether important or trivial) was strictly prohibited. All the matters that came to the knowledge of the office staff through the medium of communications, note, orders etc. were to be kept secret. Any subordinate who failed to keep up official secrecy was severely punished.¹³⁰ Records that were to be destroyed would be sorted and enclosed in bags in the presence of the office Inspector and after getting the orders of the superintendent will be destroyed by being burnt, if not otherwise disposed of as ordered by Government from time to time.¹³¹

The Head Accountant is responsible for the efficient working of the section placed under him, and he would supervise and check the work of the auditors of the auditors of the respective branches. He would see whether the accounts, papers etc., and minimum examination qualification required for

¹²⁹ Development, File No. 588, Bundle No. 201, 1938, KSA.

¹³⁰ The Travancore Anchal Manual Vol. I, Trivandrum, 1937, p. 9.

¹³¹ *Ibid.*, p. 12.

appointment in the office was that laid down in the public Service Notification.¹³²

The Anchal master

Account keeping is the main function of the office of *Anchal* master. He would be thoroughly acquainted with the rules and all sections of the department. He would be able to supervise effectively the works done by clerks and *Anchal* men and to maintain strict discipline in his office. He would be energetic and intelligent and be able to act with judgement and promptitude in cases of robbery, fraud etc.

Anchal master was the custodian of the error book. The error book is a record of all irregularities noticed. Every irregularity, serious or petty, committed by any member of the office establishment in any nature was entered in the Error Book.

Entries in the Error book were as brief as possible, made by the *Anchal* masters themselves in their own writing, and were duly signed by them. In case a report was required to be made to the Superintendent or the inspector, the number and date of the report would be noted in the column for remarks in the error book. In other cases no report needed to be made, as the entry in the error book would sufficient evidence that the *Anchal* Master had noticed.¹³³ The report of the *Anchal* master in an error book was sent directly to the *Anchal* inspectors in which division he or she belonged.

When the *Anchal* mail was robbed, the *Anchal* master who first received information would immediately communicate such particulars to the Magistrate and police of the locality and submit immediate reports to the *Anchal* Superintendent and the *Anchal* Inspector of the Division by the next

¹³² *Ibid.*, p. 7.

¹³³ The Travancore Anchal Manual Vol. III, 1937, p. 6.

Anchal. Wherever it was possible, the information would be communicated to the Inspector by Telegraph also. ¹³⁴

If the entire mail was not carried off by the robbers, or if any portion of it is recovered, the application would at once be made to the police to deliver the recovered articles to the master of the nearest *Anchal* Office. An inventory of the cash, currency notes, money order documents, registered articles and parcels forming the contents of the recovered mails, together with a full description of the condition in which each registered article etc., was found, would be prepared in duplicate and signed by the *Anchal* Inspector or other official who might have charge of the preliminary enquiry. One copy of the inventory would be retained by the *Anchal* Inspector, and the other made over to the Police authorities as a receipt for the articles received from them. If any of the articles were retained by the police for investigation, a remark to that effect would be made in the inventory. At the close of the investigation, the *Anchal* inspector would submit a final report to the Superintendent, commencing, viz, (a) the date of the robbery (b) the name of mail- line on which the robbery was committed. (c) A description of the locality, i. e., the distance from the nearest stages and *Anchal* offices on either side and also from the terminal offices of the line (d) the name of the place in which the robbery was committed. Then would follow a recapitulation of the principal facts of the case and the steps taken by the departmental and police authorities and the result of the enquiry. ¹³⁵

He would be a model in his dealings with the public transacting business with the *Anchal* office. He would be neat and decent in dress and during the office hours should wear a coat and head dress. He would see that the clerks under him also appeared in a proper dress code. Working knowledge of the English Language was essential. In the case of recruits, English school leaving certificate and the *Anchal* departmental test were the

¹³⁴ Development File No. 588, Bundle No. 201, 1938, KSA.

¹³⁵ The Travancore *Anchal* Manual Vol. II, Trivandrum, 1937, p. 20.

minimum qualification required. ¹³⁶ The *Anchal* master should insist the punctuality of attendance among his sub ordinates including *Anchal* men, runners etc. ¹³⁷ Despite of all services rendered, *Anchal* masters had to remit a deposit as security equal to 20 times of their pay; the minimum cash security required being Rs. 400. A deposit of Rs. 100 was earmarked for *Anchal* men. Whereas Runners and packers had to pay Rs. 50. In short, the deposits for security were applicable to other officers also according to their rank. The deposit in Non-Departmental *Anchal* masters were fixed to Rs. 200. However, additional securities were required at each promotion for a clerk or a master in the form of fidelity Bonds of Life Insurance Companies approved by Government from time to time instead of cash. The National company ltd, Calcutta was the one approved by government and Government accepted their guarantee bonds. ¹³⁸

The Anchal men

Anchal men had to be able to read and write Malayalam well and to read English addresses. Preference was always be given to V. S. L. C (Vocational Secondary Leaving Certificate). In larger offices, usually one or more office *Anchal* men were entrusted with the duty of conveying money to and from the treasury and to sub-offices. *Anchal* men were expected to know thoroughly the rates of postage, commission on hundies, the charges for insurance and the fee for registration. ¹³⁹ They were fully competent to fill up the forms with which the public had ordinarily to deal, especially *Hundi* and value payable forms. *Anchal* men on duty were required to wear their belts and carry their bags. They were always be dressed neat and clean. *Anchal* man supplied *Anchal* stamps, cards and envelopes to the public.

¹³⁶ The Travancore Anchal Manual Vol. III, Trivandrum, 1937, p. 25.

¹³⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 26.

¹³⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 24.

¹³⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 113-114.

In *Anchal* service, there also existed temporary runners for specific seasons and selected areas. For example, *Anchal* man attached to the Aranmula *Anchal* office and another one attached to the Haripad *Anchal* offices were served in the waterlogged areas, as stated earlier.¹⁴⁰ The designation as *Anchal* peons was later redesignated as *Anchal* man.¹⁴¹ The duty of the *Anchal* man consisted of getting on the receipt an acknowledgement at the time of delivering a registered article or a letter or parcel mail delivered to an illiterate addressee. It was done in the presence of a resident witness who would be required to attest it with his signature. An insured article addressed to a minor was always delivered to him in the presence of the person in whose care he may live at the time and after his thumb impression on the receipt and acknowledgement had been attested by that person.

British Postal System

The history of the British post office starts with the Beginning of the 16th Century. Long before this, however a system of communication had been established both for the personal use of king and for the conveyance of official letters and documents.¹⁴² In 1591 Queen Elizabeth issued a proclamation that attempted to create a monopoly for conveyance of British post. The Royal Edict prohibited the conveyance of mail into or out of the country by any carriers except “our Master of the posts or Masters of the post general of that country’s reciproquel”.¹⁴³ This move stemmed from Economic concerns and issues of national security. During the reign of Charles I (1625-1649) postal items sent abroad or arriving from overseas could be intercepted and kept for weeks while various parliamentary Committees inspected their

¹⁴⁰ Development, File No. 1854, Bundle No. 53, 1925, KSA.

¹⁴¹ Development, File No. 586, Bundle No. 159, 1926, KSA.

¹⁴² J. C Hemmeon, *The History of the British Post Office*, London, 1912, p. 12.

¹⁴³ Esther Milne, *Letters, Postcards, Email: Technologies of presence*, New York, 2010, p. 30.

contents. The penny post of London in 1680 was another great step in the field of postal service.¹⁴⁴

In a large Empire like British India, the maintaining of communication between the various parts of the country was highly essential so that the offices in charge of the distant provinces could contact with the capital and the ruler could be kept informed of what was happening there. The postal system developed from this necessity. During the period of the Mughal emperors there was a regular system of postal lines known as 'daks'. The historian Ferishtah has recorded that Shershah had employed a mounted post in India during this reign of five years from 1541 to 1545. Akbar the great who succeeded him had built post houses 10 miles apart on the principal roads and swift turki horses were used in each stage¹⁴⁵. During the reign of Muhammed Bin Tughlak there was an organised system of courier system in the country, observes Ibn Batuta, the Arab traveller who had visited the country in the middle of the 14th century Colonel Wilks who authored the famous history of South India writes that there was a regular postal service in the kingdom of Mysore.

However, when the British began to extend their dominions in India in the middle of the 18th century, the system of communication was not well established, and hence it was a difficult task to send a letter to a distance of more than 100 miles. Governor Robert Clive first introduced a regular postal system in India in 1766. The zamindars or the landholders were entrusted to appoint runners in the respective provinces to carry the mails. Warren Hastings later made many improvements in Bengal in the postal system. A postmaster general was appointed and private letters were charged for

¹⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 31.

¹⁴⁵ Geoffrey Rothe Clarke, 'Postal and Telegraph Work in India', *Journal of the Royal Society of Arts*, Vol. 71, No. 3680, 1923, p. 485.

postage. The three presidencies Calcutta, Madras and Bombay, which were occupied by the East India Company, had separate postal systems by 1874.¹⁴⁶

The introduction of postage stamps in 1854 was one of the most important steps of improvement in the postal system. Postage rates were also made cheaper irrespective of distance in the same year. The same rates were fixed for the whole country and a single Director General was appointed for the postal department. During that year various functions like the carriage of parcels, sending money orders to the residences of payees, Saving Banks and selling of essential medicines like quinine etc. were also introduced. In addition to these services, the postal department assisted the government in distributing loan etc. to the people. In the province of Punjab the post offices distributed military pensions. In British India, because of the enormous size of the country the administration had to be decentralised. Consequently, under the Director General who had considerable independent powers. The country was divided into eight postal circles and each postmaster general was in charge of its administration. The railway mail service was also under the control of this department.

The postal system introduced by the British government in India was one of the significant turning points in the history of the country's communication system. It was in Travancore, the British - Indian postal system was introduced in the year 1857. One of the first post offices opened by the postal authorities of British India was at Alleppey in Travancore, known as the Venice of the East, was one of the most important trade centres in Travancore.¹⁴⁷ The postal department chooses to open an office in Trivandrum in 1863¹⁴⁸ and Quilon in 1864, as they were the leading trading centres in Travancore.¹⁴⁹ In 1865, another British Indian post office was

¹⁴⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁴⁷ A. Sreedhara Menon, *Kerala District Gazetters, Alleppey*, Trivandrum, 1975, p. 313.

¹⁴⁸ A. Sreedhara Menon, *Kerala District Gazetters, Trivandrum*, Trivandrum, 1962, p. 472

¹⁴⁹ A. Sreedhara Menon, *Kerala District Gazetters, Quilon*, Trivandrum, 1964, p. 421

opened at Nagercoil.¹⁵⁰ In the areas, where there was no Anchal office, the Anchal letters were transferred by the British postal department through Anchal runners. For example, Devikulam.¹⁵¹ The British-Indian postal department introduced a runner line of 81.5 kilometres between Kottayam and Peerumedu in the year 1876 following the footsteps of Indian Anchal Service. (In the matter of sharing the runner line and the runners, there was a perfect understanding between the Anchal department and the British postal department.) Another example of the mutual understanding between the departments was that the Anchal superintendent allowed fixing a British postal letterbox at “sacred heart mount”, which was only two miles away from the Kottayam Anchal post office.¹⁵² The government allowed fixing British postal letterboxes at Clappana, Keerikad, Vylar, Pattanakad, Mutholy and Bharanagnanam etc. as the Government felt that the revenue of the Anchal department would not be affected by opening such letterboxes.¹⁵³ The same was also fixed at the under mentioned villages like Perinad, Mangad, Pullathope, Mampally, Maraman, Ayroor¹⁵⁴ etc, in the central part and Ithavillai, a village about three miles from Thuckalai, the southernmost part of Travancore.¹⁵⁵ In addition to that, the government was eager to plant letter boxes at Parthiparakonam, Muttada and Vidura¹⁵⁶ and also in the English school at kundara.¹⁵⁷ A new building was constructed for the post and telegram offices at Trivandrum in 1924.¹⁵⁸

In 1883 it was merged with the Post Office Department, which allowed telegrams to be handled by thousands of small post offices which forwarded

¹⁵⁰ Cover File No. 122, Bundle No. 262, 1873, KSA.

¹⁵¹ Cover File No. 14859, Bundle No. 265, 1901, KSA.

¹⁵² Development, File No. 1886, Bundle No. 57, 1926, KSA.

¹⁵³ Development, File No. 1177, Bundle No. 77, 1929, KSA.

¹⁵⁴ Development, File No. 1729, Bundle No. 79, 1929, KSA.

¹⁵⁵ Development, File No. 1177, Bundle No. 21, 1922, KSA.

¹⁵⁶ Development, File No. 340, Bundle No. 757, 1949, KSA.

¹⁵⁷ Development, File No. 1553, Bundle No. 28, 1923, KSA.

¹⁵⁸ PWD, File No. 618, Bundle No. 404, 1924, , KSA.

them by mail to and from the nearest telegraph office. Access to the network was thus extended to the entire population.¹⁵⁹

In the year 1893-94, British sub-post office was opened at Kottarakkara and thus total number was rose to 17 in the state. There was also a Post and Telegraph office opened at Peermade, raising the number to 11.¹⁶⁰ During the year 1893, there was a Head Office, 10 sub-offices and 5 Branch offices, which provided services at important towns and villages, facilitated services like money orders and savings bank.¹⁶¹ The following illustrate the working of post office in Travancore and the transcation of money order in the post office.

Table 3. 7
Working of the Imperial Post Offices
in Travancore from 1934-35 to 1946-47

year	Number of Post offices	Length of Mail lines	Number of Money orders issued	Number of Money orders paid
1934-35	113	1045	164486	168982
1935-36	116	1049	164022	123749
1936-37	111	922	165977	165243
1937-38	116	1148	174793	154709
1938-39	82	687	132620	16443
1939-40	136	779	156885	191119
1940-41	142	879	147384	228682
1941-42	143	790	115706	224967
1944-45	162	922	211138	965125
1945-46	162	1290	208775	903610
1946-47	176	1405	420944	1041285

Source: The statistics of Travancore from 1934-35 to 1946-47

¹⁵⁹ Daniel R. Headrick, *The Tentacles of Progress: Technology Transfer in the Age of Imperialism, 1850-1940*, New York, 1988, p. 121.

¹⁶⁰ Travancore Administrative Reports, 1893-94, p. 108.

¹⁶¹ Travancore Administrative Reports, 1892-93, p. 110.

Post Office Saving Bank

Anyone could deposit money in a post office savings bank on his own behalf or on behalf of any minor relative or of any minor of whom he is the guardian. The smallest sum that could be deposited at any time is four *annas*, but a fraction of an *anna* is not allowed. The total amount at call which a depositor might have at any time exclusive of interest for the current year was Rs. 5, 000 in the case of an adult and Rs. 1, 000 in the case of an account opened on behalf of a minor by his relative or guardian. A depositor could withdraw money from his account only once a week. If a pass book was lost or spoiled, the depositor had to pay Rs. 1 to obtain a fresh pass book. Savings bank accounts were transferable to any place in India and Burma free of charge.¹⁶² The following table depicts the working of the savings bank.

Table 3. 8
Working of the British Postal Savings
Bank in Travancore from 1934-35 to 1946-47

Year	Number office	Opening Balance		Deposit	Withdrawal	Closing Balance	
		Number of Accounts	Amount			Number of Accounts	Amount
1934-35	70	10828	598562-2-7	522932-11-10	502432-7-3	9435	6, 33, 245-12-5
1935-36	70	9817	75583-3-4	660344-12-3	659695-10-1	11115	772964-9-8
1936-37	62	8114	623428-13-2	524526-2-10	486157-15-9	7074	675396-1-3
1937-38	64	9148	759179-0-8	828430-8-9	565855-9-0	8875	1044569-4-10
1938-39	65	7736	1553226-14-2	525691-2-7	506876-12-1	10938	1573141-11-0
1939-40	71	10863	1454807-0-0	885978-0-0	1539488-0-0	10024	809310-0-0
1940-41	75	10024	809310-5-8	486348-10-8	672569-8-5	9321	623089-7-11
1941-42	105	10047	802802-3-10	240851-10-5	301360-2-9	9237	22383-13-10
1944-45	75	12176	1464468-6-8	1506992-0-0	792906-15-1	13018	2201461-5-2
1945-46	70	9850	1984295-9-2	2373210-2-2	2035877-12-10	12107	2333058-5-8
1946-47	74	12107	2333058-5-8	2543117-13-3	4169675-5-2	17034	1281655-3-6

Source: Statistics of Travancore from 1934-35 to 1946-47

Any person, whether previously a depositor in the post office savings bank or not may invest through the post office in Government securities, on one of the third and above percent, loans, specifying in his application either

¹⁶² Travancore Directory for 1939 Part II, Trivandrum, 1938, p. 775.

the sum to be invested or the nominal value of the securities to be purchased provided that the nominal value of securities to be purchased should be for the whole pieces of government paper of Rs. 100 or any multiple of Rs. 100 subjected to the maximum limit of Rs. 5, 000 in any one official year from 1st April to 31st March 1938.¹⁶³

In the beginning, the labourers in plantations were far from the outside world. Normally the tea plantations were in remote areas. There was only scant opportunity for communication with the outside world; their only means of communicating with the world outside was through the *Anchal* system of the Travancore Government. Government appointed the runners who took the mail from one point to another. This was not possible in high range areas. Therefore the government took steps to open a post office in a high range area. Thus, the first post office of the high range was opened in 1902 at Devikulam as an experiment.

A second post office of this type opened in Yellapetty, Munnar. A Ford truck was used for carrying posts from Munnar to other stations¹⁶⁴ while the ropeways were dysfunctional on Sundays; this truck also carried mailbags from the top station. A bus running between Udamelpet and Coimbatore brought letters and packages from the north Travancore. The English mails from high ranges came through this route. The return mails were arranged by train. The mails were normally carried in the hill stations through ropeways. Sometimes it was delayed due to bad weather. However, the *tapal* service was regular and reliable.¹⁶⁵

Central authorities supplied Quinine in the native States of Hyderabad, Mysore, Travancore and Cochin and there is also stated that requirement in

¹⁶³ *Ibid.*

¹⁶⁴ Travancore Administration Report, 1892-93, p. 25.

¹⁶⁵ *Ibid.*

bulk and it was supplied through Durbar Physician, Travancore Government.¹⁶⁶ Quinine Sulphate imported by the Government of India from Java also.¹⁶⁷ Supply of Quinine as an anti malaria measure.¹⁶⁸ Cinchona - Quinine supply through post offices in Travancore and Cochin discontinued, and Government had no objection; because prices of both were enhanced.¹⁶⁹ A consolidated statement of the stock of quinine held by the post masters on 31st March will be prepared each year.¹⁷⁰

The British Post and Telegraph department aimed to open rural post offices in all villages with a population of 2000 and above, as a part of post-war planning. Kulaseharam, Thamaraculam, Villukri, Venganoor, Thalayolaprampu, Karinkunnam etc. are some of the places where such post offices were opened.¹⁷¹

Another significant feature of the British Postal System was that they kept an account of all transactions carried out between the government treasuries and the British Post offices. According to this practice, the account was adjusted after verification by the treasury office every month. This work was overseen by the resident's treasury office at Trivandrum.¹⁷² The British officials received various collections collected in select post offices at Nagercoil, Quilon and Alleppey, every week. The amounts in such payments were transferred to the local taluk treasuries and were later accounted to the postmaster of Trivandrum. Though the public used British Indian postal service largely for sending letters to outer the state. The introduction of British postal service was also a part of their imperial design as majority of

¹⁶⁶ Development G. O. No. 278, 1922, Tamil Nadu Archives, Chennai.

¹⁶⁷ Development, G. O No. 381, 1922, Tamil Nadu Archives, Chennai.

¹⁶⁸ Development, G. O. No. 806, 1922, Tamil Nadu Archives, Chennai.

¹⁶⁹ Development, G. O No. 578, 1922, Tamil Nadu Archives, Chennai.

¹⁷⁰ PWD, G. O. No. 116, 1922, Tamil Nadu Archives, Chennai.

¹⁷¹ PWD, File No. 366, Bundle No. 841, 1949, KSA.

¹⁷² A. Sreedhara Menon, Kerala state Gazetters, Trivandrum, *Op. Cit.*, P. 472

their post offices were established at places where the foreigners settled. It is viewed as a business interest too. Trivandrum, Colachel, Kottayam, Peermedu, Quilon, Nagercoil etc. were the exclusive main office of the British post. ¹⁷³The Imperial post offices in the Travancore state also despatched numerous letters, postcards, Newspapers and Packets. The following table enumerates the details.

Table 3. 9

Table showing the number of Letters, Post cards, Newspapers and Packets issued in through Imperial Post Offices in Travancore from 1935-36 to 1940-41

Particulars	1935-36	1936-37	1937-38	1938-39	1939-40	1940-41
Letters	25, 70, 828	2, 75, 8485	2, 541, 457	9, 57, 684	1, 826, 324	1, 839, 241
Post cards	7, 56, 667	5, 40, 084	5, 74, 438	2, 00, 142	5, 16, 960	4, 27, 297
Newspapers	4, 18, 438	3, 94, 542	4, 78, 044	2, 67, 222	2, 8, 1926	2, 44, 724
Packets	8, 01, 161	6, 14, 238	7, 55, 025	3, 51, 552	5, 10, 684	4, 20, 825

Source: The statistics of Travancore from 1935-36 to 1940 -41.

The British postal service in Travancore had a great position in the communication history of Travancore. On April 1, 1951, the amalgamation of the *Anchal* department with the Indian postal department working in the state was finalised. ¹⁷⁴

TELEGRAPH

During the nineteenth century, new scientific and technological inventions began in European colonies, which were spread into distant parts of the world. In short, this resulted in bringing western technology to African and Asian countries. In the background of this situation of colonialism, India was an example of the new development. Among the new technological innovations introduced in colonial Bengal during this period the most notable

¹⁷³ Cover File No. 15250, Bundle No. 25, 1884, KSA.

¹⁷⁴ A. Sreedhara Menon, *Kerala State Gazetteers, Trivandrum, Op. Cit.*, P. 472.

were the establishment of the printing press, the steamboats and ships, inoculation and vaccination, the telegraphs, the railways and electricity in the last decade of the 19th century.¹⁷⁵

Historians of culture are unanimous in the observation that electric telegraph was crucial in the transformation of Victorian culture into techno scientific areas. The use of the telegraph was essential to the expansion and control of colonial administration. As a result the remote colonies could be brought into closer contact with the imperial administrative centres. Hence telegraphy became one of the key industries of the 19th century. All colonial powers which aimed at the expansion of their empires tried to increase their possession of networks of telegraph cables both under water and over the land. During the 1850's and 1860's the British colonial powers in India also exhibited enthusiasm in the strategy of building and protecting a well developed telegraph system in India.

The Victorian intellectuals welcomed the advent of the telegraph “for its capacity to make the world smaller and more manageable.”¹⁷⁶ Before the coming of the telegraphic system of communication, information could travel only at the speed of any other commodity by land or the sea. Letters or messages could be sent along with the cargo of a ship or a vehicle. Though its size was small, it could be sent only through the fastest mode of conveyance of that time. In such a situation, the invention of the telegraph was revolutionary because it made communication possible within minutes even between far distant places. The uses and benefits of the telegraph were many,

¹⁷⁵ Suvabrata Sarkar, ‘Technical Content and Colonial Context: Situating Technical Knowledge in Nineteenth century Bengal’, *Social Scientist*, Vol. 38, No. 1/2, 2010, p. 3.

¹⁷⁶ Iwan Rhys Morus, ‘The Nervous System of Britain: Space, Time and the Electric Telegraph in the Victorian Age’, *The British Journal for the History of Science*, Vol. 33, No. 4, 2000, pp. 455-456.

and advantageous to the imperial set up. There were also economic and social advantages.

Markets could be integrated and intercontinental trade and commercial activities progressed. The phenomenon of shrinking distance and saving time of the modern age began in the Victorian age from the invention of the telegraph. The contribution made by telegraph in the improvement of transportation such as the railways has not been assessed will so far. The impact of the telegraph on rail and ocean transport was enormous. It could also bring about market integration and the lowering the cost of trade activities.¹⁷⁷

It was in 1837 that the telegraph was introduced for the first time for commercial purposes. During the 1840's it became wide spread both in Europe and America. Overland telegraph network was more common in the beginning, but soon technology developed to that telegraph wires could be placed under water also. In under water cables could be installed across the English channel and across the Atlantic ocean connecting North America with Europe in 1865. One of the longest underwater trans Atlantic telegraphic cables were between Ireland and New found land. Many cable lines were constructed to connect shorter distances and by the middle of 1870's most of the important trading centres of the world were connected by telegraph cables. The installation of telegraph cable line into went on increasing till the World War I and places which were linked formerly by circuitous routes were directly connected.¹⁷⁸

Dalhousie, Governor General of British India was responsible for the introduction of telegraph into India. In his famous book 'The History of

¹⁷⁷ Byron Lew and Bruce Cater, 'The telegraph, co-ordination of tramp shipping, and growth in world trade 1870-1910', *European Review of Economic History*, Vol. 10, No. 2, 2006, p. 147.

¹⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 148.

British India' James Mill suggested that Indian society needed reform based on the principles of Bentham. Explaining doubts on the values of Indian society, he pointed out that the key to Indian progress was the introduction of western science and Knowledge. Dalhousie followed this idea of James Mill and tried to introduce reforms in many areas of activities in India, though they had not been fully achieved in England.¹⁷⁹

In 1851, the first telegraph line was opened in India between Calcutta and a place 30 miles away called Diamond harbour. Sir William O' Shaughnessy who made it possible came to be known as the "Father of the Electric telegraph in India."¹⁸⁰ The telegraph line was placed under the edge of the road at a depth of two feet. It made use of 131 ½ foot lengths of three inches iron rods welded together.¹⁸¹ In 1853, the construction of trunk lines began to connect the major cities in India. Dalhousie was quite impressed by the performance of the new system of telegraph. He wrote to a friend that it was great political reinforcement because "In less than one day the government could make communications, which formerly would have taken a whole month".¹⁸²

In 1857 when the so called "Sepoy Mutiny" broke out in India the British Government found that the telegram was highly indispensable to crush the rebellion. The Times Daily wrote that the electric telegraph played a decisive and daring role to save the empire. The correspondent of the Times also observed that without it the commander in-chief of the among would

¹⁷⁹ Suresh Chandra Ghosh, 'The Utilitarianism of Dalhousie and the Material Improvement of India', *Modern Asian Studies*, Vol. 12, No. 1, 1978, pp. 97-98.

¹⁸⁰ Geoffrey Rothe Clarke, 'Postal and Telegraph Work in India', *Journal of the Royal Society of Arts*, Vol. 71, No. 3680, 1923, pp. 483-498.

¹⁸¹ Mel Gorman, 'Sir William O'Shaughnessy Lord Dalhousie, and the Establishment of the Telegraph System in India, Technology and Culture', *The Johns Hopkins University Press and the Society for the History of Technology*, Vol. 12, No. 4, 1971, p. 585.

¹⁸² Krishnalal Shridharani, *Story of the Indian Telegraphs: A century of Progress*, New Delhi, 1953, p. 20.

have lost the effect of half his force.¹⁸³ The feeling among the British officials was that “the Electric Telegraph had saved India”.¹⁸⁴

After crushing the Mutiny of 1857 the British Government installed more telegraph lines so that by 1865 the network reached the length of about 28000 kilometres. The telegraph department had established 4949 telegraph offices in cities and towns of India by 1900 and 84000 kilometres connected by landlines. These officials carried several million telegrams each year, and employed numerous runners to handle the telegram. In 1947 when India became independent, we had 185, 000 kilometres of telegraph lines. The telegraph charges were lower in India than in Europe or the United States of America. The rate was one rupee per sixteen-word message.

As part of its modernisation, in 1863 the government of India resolved upon connecting Cochin with Tuticorin through the Travancore territory by telegraphic communication, and the Travancore Government readily permitted the line to pass through the State and also intimated that they had no objection to the British government keeping the line passing through their territories.¹⁸⁵ The selection of this particular route was significant. This line facilitated the Britishers to plunder the important coastal resources easily and systematically.

In 1864, the telegraph line was extended to Quilon and was opened to the public.¹⁸⁶ Likewise telegraph offices were opened in 1864 at Trivandrum, and Alleppey. Another telegraph office was opened at Nagercoil in 1865. The opening of electric telegraph service between Quilon and Trivandrum was

¹⁸³ Chandrika Kaul, *Reporting the Raj, The British Press and India C. 1880-1922*, Manchester, 2003, p. 42.

¹⁸⁴ Mohini Lal Majumdar, *Early History and Growth of Postal System in India*, Calcutta, 1995, p. 252.

¹⁸⁵ V. Nagam Aiya, *Op. Cit.*, p. 243

¹⁸⁶ Cover File No. 15286, Bundle No. 28, 1864, KSA.

started in 1865.¹⁸⁷ This was followed by Kayamkulam and Kottayam in 1889.¹⁸⁸ In 1898 imperial post office at Munnar was started into a combined post and telegraph office.¹⁸⁹ In April 1894, a telegraphic office was opened in Peerumedu. Places like Chalai Bazaar, Aattungal and Neyyattinkara got their offices inaugurated in 1905. Telegraph line from Shencotta to Quilon and from shencotta to Tinnevely was opened which was followed by the extension of railway from Tinnevely to Quilon.

Small model instruments of wireless telegraphy were imported solely for instructional purposes at schools and colleges. This was done under the instruction given by the collector of customs, Bombay. Moreover, a license to establish a wireless telegraph imported in British india was granted by Governor-General in council under section 4 of the India telegraph act 1885 (XIII of 1885).¹⁹⁰ If any dispute arises between the telegraph authority and a local authority, it should be determined by such officer as the Government may appointment either generally or specially in this behalf as per the section of 15 of the Indian Telegraph Act XIII of 1885.¹⁹¹

For easy and speedy installation, the government raised no objection in cutting or removing branches of trees within the alignment of the telegraph line from Quilon to Shencottah and if it caused any damage or loss to the public that was compensated by the railway after the assessment of district officer.¹⁹² The word 'Electric' was the abbreviated telegraphic address of the electric engineer, Trivandrum. Similarly, the old telegraphic address 'Aqua' relating to Nagercoil division officer was changed into 'Opera' Nagercoil and

¹⁸⁷ Selected Notifications by the Government of Travancore, Trivandrum, 1939, p. 400.

¹⁸⁸ A. Sreedhara Menon, Kerala District Gazeeters, Kottayam, *Op. Cit.*, p. 268.

¹⁸⁹ Cover file No. 15229, Bundle No. 243, 1898, KSA.

¹⁹⁰ Development, File No. 934, Bundle No. 1, 1909, KSA.

¹⁹¹ PWD, G O. No. 343, 1940, Tamil Nadu Archives, Chennai.

¹⁹² Cover File No. 8077, Bundle No. 248, 1899, KSA.

word 'Aqua' was registered as the telegraphic address of the waterworks, engineer, Trivandrum¹⁹³.

The charges for the telegraphic service were calculated according to the number of words used in the telegram. Telegraphic charges were fixed to two *annas*..¹⁹⁴ Radiotelegraphs were also possible in India and Burma to be transmitted to ships having radiotelegraph apparatus on them. Bombay, Calcutta, Karachi, Madras, Port Blair and Bangalore were involved in such radio telegraphic network. Radio telegram addressed to ships had to be written in yellow telegram forms used for foreign telegrams.¹⁹⁵

TELEPHONE

The relationship between the development of telecommunications and a country's economic progress is deep and highly significant. The infrastructure of telecommunication has an important role in all economic activities by providing administrative service and manufacturing capability. It plays a central role in controlling and supplying production on the basis of cost effectiveness also.¹⁹⁶

The telephone is the most widely used telecommunication device that transmits and receives the human voice, and its function is to provide the facility for communication between people who are separated by long distances. Alexander Graham Bell, who invented the telephone made the first telephone call on 10th March 1876.¹⁹⁷ In the long history of its development the telephone passed through many significant stages and now it has become indispensable to all aspects of human life such as business, household and

¹⁹³ PWD, File No. 493, Bundle No. 389, 1927, KSA.

¹⁹⁴ A. Sreedhara Menon, *Kerala District Gazetteers*, Kottayam, *Op. Cit.*, p. 268.

¹⁹⁵ The Travancore Directory for 1940 Part I, Trivandrum, 1939, p. 769.

¹⁹⁶ Emily Bills, 'Connecting Lines: L. A. 's Telephone History and the Binding of the Region', *Southern California Quarterly*, Vol. 91, No. 1, 2009, p. 4

¹⁹⁷ Herbert N. Casson, *The History of the Telephone*, New York, 2006 p. 23.

Government activities. In fact, it is the most widely used popular appliances in the developed world. It is interesting to note that even the word “telephone” has been adapted to many languages of the world.¹⁹⁸ The commercial services of telephone were inaugurated in New Haven and Connecticut in 1878 and in London in the next year.¹⁹⁹

In British India, the telephone services were introduced in the year 1881 due to the pressure from Bengal Chamber of Commerce.²⁰⁰ The newly introduced Telephone services were under the Telegraph department, which was a Government establishment. However, limited participation of the private sector was allowed. As a result, the newly constituted “Oriental Telephone Company” was permitted to establish telephone exchanges in four cities such as Calcutta, Madras, Bombay and Rangun. Some other local companies were allowed to operate telephone networks in cities including Karachi and Ahmadabad. The British Government of India passed a resolution in October 1883 making it clear that the telephone system was under the monopoly of the Government. The history of the telephone services in India is directly related to the development of the towns and cities of India.²⁰¹ Its development was comparatively slow because India was largely a country of villages.

The British Government sanctioned the installation of telephone for the first time in Travancore in 1905-06. Communication connecting Pechippara with other principal stations in south Travancore was first commissioned. Towards the end of 1910-11 (1086 M. E) this telephone line was taken over from British Indian Telegraph department, and a new station was opened at a

¹⁹⁸ Manoj Gupta, *The New Era of Telecommunication*, Allahabad, 2016, p. 35.

¹⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 13.

²⁰⁰ Michael Mann, ‘The Deep Digital Divide: The Telephone in British India 1883-1933’, *Historical Social Research* Vol. 35, No. 1, 2010, p. 198.

²⁰¹ *Ibid.*, p. 197

place called Chellanthuruthi, which ran on one line system.²⁰² In 1908 the latest system of 'Magneto Telephone' was installed asin Europe and America.²⁰³ In 1920's the system was further expanded. For the development of shipping and commercial activities the Travancore government negotiated with the British government to establish trunk telephone lines between Cochin and Alleppey. A telephone line between Aruvikkara and the water works head quarters at Trivandrum in 1930.²⁰⁴

The accession of Chithira Thirunal heralded an era of reforms. During his period Travancore witnessed salutary changes in transport and Communication. During his time, a telephone line was established between Travancore and Delhi for the first time.²⁰⁵ The telephone service was commenced effectively in 1931. Out of the 68 stations originally sanctioned, 42 stations were connected up to the central Exchange during the year.²⁰⁶ The telephone activities came into full swing in the year 1931 following the commencement of a central exchange with a 100-magneto board in Trivandrum with 42 subscribers availing service. The underground cable was also laid during this time between Poojappura and Vellayambalam.

The Travancore government introduced in 1936 a Travancore Trunk Telephone system which was another new feature of the scheme. This was linked to the trunk telephone system of the Government of India. The telephone department became a separate division in 1937 and kept it solely independent to handle the telephone services. This division was put under the control of the electrical Engineer.²⁰⁷ The Colonial Indian government having

²⁰² T. K. Velupillai, *The Travancore State Manual Vol. IV*, Trivandrum, 1940, p. 166

²⁰³ Sulochana Nalapat, *The Story of Munnar* (Mal.), Kottayam, 2010, p. 83

²⁰⁴ T. K. Velu Pillai, *Op. Cit.*

²⁰⁵ *Ibid.*

²⁰⁶ Travancore Administration Report, 1930-31, p. 159.

²⁰⁷ Travancore Administration Report, 1935-36, p. 156.

vast experience in the working of postal and telegraph department appointed efficient and well-known engineers. One such was the engineer J. C Pathew, who was directly in charge of the new division. The scheme was intended to link Trivandrum with other parts of the state, and with the important cities outside of Travancore.

By 1936, Travancore was well connected by telephone with other parts of the world. This connectivity facilitated and mobilized the fast development of the Pallivasal Hydro-Electric Project.²⁰⁸ For this purpose, the government sanctioned as much as eight lakh rupees. In connection with the Perunchani dam project scheme, Nine and a half miles of trunk telephone lines were completed for providing telephone connection to the P. W. D division office at Kulasekharam.²⁰⁹ Under this plan, exchanges were opened at Quilon, Kottayam, Trivandrum, Alwaye and Nagercoil. The completion of the telephone lines was done in 1940 and lines were made available from Trivandrum to the Cape Camorin and to Quilon; from Quilon to Kundara, Kundara to Mavelikkara and from Mavelikkara to Alleppey.²¹⁰ It was Maharaja Sri Chithira Thirunal who inaugurated the linking up of Travancore telephone system with the India Government Trunk system in 1940, on April 22.²¹¹ The telephone system was introduced in Quilon in 1939-40 under the auspices of the Travancore Electricity department.²¹²

The ruler inaugurated the system by making a call from the Kowdiar Palace to G. V. Bewoor who was the Director General of the India post and Telegraph Department, at Peshawar and the conversation lasted for half a minute. The second call was made by C. P Ramaswamy Aiyer who was the

²⁰⁸ Travancore Administration Report, 1936 – 37, p. 159.

²⁰⁹ Travancore Administration Report, 1944-45, p. 123.

²¹⁰ The Travancore Almanac and Directory for 1937 Part-I, Trivandrum, 1936, p. 382.

²¹¹ *Ibid.*

²¹² A. Sreedhara Menon, *Kerala District Gazetteers, Quilon, Op. Cit.*, p. 422.

Dewan of Travancore at the time. The speech was remarkably clear through the telephone line in spite of the distance of 2750 miles between the caller and the receiver.

Telephone exchange system linked to the Trunk Telephone scheme was commissioned in 1941. By the end of that year, there were 514 main telephone connections and 171 extensions. The same year 27 public call offices and four exchanges were functional. All the exchanges together handled 35102 trunk calls inside Travancore, 5101 trunk calls went out of the state and from outside the state as many as 10074 trunk calls were received. The total investment for the scheme amounted to 10. 16 lakhs for the year. The total income from the scheme amounted to rupees 9953. By the year 1942, public telephone call offices had been installed in 23 Anchal offices, in all these offices, telephone services were available four hours daily. Telephone connection was high on demand, and because of difficulties connected to installation, many applications had to be rejected. The trunk lines were as long as 714 miles then the number of exchanges, and public call offices were 37 then. The rentals for telephone connection were increased in 1943 by 20 percent because of the increase in the cost of equipment and maintenance of telephone lines. Until the end of 1943, the capital investment in telephone services was rupees 1209564.²¹³

It was expected to complete the lines from Cape Comorin to Quilon by the end of 1939 and telephone service in that section could be commenced then. The government also took necessary steps during 1939 for trunk telephone and earmarked an amount of Rs. 8 lakhs in the budget.²¹⁴ Applications for licence for private telephone system under rule 37 of the Travancore telephone rules, received from the superintendent, Ponmudi

²¹³ Travancore Administration Report, 1940-41, p. 146.

²¹⁴ PWD, File No. 1545, Bundle No. 551, 1939, KSA.

estate, Nagercoil electric supply corporation, the southern India tea estate company, peermade and the Indian aluminium co. ltd Alwaye. And the licence for these companies were sanctioned in 1944. Similarly licence was granted to Kannan Devan hills company limited Munnar in 1945.²¹⁵ Its extension was granted to its Tea estate at Anamallias.²¹⁶ The license was renewed in favour of the superintendent, venture estate for the year ending 1946. The number of the main phone in service is 16 and the license fee remitted on this basis.²¹⁷ On the basis of continuous request made by the Kerala press service and the urgency it brought about, the telephone department sanctioned telephone connection to Kerala press service in 1947.²¹⁸

The communication established between Munnar and Devikulam using telephone helped a great deal in communicating with any part of the plantation in Travancore owned by KHDP Company Ltd. It was highly useful for obtaining timely information and for making transport arrangements when the plague broke out widely in Travancore.²¹⁹

Moreover, a direct trunk line from Alleppey to Kottayam and an additional trunk line from Mavelikkara to Trivandrum were sanctioned, and a major part of the installation work was completed in 1945.²²⁰ By the end of 1945, there were 871 miles of trunk lines by the end of 1945 in Travancore. In 1945, public offices were stated in Punalur, Kottarakkara and Shencotta. At Kayamkulam when the full-time telephone exchange. By now, the number of public call offices had risen to 43. There were 1306 telephone connections,

²¹⁵ PWD, File No. 1768, Bundle No. 676, 1945, KSA.

²¹⁶ PWD, File No. 1679, Bundle No. 675, 1945,, KSA.

²¹⁷ PWD, File. No. 1663, Bundle No. 675, 1945, KSA.

²¹⁸ PWD, File No. 1789, Bundle No. 719, 1947, KSA.

²¹⁹ PWD, File No. 175, Bundle No. 428, 1931, KSA.

²²⁰ Travancore Administration Report, 1945 -47, p. 126.

and the number of telephone calls amounted to 241809. By the end of 1945, the total expenditure spent on the telephone scheme was Rs. 17. 45 lakhs.²²¹ The All-state Trunk Telephone was completed and linked up with the General Trunk Telephone was completed and linked up with the General trunk telephone system of India in 1940. The telephone service in the State increased during the year. An additional trunk line from Trivandrum to Mavelikara and a direct trunk line from Kottayam to Alleppey were taken up for construction, and a major portion of the work was completed during the year. The total length of trunk lines at the end of the year was 871 miles against 755 miles in 1945. The Alleppey telephone system which was under the Post and Telegraph department was taken over by the Government.²²²

In the year 1946 the trunk line between Trivandrum and Quilon was completed. The same year a public call office was also started in Kilimanoor. Also in the year 1946, the construction of building to accommodate the automatic exchange equipment started at Trivandrum. In 1947, as many as eleven extension trunk lines were introduced for providing additional facilities and to reduce congestion of calls an exchange was opened at Sherthalla in 1947, and also another one inside Trivandrum power house.⁸⁷ The same year, a public call office was opened in Harippad, and another one opened in Aramboly. The linking up of the Travancore system with the India telephone system expanded telephone communication, and this exchanged commercial activities. The government clarified the trunk call tariffs as the 'main trunk system' and the 'Rural trunk system'. These charges had been out by the Telephone engineer according to the post and telegraph scale, i. e. as 3/-for every 12 ½ miles or fraction thereof over the first 100 miles.²²³

²²¹ *Ibid.*

²²² Travancore Administration Report, 1945-46, p. 117.

²²³ PWD, File No. 1606, Bundle No. 55, 1939, KSA.

The Government sanctioned the free usage of the Trunk Telephone system permitted in the following cases, subject to the condition that the exemption from payment of the usual fees would apply to calls relating to official duties. (a) The Anchal superintendent had exemption for administrative control over the public call offices in Anchal offices (b) The staff of the Pallivasal Hydro-Electric project in connection with their official duties (c) All gazetted officers of the electrical department, but the public had a prior claim for the use of the public service system and (d) The staff of the telephone division irrespective of their rank.²²⁴

Considering the ever growing demands from the subscribers, a telephone directory was published in 1945. It was printed in government press and released 2000 copies.²²⁵ The yellow pages in the directory was a source of revenue to the department.

During 1945, the existing magneto telephone system had been replaced by the automatic telephone system. By the introduction of the new system there was a revolution indeed in communication in various parts of Travancore.²²⁶ Alleppey Trunk booking service was commissioned in July-September 1944.²²⁷

A subscriber situated within a radius of one mile from an exchange to which he is connected had to pay an annual rent of Rs. 125/-. If the radial distance of the subscriber from the exchange was more than one mile but not beyond 2 miles, then the rent was Rs. 130 per annum. If the subscriber was situated at a distance, more than two miles but not beyond 3 miles from the

²²⁴ PWD, File No. 2024, Bundle No. 557, 1939, KSA.

²²⁵ PWD, File No. 1524, Bundle No. 674, 1945, KSA.

²²⁶ PWD, File No. 1554, Bundle No. 684, 1945, KSA.

²²⁷ PWD, File No. 884, Bundle No. 631, 1943, KSA.

exchange, the rent was Rs. 135. The above rates had been increased by Rs. 20/ with effect from 7-5-1943.²²⁸

Government sanctioned Trivandrum telephone stores at Rs. 80000 temporary until the stores at Kottayam was organised, so that the excess expenditure respect of the stock at Trivandrum might be regularised.²²⁹ Conversion of Trivandrum, Quilon, Kottayam and Alleppey exchanges were converted into automatic exchanges.²³⁰

Three private individuals had applied for connection at this time. A total amount of rupees 824438 was charged around this time. The first automatic exchange with 50 lines was installed in 1935 in Trivandrum to connect important places and subscribers. Also in the same year, the central exchange had a subscription of 313 with 159 extension phones.

Teleprinter service was inaugurated on September 18, 1943. This facilitated speedy transmission of news from different places of the state. Travancore won the distinction of being the only Indian State in which Reuters and Associated Press of India started their services.²³¹ Government provided teleprinter line from the General Post office to the Associated press India office, Trivandrum.²³² Government sanctioned an amount of Rs. 22-8-4, for the construction of lines from Trivandrum Telegraph office to Reuters ltd Ponnem road for teleprinter service in 1943.²³³

²²⁸ PWD, File No. 1799, Bundle No. 656, 1944, KSA.

²²⁹ PWD, File No. 835, Bundle No. 543, 1939, KSA.

²³⁰ PWD, File No. 5949, Bundle No. 898, 1950, KSA.

²³¹ A. Sreedhara Menon, *Triumph and Tragedy in Travancore Annals of Sir Cp's Sixteen Years*, Kottayam, 2001, p. 104.

²³² PWD, File No. 799, Bundle No. 666, 1945, KSA.

²³³ PWD, File No. 1662, BundleNo. 655, 1944, KSA.

Reuter was the greatest news distributor in the world from China to Peru and North Cope to Australia Reuter played as a trusted news agency, founded by Paul Julius Reuter in 1851 in Britain at the London Royal Exchange. It was established before the

RADIO

Marconi's invention of the wireless communication was one of the greatest contributions to the world of science and technology in the 20th century. His invention of the Radio in 1901 effected far-reaching changes in the history of mass communication and also to the world. In December 1901 Guglielmo Marconi materialized wireless communication between St. John's, New found land and Poldhu, Cornwall, England.²³⁴ Radio communication is made possible by the transmission of signals through free space by electromagnetic waves between the ranges of 30 KHz to 300 GHz. This electromagnetic radiation waves travel by means of oscillating electromagnetic field that can pass through air and the vacuum of space, below the frequency of visible light. The early use of the radio consisted of maritime requests and messages, which were sent using Morse code. In the year 1905, the Japanese Navy could defeat the Russian fleet during the battle of Tsushima using the technology advantage. Similarly during the tragedy of Titanic in 1912 some of the memorable use of marine wireless messages was made.²³⁵ The communication made between operators on the sinking ship and those of nearby ships and communication from the land stations to the survivors are memorable.

The invention of the radio by Marconi is a wonderful contribution to our cultural progress. This scientific achievement could transform human voice into electro-magnetic waves and send to places which were thousands of kilometres away to reach the ears of listeners, without the help of wires. The pilots of planes flying over the sky and Captains of fishing ships in the

Railway and Telegraph came into existence. He had tried to start a news agency which was faster than the normal mail. For these trained doves were used and through this gave the information about the market standards. Vide, Mathrubhumi Weekly, Vol. 49, Issue No. 16, Feb 19, 1939, Kozhikode, p. 67.

²³⁴ Manoj Gupta, *The New Era of Telecommunication*, Allahabad, 2016, p. 13.

²³⁵ *Ibid.*

sea made use of it. However only after growing into a popular device for spreading knowledge and useful information to mankind, that radio's significance became accepted in literary and cultural circles. Scientists could modify radio as an instrument capable of receiving programmes of different wave lengths. By the beginning of 1920's many countries of the world formed radio broadcasting stations, which could not only boost up human imagination, but also make the process of communication speedier, hearty and powerful.²³⁶

In India, the first radio broadcast was made on July 23, 1927 by the Indian Broadcasting Company Bombay station. It was Lord Irwin, the Viceroy of India who inaugurated this 1.5 KW station with an effective range of 30 miles (48kms).²³⁷ It is notable that the BBC had been formed only about seven months before that in January 1927. It was a public funded organization with John Reith as its first Director General. The Indian Broadcasting Company was formed on the model of the BBC borrowing its pattern of programmes and method of operation. During the first two years and eight months, the IBC operated as a commercial venture, but after that, it was placed under Government control. The year 1935 is a milestone in the history of Indian broadcasting. During the month of August of that year Lionel Fielden, an officer of the BBC took charge as the Controller of Broadcasting in India. He was the imaginative architect who laid the foundation stone of the art of Broadcasting in India. Within five years he could transform the entire shape and structure of the broadcasting system. It was Fielden who changed the name "Indian State Broadcasting Service" into

²³⁶ M. K. Sivasankaran, *Prakshepanakala Charithram*(Mal.), Thiruvananthapuram, 2004, p. 5.

²³⁷ Kanchan Kumar, 'Mixed Signals: Radio Broadcasting Policy in India', *Economic and Political Weekly*, Vol. XXXVIII, No. 22, 2003, p. 110.

“All India Radio” (AIR). The new name came into effect from 1936, June 8.

238

Many native States of India like Travancore had started broadcasting stations during this time. The contribution of the native states to Indian broadcasting deserves serious attention and study. Mysore, Baroda, Hyderabad, Aurangabad, Thiruvananthapuram etc. had radio stations working under the native Governments.²³⁹

The installation of the Travancore transmitter station equipment was completed during the year. After several transmissions, regular broadcast was commenced from 12th March 1943. Due to want of adequate spares, particularly valves only weekly programmes were arranged. The studio was located in the city of Trivandrum, and the work had almost been completed with locally available materials. There were only two studios of which one was used for the talks and the other for music performances and development of broadcasting in Travancore during 1943.²⁴⁰ Setu Parvati Bayi formally inaugurated the broadcast from the station on 12th March 1943.²⁴¹ The inauguration of the radio station by the Travancore government had three objective: (i) For cultural and scientific endeavours, and for researches in these fields. (ii) For the spread of popular education through the mother

²³⁸ M. K. Sivasankaran, *Op. Cit.*, p. 11.

²³⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 10.

²⁴⁰ PWD, File No. 261, Bundle No. 644, 1944, , KSA.

²⁴¹ A. Sreedhara Menon, *Cultural Heritage of Kerala*, Kottayam, 2014, p. 184.

Setu Parvati Bayi said during the inauguration, “The radio was bound to become increasingly one of the strongest links uniting country and country, making it possible for the widest circulation of news and views and the exposition of the fine arts. She hoped that when the urgencies of the present conflict were over, when the world’s nerves were quited, and hourly news reels and catchy music would give place to the much needed programme of harmony and synthesis so essential for the future. Then the work would turned out by the receiving and transmitting sets as amongst the most effective factors, tending towards co operation and mutual appreciation among the nations. ”. Vide, Travancore Information and Listener, Vol. III, No. 7, March 1943, p. 45.

tongue in things that are important to them in everyday life. Radio becoming a valuable agent for disseminating ideas about dietetics, hygiene and public health and also talks for things that enlighten and embellish the mind. (iii) For educating ordinary people and peasants on agricultural and industrial possibilities, and for campaigning to grow more food and to improve cottage industries and to know in the domain of contemporary history and contemporary scientific knowledge. The broadcasting department was under the executive control of a director who was assisted by a staff of programme. A technical section was also attached for campaigning the possibilities of industrial growth, propagating the necessity of food production and the possibilities of improving cottage industries.²⁴²

The cost of the scheme totalled to rupees 1, 23, 003 as of the year 1943. Because of the situations created by the Second World War, transmission from the station was limited to Tuesdays and Fridays.²⁴³ Later, the number of transmissions increased. Daily transmissions however, started every evening from August 1947. The main programmes were recitation and talks in Malayalam, Tamil and English. Moreover, local art forms like *Ottamthullal*, *Kadhakali*, *Patakam*, *Thiruvathirakali*, etc. and musical concerts were also available. Bi-weekly broadcasting programmes were inaugurated from 1945, and Tri-weekly programmes were introduced during the year.²⁴⁴

New designs and principles of radio art were added to its program by the department. The broadcasting building was at the centre of Trivandrum city; however, the transmitter was installed in Pangappara. High-grade telephone lines connected the transmitter and the broadcasting station. The proposed telephone lines were for transmitting programme from the studio to the

²⁴² Travancore Information Vol. III, No. 7, March 1943, pp. 45-46.

²⁴³ Travancore Almanac and Directory for 1948, Trivandrum, 1947, p. 355.

²⁴⁴ Travancore Administration Report, 1945-46, p. 118.

transmitter. Two pairs of lines are proposed of which one was for carrying the programme and the other for intercommunication to check the programme and to function as a spare in case of emergency. These telephone lines were essential for the satisfactory operation of the transmitter station and the studio when they began to function.²⁴⁵

In pre-independence India, radio played the twin role of a medium of communication as well as a tool of propaganda. During Second World War radio services were used by the military forces for internal transmission of strategies and troop movements. It was also vital as a medium to transmit news to the public.²⁴⁶ A shortage of paper and limitations of widespread delivery of printed matter made radio's reach to a wide audience a boon. With the outbreak of the Second World War there was great economic depression, which affected the broadcasting sector also until the Indian Independence no new radio stations were started as a result.²⁴⁷

The various means of communication prevalent in the princely state of Travancore included the *Anchal*, the British post and Telegraph, the Telephone and the Radio. The prime position in the communication system was held by the *Anchal* Postal Service. It provided its service to every nook and corner of the state. The popularity of the *Anchal* service was due to its variety of business like Savings Bank, *Hundi*, and Insurance etc. The British post and Telegraph was organised mainly on economic interest. The area mainly entered were the Highbanges, Ports, Town, Markets etc. By the introduction of speedier communication systems like Telegraph, Trade was increased although the Travancore State. The telephone was another mode of communication, which prevailed in Travancore. The King and High

²⁴⁵ PWD, File No. 474, Bundle No. 34, 1943, KSA.

²⁴⁶ Coonoor Kripalani, 'All India Radio's Glory Days and its Search for Autonomy', *Economic & Political Weekly*, Vol LIII, No. 37, 2018, p. 42.

²⁴⁷ M. K. Sivasankaran, *Op. Cit.*, p. 12.

administrators were the prime subscribers, but after some time common people also became its beneficiaries. *Anchal* offices too provided public call offices throughout the state. Introduction of the Radio was another great experience for the state; it provided both Education and entertainment sections. The *Anchal* service, The British Indian type of postal service, Telegraph, Telephone, and Radio brought about a revolution in communication in Travancore, which led to much larger contacts between the people and the consequent modernisation of the social order through increased social mobility. It facilitated factors for the development towards a Modern state.

CHAPTER - IV

THE SOCIO-ECONOMIC IMPACT

In the 19th and 20th century Travancore experienced all round progress throughout the state. This was attained through the development of transport and communication, which were designated as “Veins and Arteries”¹ of a country. The development of transport and Communication brought an era of Modernization in the princely state of Travancore. The modernization in a way helped an all round progress in each and every field, at the same time it created an impact on the socio economic life of the state. Development, modernization and industrialization, although related phenomena, can be placed in a descending order of generality. Development, in most general, results from the proliferation and integration of functional roles in a community. As David E. Apter analyses, three conditions are required for the successful growth of modernization. (a) A social system that is innovative enough to accept change (b) Flexible social structure which can adjust without breaking up into fragments. (c) The availability of social frame work which can provide the skills and knowledge necessary for social change. Industrialization, a special aspect of modernization, may be defined as the period in a society in which the strategic functional roles are related to manufacturing. It is possible to attempt the modernization of a given country

¹ “In nineteenth- and twentieth-century European writings, the relate analogy of the ‘artery’ was frequently employed for main channel of transportation and communication. Thus we read of “arterial or trunk roads, of “the arteries of trade”, of railways as “arterial sources of wealth and prosperity” and of “great arterial communications which connect one province with another”. Even more explicitly, roads and bridges were designated “the veins and arteries of a country. As indispensable to a state as those parts of the system were to the human frame”. Vide, Ravi Ahuja, *Pathways of Empire: Circulation, ‘Public Works’ and Social Space in Colonial Orissa(c. 780-1914)* Orient BlackSwan, Hyderabad, 2009, p. 69.

without much industry, but it is not possible to industrialize without modernization.²

The 19th century is well known as the age of Industrialization all over the world. The rapid industrialization and production of goods due to the new inventions and machinery brought many changes in the Western countries which were introduced in their colonies also. With the industrial revolution greater demands on the raw materials from the colonial countries emerged. The immediate cause of the development of penetration lines in colonial countries was to haul raw materials from the hinter land to the ports.³ In addition, a revolution in transportation and a decline in sea-freight rates fostered international trade and specialization making it possible for Britain to win over India's exports, and subsequently, the domestic market.⁴

The ability of Europeans in the nineteenth century to conquer other continents stemmed from a relatively few inventions.⁵ This is what is called tools of Empire.⁶ The 'tools' took place in three phases: penetration, conquest, and consolidation. In the first stage, steamers and the prophylactic use of quinine were the key technologies. In the period of conquest European infantry weapons, which were revolutionized after the mid-century, were crucial. In the third phase, it was the communications revolution that facilitated consolidation. The communications revolution: the railway, the steamship, the submarine cable, and the Suez Canal that made the imposition

² David E. Apter, *The Politics of Modernization*, Chicago, 1966, p. 67.

³ K. P. Sunny, 'Uneven Development of Kerala's Transport System: Some Economic Aspects', *Economic and Political Weekly*, Vol. 25, No. 37, 1990, p. 2093.

⁴ Ishita Banerjee - Dube, *A History Of Modern India*, Delhi, 2015, p. 161.

⁵ Daniel R. Headrick, *The Tentacles of Progress: Technology Transfer in the Age of Imperialism, 1850-1940*, New York, 1988, p. 5.

⁶ Daniel R. Headrick, *The Tools of Empire: Technology and European Imperialism in the Nineteenth Century*, New York, 1981, p. 6.

of colonial rule easier. By using these tools the state could develop through commercialization of agriculture, development of export and imports etc.

Colonialism brought new technology, institutions and knowledge and value systems. But the beneficiaries were the dominant castes and the newly emergent wealthy class. The economically independent and numerically weak, depressed castes were least influenced by these developments. But it provides a space for social mobility, which was the outcome of historical and contextual pressures. Education, employment in Government and other sectors, and participation in the newly emergent political process accelerated this.⁷

In the beginning of the nineteenth century the chief interest of the British in Travancore was to establish their relations with that state “on a permanent basis of security for all times to come”.⁸ History of Travancore took a different turn after the conclusion of the subsidiary alliance treaty with the English East India Company in 1805.⁹ It made Travancore completely subservient to the Company in foreign affairs and crippled her freedom even in internal affairs. It reduced Travancore, hitherto an equal ally to the position of a sub ordinate power. As external defence was taken over by the Company the state became completely dependent on the British.¹⁰ The treaty marked a change not only in political, but also in economic and social life of the State.

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⁷ S. Thulaseedharan Assary, ‘Colonial Power, Princely states and People’s Resistance: Travancore 1938-48’, *Journal of Social Science in Perspective*, Vol. I, No. 1, July-September 2009, p. 80.

⁸ R. N Yesudas, *British Policy in Travancore 1805 -1859*, Trivandrum, 1977, p. 17.

⁹ S. Ramachandran Nair, ‘The Movement for Social Justice in Travancore: An Economic Interpretation’, *Journal of Kerala Studies*, Vol. XIII, March- December, 1986, p. 89.

¹⁰ T. P. Sankarankutty Nair, *A Tragic Decade in Kerala History*, Trivandrum, 1977, p. 67.

¹¹ S. Ramachandran Nair, ‘The Movement for Social Justice in Travancore: An Economic Interpretation’, *Op. Cit.*

The British India Trade Act of 1848 excluded Indian states from all customs duties on goods passing from one port to another within British India. Consequently export from and import to Travancore had to pay foreign duty at British ports, and the duty had been heavy.¹² This situation was used in 1855 by the Governor of the Madras Presidency to condemn the state monopoly system for promoting smuggling and endangering public peace. This resulted in the signing of the Travancore Inter-portal Commercial Treaty of 2nd June 1865 signed between Travancore, Cochin and British governments. By this treaty no customs duty could be levied for British manufactured goods in Travancore for products from Cochin except Tobacco, Salt, Opium and Spirit.¹³

While, on the one hand, the Travancore state encouraged a laissez-faire policy of freeing up land from landlord control and promoting private property in land, on the other hand, ironically, it matched the ideology of free trade and commerce with one that extended its own reach in society. Reforms set in motion by the Travancore state resulted in the growth of what Michael Mann calls the “infrastructural power” of the state, that is, the penetration of state power into civil society.¹⁴ As an agent of power, the British government introduced Post and Telegraph office even in hilly areas for better communication and there by achieving Imperial government designs.¹⁵

The new mode of production demanded the extraction of surplus from ‘free’ sellers of labour power in a commodity exchange market. In the pre-colonial and pre- capitalist system the surplus was extracted through extra-

¹² S. Thulaseedharan Assary, *Colonialism, Princely States and Struggle for Liberation: Travancore (1938-48)*, New Delhi, 2009, p. 29.

¹³ Travancore Administration Report, 1864-65, p. 33.

¹⁴ Manali Desai, ‘Indirect British Rule State Formation and Welfarism in Kerala India 1860-1957’, *Social Science History*, Vol. 29, No. 3, 2005, p. 481.

¹⁵ Cover File No. 333, Bundle No. 70, 1876, KSA.

economic coercion of unfree labour.¹⁶ Therefore it was an essential requirement for the capitalist to convert the existing unfree labour into a free labour market and to eliminate all extra-economic coercive forces. Their cause was propagated by the evangelists who had been further motivated by humanitarian considerations.¹⁷ The Government of Travancore abolished slavery through the Abolition of slavery Act of 1855. This was made by the government under pressure from the Colonial administration.¹⁸

However, though slavery was abolished by law, the former slaves had no other choice but to continue working for their masters as dependent labourers. Indeed, the estate worker was both 'free' and 'unfree', resulting from the often conflicting strategies of labourers, planters and governments. In the case of Southwest India, the abolition of slavery (1855) did not usher in a period of 'free' plantation labour, the introduction of the Criminal Breach of Contract Act (1865) did not establish a completely 'unfree' work force, and the abolition of that same act (1935) did not 'free' the estate workers.¹⁹ The criminal Breach of contract Act protected the position of the planter, but did not give the employee any form of legal protection against his or her employer.²⁰

However, the wages paid by the planter to the employee was indeed considerably higher than those paid by the landlords in the lower parts of

¹⁶ K. K. N. Kurup, 'The Colonial Investment And The Abolition Of Slavery In South India A Case Study Of Kerala', *Journal of Kerala Studies* Vol. IX, March - December 1984, p. 197.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁸ K. K. Kusuman *Slavery in Travancore*, Trivandrum, 1973, p. 53.

¹⁹ Paul E. Baak, 'About Enslaved Ex-Slaves, Uncaptured Contract Coolies and Unfreed Freedmen: Some Notes about 'Free' and 'Unfree' Labour in the Context of Plantation Development in Southwest India, Early Sixteenth Century-Mid 1990s', *Modern Asian Studies*, Vol. 33, No. 1, 1999, p. 125

²⁰ Paul E. Baak, 'The Planter's Lobby in Travancore in the Nineteenth Century', *Journal of Kerala Studies*, Vol. XIII, March- December, 1986, p. 32.

south India. Moreover, the wages paid by the department of Public Works was higher than the traditional agriculturist had given. This was well attested by Samuel Mateer Mateer, who noted that in 1859 in south Travancore agricultural labour was attainable for an *anna* per day and that the Public Works Department, which carried out canal works in the region, paid a little over two *annas*. Again he stated that “The planters, however, were obliged in entering on their, to give at least four *annas* to induce ordinary coolies to brace the dangers of the hills; and eight *annas* or more were paid to wood cutters”²¹.

The abolition of slavery and the demand for labour from the planters and the Public Works Department whose establishment in 1860 was closely related with the development of European coffee plantations gradually strengthened their bargaining positions vis-a-vis their landlords. That again resulted in better working conditions, including higher wages.

According to K. K. N Kurup “Once the abolition of slavery was enforced the development of a free labour market in different parts of the country was finally profitable for the capitalist who could purchase cheap labour and curtail the production cost”.²² But Sanal Mohan disagrees with the above statement. He stated that, the arguments that posit inherent relationships between capitalism and free wage labour were never an absolute necessity for the development of capitalism, especially capitalism under colonial conditions.²³

The establishment of British rule reacted in a peculiar way on the process of the creation of the national market. On the one hand, it accelerated

²¹ Samuel Mateer, *Native Life in Travancore*, London, 1883, p. 235.

²² K. K. N. Kurup, *Op. Cit.*, p. 197.

²³ P. Sanal Mohan, *Modernity of Slavery: Struggles Against Caste Inequality in Colonial Kerala*, New Delhi, 2015, p. 18.

the process by making the biggest transformation in the mode of production, i. e., it replaced the production of articles mainly one's own use by production for market.²⁴ Travancore, which was predominantly agricultural state for proper economic growth and development sources for agricultural finance, facilities for irrigation, marketing, transport and communication were immediately required for mobilizing the resources from hinterland to the port.

The Madras government in November 1855 gave instruction to the Travancore government to construct roads, canals and public buildings as part of modernization.²⁵ After the advent of T. Madhava Rao as Dewan in 1858 started a new era of development in Travancore was started. In spite of the sporadic efforts put forth from time to time for improving the condition of roads, there was a great paucity in road communication prior to the organization of the Engineers' Department in 1860.²⁶ During the period of Dewan T. Madhava Rao, Chief Engineer Barton, the Head of the Department of Public Works was appointed in the year 1863.²⁷ Barton organized the department to prove equal in efficiency to the requirements of the government. Barton naturally endeavored to introduce the contract system of work.²⁸ It was the beginning of a new era in the field of public works in Travancore. T. Madhava Rao, the Dewan of Travancore stated that, "it is the cherished aim of the Highness and Government to provide for every subject within a couple of an hour's journey, the advantages of a doctor, a school

²⁴ E. M. S. Namboodiripad, *Kerala Yesterday Today and Tomorrow*, Calcutta, 1968, p. 79.

²⁵ R. Gnanaselvam, 'Public Works Department in Travancore: Its Early History and Growth', *Journal of Kerala Studies*, Vol. XXXI, 2004, p. 146.

²⁶ P. Ibrahim, 'The Development of Transport Facilities in Kerala: A Historical Review' *Social Scientist*, Vol. 6, No. 8, 1978, p. 38.

²⁷ Travancore Administration Report, 1862- 63, p. 49.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 50.

master, a judge, a magistrate, a registering officer and a post master”.²⁹ This policy became a reality in Travancore during the middle of the 19th century.

Land reform was needed for social change in an agrarian society through the intervention of the state. The state does not intervene casually and expediently. It adopts, to use Weber’s expression, the instrumental rational action for intervention.³⁰ The Pandarapattom Proclamation of 1865 gave them the right of ownership over the land held by them it was the ‘Magna Carta’ of the peasants of Travancore.³¹ It removed all uncertainties that had prevailed over the ownership rights of the land in Travancore. This Proclamation also produced the possibility for the weaker section of the population to become owners of the land in which they lived.³² The new Land Tenure legislations are highly significant land mark in the history of Travancore because they were responsible for creating far-reaching changes in the social mobility of the people. Due to the consequent commercialization of agriculture market economy developed money transactions became more prominent. The cultivators needed more capital investment for which they approached money lenders. In other words a new credit system was introduced.³³

The shift from subsistence farming to commercial farming was possible because of two reasons. The first was the introduction of money economy in the form of cash assessment of the land revenue and substitution of ‘rent in kind’ by ‘cash rents’. The second reason lay in the development of

²⁹ M. Kabir and T. N. Krishnan, ‘Social Intermediations and the Health Transition: the Case of Kerala’, *Working Paper No. 251*, Centre for Development Studies, Thiruvananthapuram, 1992, p. 22.

³⁰ Paramjit S. Judge, *Social Change Through Land Reform*, Jaipur, p. 11.

³¹ T. K. Velupillai, *The Travancore State Manual Vol. III*, Trivandrum, 1940, p. 191.

³² S. Ramachandran Nair, *The State and Economy in Colonial British Kerala*, Thiruvananthapuram, 1998, p. 28.

³³ S. Ramachandran Nair, ‘Peasant Movements and Tenancy Reforms in Travancore’ *Journal of Kerala History and culture*, Vol. I, March, 1996, p. 96.

the means of transport, and new infrastructural facilities to grow more for the market.³⁴

As a result, after much negotiation with the British Government permitted the State Government to finance the construction of a road from Devikulam to the lower regions of Travancore. The newly formed Public Works Department started the construction of the ghat road from Kottayam to Gudalur via Peermade in 1863.³⁵ The work was completed in 1871 up to Peermade and to Gudalur in 1884. The cart tracks and bridle paths constructed by the planters were connected to Munnar by 1906.³⁶ A hospital was established in Peermade, as a result of the request put forward by planters in this region in 1869.³⁷

Like slavery, *uzhiyam* was also discontinued by the 1860s. The government created a public works department which introduced waged labour, which was one of the effects of the ending of *uzhiyam* Labour.³⁸ In 1865-66 nearly 10, 000 Ezhavas and slave-caste coolies were recruited on daily wages in the public works department. The scale was not extravagant, but the four *annas* a day which was paid to men, represented an increase of three or four times the rate before the establishment of the PWD.³⁹ The establishment of PWD provides many welfare measures throughout the state.

For example, the government launched ‘a food for work programme’ which accelerated the formal establishment of Public Works Department and

³⁴ Suresh Kumar, *Political Evolution in Kerala Travancore 1859-1938*, New Delhi, 1994, p. 25.

³⁵ Marcus Moench ‘Politics of Deforestation Case study of Cardamom Hills of Kerala’, *Economic and Political Weekly* Vol. 26, No. 4, 1991, p. 51.

³⁶ *Ibid.*

³⁷ Cover File No. 15690, Bundle No. 53, 1869, KSA.

³⁸ Koji Kawashima, *Missionaries and a Hindu State Travancore 1858-1936*, Delhi, 1998, p. 150.

³⁹ Robin Jeffrey, *The Decline of Nair Dominance: Society and Politics in Travancore 1847-1908*, New Delhi, 2014, p. 83.

its later developments.⁴⁰ To help the people suffering from famine, relief operations had started. As a part of the relief work the smooth supply of food grains was essential, for which the repair and construction of roads and bridges became necessary. Consequently the Public Works Department was constituted under the supervision of efficient British engineers. Moreover Missionaries also joined hands with the Government's relief operations. They could also supply men and materials for relief work.⁴¹

After the Pandarappattam proclamation land sale became possible, and foreign capitalists bought land in eastern hilly regions and plantations were started. For eg: The Kannan Devan Hills Plantation Company, Piers Leslie, Aspinval, William Gudekar, AVT etc, companies of native and foreign ownership were formed. Consequently thousands of acres of forest land were converted to either tea estates or plantation sectors. Unlike factories where machinery was used widely, in estates and plantations thousands of labourers were required. "Through plantation agriculture is generally considered as one of the chief means by which various underdeveloped countries have been brought to the 'tributaries' of modern world economy"⁴²

The traditional labourers and skilled artisans were ready to give up their traditional employment because they were paid in each by the capitalists. So markets became alive and it became possible to buy goods like food grains by paying money. Thus a cash based and market based economy became active. Attracted by cash, *Chakaram*, *Fanam*, *New rupee*, etc or in short metal

⁴⁰ Dick Kooiman, 'Mass Movement, Famine and Epidemic: A Study in Interrelationship', *Modern Asian Studies*, Vol. 25, No. 2, 1991, p. 290.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*

⁴² Tharian George. K and P. K. Michael Tharakan 'Development of Tea Plantations in Kerala: A Historical Perspective', *Working Paper No. 204*, Centre for Development Studies, Thiruvananthapuram, 1985, p. 1.

currency, the traditional bonded labourers transformed themselves into wage earning labourers.⁴³

During the middle of the 19th century there was a political stability in Travancore under strong British indirect administration. The colonial Government had the intention of securing monopoly over the trade of spices such as pepper and cardamom and plantation crops like coffee, tea and rubber. Hence they wanted to implement, condition for capital investment in plantations and related industries. The State Government also encouraged colonial capital investment in tea plantations and cottage industries.⁴⁴

The British colonial administration changed the Travancore state policy of agriculture, by forming a new agro economy of preference for western oriented “mono culture” or crops. The policy of traditional poly-culture agronomy was replaced.⁴⁵ In the changed scenario missionaries had a prominent role along with Europeans and Indian planters like P. D. Devasahayam.⁴⁶ The LMS missionaries planted coffee estates in the Ashambu hills and the CMS missionaries started plantations in the north-eastern hills of Travancore. Being the members of the lower middle class of British, the missionaries were money minded. The “combined a predilection

⁴³ V. Karthikeyan Nair, *Navodhana Moolyangalum Keralasamoohavum*(Mal.), Kottayam, 2015, p. 41.

⁴⁴ Manali Desai, *Op. Cit.*, p. 466.

⁴⁵ Varghese, V. J, ‘Land Labour and Migrations:Understanding Kerala’s Economic Modernity’, *Working PaperNo. 420*, Centre for Development Studies, Thiruvananthapuram, 2009, p. 23.

⁴⁶ “PD Devasahayam of southern Travancore was born into a poor, lower caste Nadar family. He turned to protestant faith and attends the London Missionary Society’s Boarding School. Subsequently, he worked for many years before returning to Travancore Back home, Devasahayam bought a large expanse of rice fields and soon emerged as a leading coffee planter. Clearly, the princely portrayal of the individual life of a ‘self-made man’ marked a definite break with the traditional Hindu notion of human life as entirely determined by caste- position and destiny”, Vide, K. T. Rammohan, ‘Mentalities of Development The Case of Travancore, South -West India’, *Social Orbit*, Vol. I, No. 1, 2015, p. 54.

for a sober and industrious life with a keen eye for economic opportunities that the native circumstances offered. ”⁴⁷

The new ‘coffee era’ started in Travancore was dominated by the missionaries from Britain, their relatives, who were Government servants and also a few Indians. They preferred plantation work because it needed only limited capital and seasonal labour. They could become rich by simple methods of cultivation and manufacture, so that by the end of 1860’s there were about fifty coffee estates owned by Europeans in Travancore extending to an area of about 14, 700 acres. The value of coffee exported from Travancore rose steadily from Rs. 8, 397(587cwts) in 1859-60 to Rs. 8, 39, 000(41, 597 cwts) in 1872-73. It reached an all time high of Rs. 9. 89 lakhs with almost 50 thousand cwts of export in the year 1876-77, only to decline to Rs. 42, 061 with 2, 087 cwts of export in 1890-91.⁴⁸

Coffee land was cheap, cultivation and manufacture were comparatively simple and seasonal labour was adequate. At the same time, the British companies Act of 1862 encouraged the old family firms by joint stock companies and salaried managers.⁴⁹ In the 1870’s there were at least 22 coffee plantations owned by Christians converted, mostly Shanars. The area cultivated by them amounted to about one quarter of the total number of plantations in the region.⁵⁰ The involvement of the missionaries in plantations and the supply of labourers were reflected in the amount of contributions given to the Churches. The financial well being and commercial success of the converted entrepreneurs were seen in the change in their life style and their newly built two - storeyed houses. The majority of ex-slaves who took

⁴⁷ Varghese, V. J, *Op. Cit.*, p. 24.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*

⁴⁹ S. Muthiah, *A Planting Century: The First Hundred Years of the United Planters’ Association of Southern India, 1893 - 1993*, Madras, 1993, pp. 40-42.

⁵⁰ Dick Kooiman, ‘Conversion from slavery to Plantation Labour: Christian Mission in South India (19th Century)’, *Social Scientist*, Vol. 19, No. 8/9, 1991, p. 64.

refuge as plantation labourers felt that there was little improvement in their conditions of life.⁵¹

In addition, Once submarine cables were completed between India and Britain in 1870 (paralleling the opening of the Suez Canal to steam navigation in 1869), the telegraph integrated India more completely than ever before into administrative, military and commercial network of the British Empire.⁵² Transit time between the two countries was five to eight months in the eighteenth century, while with the introduction of the Suez canal, this was brought down to one month by 1870, so that Benjamin Disareli described Suez Canal, “a high road to the Indian Empire”.⁵³ Thus the trade between countries made even smoother, and ‘the accumulated wealth of Britain was poured into capitalistic enterprises overseas’.⁵⁴

The immediate cause for the rapid expansion of tea cultivation in Kerala was the decline of coffee industry and the introduction of tea as a substitute crop. But the widespread coffee leaf disease of 1870’s simultaneously affected South Indian and Srilankan coffee plantations.⁵⁵ The analytical review forward by Rammohan was “The shift from coffee to tea, was thus not a simple case of crop change. It also meant the substitution of the earlier production organization of homestead gardens and smaller estates, with a scheme of colonialisation of huge hill tracts, and a complete shift in the control of production from within the local economy to the metropolis. It also

⁵¹ *Ibid.*

⁵² David Arnold, *The New Cambridge History of India III: Science, Technology and Medicine in Colonial India*, New Delhi, 2000, p. 113.

⁵³ K. T. Rammohan, *Op. Cit.*, p. 49.

⁵⁴ Manu S. Pillai, *The Ivory Throne: Chronicles of the House of Travancore*, Noida, 2016, p. 228.

⁵⁵ Tharian George. K and P. K. Michael Tharakan, *Op. Cit.*, p. 4.

introduced large numbers of migrant labourers to hitherto thinly population hilly regions. ⁵⁶

In 1864, a tea plantation was started in the government gardens in Peerumedu. The most important and largest plantation companies of the late nineteenth century were the British Kannan Devan hill Produce Company, registered in 1878, and the Anglo- American Direct Tea Trading Company, registered in 1897. In 1878, the old Rajah of Poonjar, a feudal chieftain at court, surrendered 1, 37, 000 acres of land to a British planter for a measly one – time payment of Rs 5, 000, and annual rent of an equally pitiful Rs 3, 000. ⁵⁷

Although improved communications primarily served the extraction of cash crops for a world market, the PWD offered also an opportunity to poverty-stricken people to keep body and soul together in times of crisis. ⁵⁸ As stated earlier one of the obstacles for quick road transport in the state was the geographical peculiarity of numerous rivers and canals. Many roads had to be constructed and numerous bridges and culverts had to be built. During 1870-71 the Government spent Rs. 9, 67, 664/- which was about 18% of the entire budget of the state for Public works. It was 1872 before the cart road between Kottayam and Peermade was opened and 1885 when the Peermade - Gudular stretch was opened. ⁵⁹

⁵⁶ K. T. RamMohan, 'Material Processes and Developmentalism: Interpreting Economic Change in Colonial Tiruvitamkur 1800 to 1942', Unpublished Ph. D thesis, Centre of Development Studies, Thiruvananthapuram, 1996, p. 67.

⁵⁷ Manu S. Pillai, *Op. Cit.*, p. 228.

⁵⁸ Dick Kooiman, 'Mass Movement, Famine and Epidemic: A Study in Interrelationship', *Modern Asian Studies*, Vol. 25, No. 2, 1991, p. 294.

⁵⁹ S. Mutiah, *Op. Cit.*, p. 40.

In the history of road making in Travancore, the year 1880 is an important landmark, due to the construction of Kottayam - Kumili road.⁶⁰ Its results were not simply the birth of the plantation estates in High range, but also the development of townships. The road that passed through the middle of wild forests made it possible for people to enter into remote areas and establish settlement colonies there. Before 1880 the year of the construction of Kottayam - Kumili road many parts of Idukki and Kottayam districts were deep forests without human habitation.⁶¹

In 1899 L. Davidson, General Manager of the K. D. H. P. Co., set about the construction of the Kundale Valley road from Munnar to Top Station. It extended over a distance of four kilometers. The northern outlet road from the High range, the construction of which was undertaken by the Kannan Devan Hills Produce Company under a special agreement with the Durbar was completed during the year 1905, i. e., more than one year before the stipulated time, and with a considerable saving in cost.⁶²

The introduction and the subsequent consolidation of rubber brought multiple mutations in the plantation sector of Travancore. With the advent of rubber, smaller estates and smaller holdings began to pre dominate the plantation field. As a result, this allowed many small holders to join the ongoing commercialization drive to make their economic fortune. It also brought changes in the geographic locations of plantations - a shift from Central Travancore and Kannan Devan Hills that continued to be epicenter of tea, to Southern Travancore and Mundakayam Area. Mundakayam rubber was pioneered in 1904 by the legendary J J Murphy who opened up Yendayar

⁶⁰ P. K. Balakrishnan, *Jathivyavasthithiyum Keralacharithravum*, (Mal.), Kottayam, 2016, p. 205.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*

⁶² Travancore Administration Report, 1904-05, p. 31.

Estate. ⁶³A bridged and metalled road from Kottayam to the Peermade ghat was opened in 1906 and this made the opening up of Mundakayam easier. In 1913, nearly 12, 000 acres had been planted with rubber, 2000 of them planted by the natives mainly Syrian Christians. ⁶⁴

Table 4. 1
The Area under plantation crops in Travancore (Area in thousand acres)

Year	Rubber	Tea	Coffee
1920-21	51. 0	47. 1	Nil
1925-26	53. 6	67. 7	Nil
1930-31	60. 4	78. 0	Nil
1935-36	96. 7	77. 6	6. 2
1940-41	90. 7	71. 8	5. 9
1945-46	111. 6	77. 4	7. 0

Source: T. C. Varghese, *Agrarian Change and Economic Consequences Land Tenures in Kerala 1850-1960*, New Delhi, 1970, p. 118.

The above table describes the vastness of commercialization of agriculture in Travancore includes mainly Tea, Rubber and Coffee.

Due to the commercialization of agriculture a new class of money lenders was created in Travancore. As the people changed from food crop cultivation to cash crop cultivation, which was more profitable more initial

⁶³ S. Mutiah, *Op. Cit.*, p. 73

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 74.

The newspapers with a predominantly Christian readership, time and again published articles calling their people to ‘use our land for our progress’ and encouraged them to practice commercial agriculture. This allowed them to switch in accordance with the demands of the rapidly changing economic dynamics. Christians were also at an advantageous position as they already inhabited the regions that emerged as rubber plantation zones like North Travancore and Mundakayam. It allowed them to appropriate all potential plantation lands and exploit it. It was also true that large-scale alienation of Nair lands, especially following the Nair Regulation of 1924 benefited Syrian Christians. Vide. V. J. Varghese, ‘Land, Labour and Migration: Understanding Kerala’s Economic Modernity’, *Working Paper No. 420*, Centre for Development Studies, Thiruvananthapuram, 2009, p. 37.

expenditure was required. Government loan facilities were not sufficient, so that the farmers were forced to approach money lenders. They were ready to offer their land as security for the loan from the money lenders who charged an enhanced rate of interest. There were also banking institutions which conducted financial transactions known as *Chitties* or *Kuries*.

The chitty is a prominent feature in Travancore finance. It is the most popular institution both for investment and credit.⁶⁵ A chitty means transaction by which one or more person hereinafter called the foreman or foreman enter into an agreement with a number of persons that every one of the contracting parties shall subscribe a certain amount of money or quantity of grain by periodical installments for a certain definite period and that each in his town as determined by lot or by auction or in such other manner as may be provided for in the *variola* shall be entitled to the 'prize amount'. *Variola* is the document curtaining the articles of agreement between the foreman and each of the subscribers relating to the chitty. The foreman is the person who under the *variola* is responsible for the conduct of chitty. The *chitties* perhaps plays a more important role in the matter of investment of the people's savings. We have seen that are *chitties* with money capital, besides small *chitties* which offer cloth, silver vessels and gold ornaments as prize.⁶⁶

Havala, this introduction of the Gujarati traders has come largely into vogue in the Alleppey market, but not so freely in other centres of Travancore. It is drawn as a bill of exchange made payable on demand. But, actually, the payment falls due only after seven to twelve days, the date on which it is to be retired being noted at the top corner of the paper folded over visually, the date is written in pencil or effaceable ink. This practice is adopted to evade the stamp duty on bills of exchange not payable on demand.

⁶⁵ Travancore Banking Enquiry Committee Report 1930 Vol. I, Trivandrum, 1930, p. 36.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 215.

Though the legal validity of the instruments is questionable, commercial customs accepts it. ⁶⁷ Measures for raising the economic condition, the productive strength and the standard of living of the mass of population must perforce be taken if improvements in the credit system should prove effective. ⁶⁸

The Growth and development of trade, commercial activities and success in plantation crop cultivation and related production of industrial crops were the indirect causes of the origin of the Banking Sector in Travancore in the nineteenth century. At first foreign banks were established in port town like Bombay, Calcutta and Madras by the British Government in India. Large amount of foreign capital were invested in industries such as jute, tea, shipping and insurance. In Travancore banking enterprises originated in the villages around Thiruvalla such as Niranom, Thalavady, Ambalapuzha and Chengannoor. In the year 1900 there were 17 companies operating with foreign capital around the port town of Alleppey. In 1912 the number of such companies increased 50, but no bank had started functioning there on foreign capital. ⁶⁹ Most of these banking institutions were managed by Christians in towns like Thiruvalla, Changanassery, Mavelikkara and Pathanamthitta. ⁷⁰

In the economic advancement of the state these banking institutions and joint stock companies had played a crucial role. In 1900 there were about 23 joint stock companies and 47 factories in Travancore. Till the beginning of the Second World War in 1939 there was an accumulation of the banking establishments in Thiruvalla. The official data available show that Tiruvalla, Ambalapuzha, Quilon and Kottayam taluks had a concentration of the

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 108.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 220.

⁶⁹ M. A. Oommen, 'Rise and Growth of Banking in Kerala', *Social Scientist*, Vol. 5, No. 3, 1976, p. 25.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*

banking companies. This shows the possible of the strong link between the industrial companies and banking establishments. Hence it follows that the resources for the development of banks must have come from the growth of the joint stock companies.

Started in 1889, the Punalur Paper Mills, and the *Manorama* Company were the first joint stock companies established in Travancore. In 1892 the Kandathil family started the Kandathil Kudumba Yogam Company for trading plantations crops with a capital of Rs. 1 lakh.⁷¹ The first commercial bank in Travancore was established with its profit, in 1893 called Travancore Bank. This bank accepted deposits at the rate of 6% interest and passed loans at the rate of 12%, 6% commission was also charged in addition. However this was less than the 30 to 50% charged by private money lenders. So within a few years the Travancore Bank earned reputation as a source of financial help to the village population.⁷²

The income of the people, increased considerably due to the development of export and other commercial practices. The surplus wealth accrued through these was invested in land and money lending. Many money lending families running chitty business entered banking enterprises. They engaged themselves in money lending and the work of pawn brokers, money lending on promissory notes was very common in Travancore. Later these establishments reorganized themselves into modern joint stock companies or commercial banks. The following table shows the growth of Joint- Stock companies and Banks in Travancore.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, p. 27.

⁷² *Ibid.*

Table 4. 2

Table of Joint-Stock Companies, Banks in Travancore.

Year	Travancore Number of joint-stock (working) companies	Banks
1888-1889	2	-
1899-1900	23	-
1900-1901	25	-
1904-1905	26	4
1910-1911	125	6
1914-1915	121	5
1919-1920	149	35
1924-1925	134	36
1929-1930	327	256
1934-1935	425	252
1939-1940	407	186
1944-1945	457	109
1946-1947	665	108
1947-1948	932	108

Source: M. A. Oommen, 'Rise and Growth of Banking in Kerala', *Social Scientist*, Vol. 5, No. 3, 1976, p. 26.

The banking as a condition necessary for economic growth, other consider it as only as an after effect. Here banks developed due to many socio economic factors which produced improvement in the economy of some regions.

Before the middle of the 19th century the agricultural production of Travancore was mainly food crops such as rice, vegetables, coconut, etc and products for export like pepper, cardamom, cloves, etc. After the development

of plantations products like tea, coffee and rubber changed the pattern of agricultural production. Commercial crops for export had to be transported to the ports and hence improvement of facilities for transport became necessary. This led to the growth of trading centres into commercial towns. There was increased demand for consumer goods like food grains, which had to be imported. The following table shows the total value and percentage distribution.

Table 4. 3
The Total Value and Percentage distribution of
the Chief Exports and Imports of Travancore, 1870-71 to 1938-39

Item	Exports				Imports			
	1870-71	1899-1900	1919-20	1938-39	1870-71	1899-1900	1919-20	1938-39
Coconut and Coconut products	57.1	52.6	36.9	37.2	-	-	-	-
Coffee, tea and Rubber	8.3	0.4	33.5	30.4	-	-	-	-
Tamarind and Arecanut	8.8	3.7	1.2	1.8	-	-	-	-
Ginger, Lemon grass	15.0	14.0	10.1	7.7	-	-	-	-
Cardamom and Tumeric Cashnew	-	-	-	6.8	-	-	-	-
Jaggery, Molasses and Sugar	2.0	3.3	3.2	2.0	0.7	0.7	-	2.5
Cotton Textiles and Yarn	-	-	-	-	26.0	14.7	-	14.4
Rice and Paddy	-	-	-	-	2.5	31.4	51.1	31.0
Tobacco	0.3	-	-	-	32.7	33.1	7.4	4.7
Mineral oils	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	12.5
Metals, Machines, Vechiles	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Hardware, Equipments etc.	-	-	-	-	3.2	-	1.6	5.6
Total Value (Rs. in lakhs)	65.7	169.5	576.3	958.0	52.1	93.9	455.7	763.2

Source: P. K Micheal Tharakan, 'Development of Colonial Economy In Kerala 1850-1947' in P. J Cherian (ed.), *The Prespectives on Kerala History*, Trivandrum, 1999, p. 379.

The export and import structure of commodities in the state also reflected the colonial interest of the British. In 1870, the 57 percent of the state's export commodities consisted of coconut and coconut products; but their export decreased to 37 percent in 1938. During the period the imports of paddy and rice increased from 2.5 percent to 31 percent of the total import of products. However the exports of plantation crops increased from 8.3 percent to 30.4 percent during the period. This shows that the net effect of the export and import trade was always in favour of the colonial British capitalists. It is to be seen that the native trading community had only an unimportant role in the commercial activities of the state in the early decades of the 20th century.⁷³

Emergence of Middle Class

Modernity can be marked in Travancore through the rise of many changes in society, caste, identity and political debates.⁷⁴ From the second half of the nineteenth century, Travancore entered a state of unprecedented agency - forming transitions, though these were at times very slow, sporadic and even belated.⁷⁵ Various reforms and regulations effected by royal Proclamations effected rapid changes in society. Reforms such as the abolition of feudal ownership of lands, growth of cash crops and plantations, development of public works department and small scale industries, and finally the introduction of Western education were all major changes which completely altered the traditional 19th century social set up.⁷⁶ All these

⁷³ P. K. Micheal Tharakan, 'Development of colonial Economy In Kerala 1850-1947' in P. J Cherian (ed.), *The Perspectives on Kerala History*, Trivandrum, 1999, p. 380.

⁷⁴ Vineeth Mathoor, 'The Romance of Ezhava -Hindus:The Case of Modernity in Travancore', in Pradip Basu (ed.), *Colonial Modernity: Indian Perspectives*, Kolkata, p. 233.

⁷⁵ P. Chandramohan, *Developmental Modernity In Kerala:Narayana Guru, SNDP Yogam and Social Reform*, New Delhi, 2016, p. 21.

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*

transformations resulted in the creation of new classes in the society, i. e., Middle class mainly Syrian Christians and Ezhavas.

In Jeffrey's words, a "movement from inherited to achieved status".⁷⁷ In other words, the existing caste society was given a thorough shake up, as the dominance of the Nairs in state politics, their near monopoly over administrative positions and other sinews of power was now effectively challenged by the upwardly mobile enterprising dalit groups like the Ezhavas and the local Syrian Christians.⁷⁸

The economic status of Christians as traders and merchants, and, later, as estate owners, landholders, manufacturers and publisher of texts printed in their own printing presses. Due to the influence of all these factors, Christianity witnessed steady growth in Travancore. The enterprise of the Christians brought the hilly tracts of Travancore under commercial cultivation (cash crops), and the trade and commerce of the state were largely handled by them. They were at their best in propagating modern education.⁷⁹ The Syrian Christians had access to village schools; some of them were teachers too. From the late nineteenth century many schools were opened in the church premises or at the initiative of the church. With access to university education and backed by economic power to invest therein, many of them could join the ranks of the small but growing class of professionals.

Syrian Christian in Kerala to produce a forward-looking and profit seeking middle class. Since the 1880s Syrian Christians started showing interest in education, and in 1888-89, they took initiatives to start the first joint-stock company in Travancore. Following the establishment of a joint

⁷⁷ Sekhar Bandyopadhyay, *From Plassey To Partition And After: A History of Modern India*, Hyderabad, 2016, p. 122.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*

⁷⁹ P. Chandramohan, *Op. Cit.*, p. 10.

stock company named *Malayala Manorama*, an association named *Kavi Samajam* was started for Malayalam poets in 1889. The concern for the development of language was raised and the absence of Malayalam grammar texts was emphasized.

Western education brought western expectations, reflected particularly in the emergence local press.⁸⁰ The newspapers gave means to express the desire for change that by the last decade of the Victorian Era had begun to permeate every land of Keralan Society.⁸¹ Consequently, the number of newspapers in Kerala increased from 1870's onwards. The Railways, international telegraph, steam ships and the opening of the Suez Canal could help the printing and circulations of newspapers. As means of communication and transport increased the movement of the people also increased.⁸² So in turn the news that travelled fast could bring in changes more quickly so that the traditional society slowly fades away.

The combination of higher education and economic surplus also facilitated their rise as 'print capitalists'.⁸³ Both the major newspapers

⁸⁰ George Woodcock, *Kerala: A Portrait of the Malabar Coast*, London, 1967, p. 225.

⁸¹ *Ibid.*, p. 226.

The newspaper was also an agency of social change. Therefore, it must identify injustice and violence in society and voice it. The media plays an important role in forming and mobilizing public opinion for the reformation of a society and reconstituting its mores and values. It is the vital agency and catalyst of social transformation. The media is for liberation and emancipation of the human spirit and for the betterment of reality at large. Vide, Ajay Sekher, *Sahodaran Ayyappan: Towards a Democratic Future Life and Select works*, Other Books, Calicut, p. 123.

⁸² Robin Jeffrey, 'Testing Concepts about Print, Newspapers, and Politics: Kerala, India, 1800-2009', *The Journal of Asian Studies*, Vol. 68, No. 2, 2009, p. 471.

⁸³ The concept is the 'print-capitalism' of Anderson (1983). Print is essential for the "public sphere" because it enables the rational debate of intelligent citizens, which is at the heart of the concept. Anderson suggests that the uniting of printing (technology) with capitalism (economic dynamism) provided the impetus to carry common messages widely and relentlessly, while at the same time homogenizing languages and creating 'national' mother tongues. Vide, *Ibid.*, pp. 465-466.

*Nazarani Deepika*⁸⁴ and *Malayala Manorama*⁸⁵ in Travancore were captured by Syrian Christians. The view of Habermas regarding the role of the news papers in the evolution of a ‘public sphere’⁸⁶ is suitable to the Kerala experience. According to Habermas the print media enabled the formulation and discussion of social and political issues. The mobilization of people around such issues is also developed as result of it.⁸⁷ Enlightened in the matters of modern polity and economy by virtue of university education and enthused by their rising stake as investors in the new economy, the Syrian Christian proprietor - editors fashioned the press as a platform for articulating range of development themes. As Rammohan points out, the themes included,

⁸⁴ On July 16, 1888 the *Nazarani Deepika* gave a clarion call: “Oh Malayali, the most important thing for human beings in this world (as distinct from the other world) is wealth and the principal means of acquiring it is through trade. These being so, at least from now on, strive to achieve this goal”. A two - part editorial, ” *Nammude Aalochanakkuravu*”(Our lack of reflection), which appeared in September 19, 1900 issued noted thus: In trade and manufacture, we (people of Travancore) have not attained eminence. This country which is so richly endowed with a variety of cereals, plants, fruits and tubers, ought to have outshone other countries in trade and manufacture. The present situation appears to be the outcome of a certain lack of capacity to reflect and to invest commensurate efforts. The Prosperity that accrues to a country from trade and manufacture would indeed be great. Countries (Sic) like Europe and America have, by employing this principle, grown richer than us...It is now our turn to pursue routes of progress. Vide, K. T. Rammohan, ‘Mentalities of Development the Case of Travancore, South-West India’, *Op. Cit.*, p. 61.

⁸⁵ The intervention through the press, especially through *Nazarani Deepika* and *Malayala Manorama* unleashed campaign with a theme something like ‘our land for ourselves’. The editorial in *Malayala Manorama* regretted that “ Europeans are moving heaven and earth to corner all our all available land” and asserted that they were not entitled to the fertile land in Travancore. Both the newspapers criticized the Travancore Government bluntly for promoting the interests of foreigners at the expense of the natives. Vide, V. J. Varghese, *Op. Cit.*, pp. 37-38.

⁸⁶ Jurgen Habermas defines Public sphere as “The bourgeois public sphere may be conceived above all as the sphere of private people come together as public; they soon claimed the public sphere regulated from the above against the public authorities themselves, to engage them in a debate over the general rules governing relations in the basically privatized but publicly relevant sphere of commodity exchange and social labour. The medium of this political confrontation was peculiar and without historical precedent: people’s public use of their reason” Vide, Jurgen Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere:An Inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society*, Thomas Burger, Fredrick Lawrence(trans.), Cambridge, 1994, p. 27.

⁸⁷ Robin Jeffrey, *Op. Cit.*, p. 471.

foremost, accumulation of wealth, reforms in agriculture, drain of economic surplus, promotion of cash crops, value-addition in industry, scarcity of capital, state intervention and technical education.⁸⁸

At the beginning of the twentieth century, they owned most of the financial institutions, printing presses and lucrative businesses in the state, and took advantage of the economic downfall of the Nairs by purchasing their landed assets.⁸⁹ In 1907 the *Malayala Manorama* fulminated that it was simply ‘unpardonable and shameful’ that nothing was being done to enable locals to ‘undertake this profitable venture’.⁹⁰ Legislators also issued impassioned pleas about how ‘capital, labour, and everything is foreign’, with ‘neither the state nor the people’ benefitting in a palpable manner.⁹¹

The growth of commercial crops in wet agricultural fields brought Christian farmers forward.⁹² When foreign and native capital investments were made in the high range plantations, many enterprising agriculturalists had started reclamation of land near the backwaters like Vembanad. The newly reclaimed lands were used for rice cultivation. During the 20th century the agricultural operations became highly profitably due to the higher prices of received for the rice produced, due to the general shortage of food grains.⁹³ This *Kayal* cultivation became a profitable enterprise. So bunds were constructed and large areas of the lakes and backwaters were converted to

⁸⁸ K. T. Rammohan, *Op. Cit.*

⁸⁹ P. Chandramohan, *Op. Cit.*, p. 10.

⁹⁰ Manu S Pillai, *Op. Cit.*, p. 229.

⁹¹ *Ibid.*

⁹² K. N. Ganesh, *Keralasamooham: Innu Naale* (Mal.), Kottayam, 2012, p. 46.

⁹³ T. C. Varghese, *Agrarian Change and Economic Consequences: Land Tenures in Kerala 1850-1960*, Bombay, 1970, p. 119.

paddy fields. For this large investments were needed and Christians, who in order to pool their savings, organized themselves in groups.⁹⁴

In the case of rubber the native planters had outnumbered the British even in the 1930's. The Syrian Christians were successful in this more than the members of other religions, due to many social and cultural causes. They were more suitable to make use of this situation created by colonialism. The socio-economic and cultural transportations made them more enterprising, dynamic and flexible than others. They were able to adapt themselves under the changed situations by wisely engaging in the new system of capitalist agricultural system. In the rubber plantations in North Travancore they had their domination. After the Nair Regulation of 1924 the Syrian Christians could get land at low cost from the Nair families who began to sell land instead by cultivating it. Even the Depression of the 1930's also helped them to secure estates because the European planters were forced to sell them. The Syrian Christians had better access to financial resources also from *chitties*, *kuries*, etc, which were financial enterprises conducted by private individuals.⁹⁵ Due to the prominence of rubber plantations Christian dominated in the cultivation of hilly areas.

The banking institutions helped farmers to increase their agricultural income by changing from food crop production to the production of cash crops. The Syrian Christian community who became rich bought more land mainly from the Nairs who were a community of land owners. When the Christian community rose in riches and power, the Nairs suffered a decline due to the changes in land owning regulations and system of inheritance. The Christian banking community provided loan facilities etc. for starting trade,

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*

⁹⁵ V. J. Varghese, 'The Alluring Music of Labour:Modernity, Migrations and Recreation of the Syrian Christian Community', *Tapsam Journal of Kerala Studies*, 2007, Vol. 2, p. 511.

agriculture and small industries to the members of all communities. Thus the lower communities were empowered.

Where, The Ezhavas based on the domination of coconut cultivation attained an upper hand in coir industry and employment sector⁹⁶ such as “coir making, coconut trade, toddy and arrack trade, artisanal occupation, various handicrafts, head load work etc”.⁹⁷ The signing of the Interportal Convention in 1865 between Travancore and the British India Government was an important landmark in the development of trade, especially in the export of coconut products. The liquor trade and the increased demand for coconut products in the world market added to the prosperity of the Ezhavas. “When the demand for coconut products in Europe and America increased towards the end of the 19th century, *Iravas*⁹⁸ were able to take advantage of a cash economy”.⁹⁹ The plantation cultivation in Travancore stimulated the creation of employment in other sectors of economy. Employment in the Public Works Department increased. As a result the Ezhavas were able to emerge as wage labourers in the rural and agro-processing industries. Several Ezhava women were “employed as coolies in the Public Works Department”. The Ezhava community consisted mainly of workers engaged in activities like coir making, coconut trade, manufacture of toddy etc. Due to the development of these trade and industries the economic background of the community also developed. The growth and development of plantations and industries related to plantation products provided job opportunities to many labourers who belonged to lower castes. Similarly tile industries, timber `trade, coir manufacture and oil mills for pressing copra were started and modern machinery were used. Many roads for the transport of carts were constituted

⁹⁶ K. N. Ganesh, *Op. Cit.*

⁹⁷ N. Noorjam Beevi, ‘The Ezhavas and the Ownership of Land: A Case Study of Travancore’, *Journal of Kerala Studies*, Vol. XXX, March- December, 2003, p. 75.

⁹⁸ Iravas are Ezhavas.

⁹⁹ N. Noorjam Beevi, *Op. Cit.*

towards the west so that the hill products could be brought to the sea ports. All these were changes from the traditional agricultural work and skilled labour of artisans.¹⁰⁰

The Ezhavas were not only agriculturists, but also the main participants in non-agricultural occupation. The Ezhavas were much benefited by these opportunities. By the end of the 19th century, the Ezhavas, who were 16.12% of the total population and 22.05% of the Hindu population. Out of this 27,499 males and 1,237 females were put down under agriculture.¹⁰¹ They even ventured into new economic arenas as contractors, commission agents, cash crop farmers, traders and entrepreneur. By engaging in profitable enterprises, they earned money and used it to buy lands.¹⁰²

The Ezhavas had done significant contribution in the social awakening of the down trodden in 19th century Travancore. The activities of social transformation undertaken by organization like ESRM were considerable.¹⁰³ The Ezhavas had occupied an intermediate social position in the caste hierarchy between the Nairs and the Ex-slave *Pulaya* communities. They found that the changed socio-economic situations were favourable for their advancement. Due to the modernization of trade and industries their traditional agricultural related occupations could be improved.¹⁰⁴ Coir industries and liquor manufacture offered attractive opportunities.

Due to the influence of the modernization brought in by the European way of life and system of western education a slow but steady transformation

¹⁰⁰ V. Karthikeyan, *Op. Cit.*, p. 40.

¹⁰¹ N. Noorjam Beevi, *Op. Cit.*, p. 76.

¹⁰² *Ibid.*

¹⁰³ T. M. Thomas Issac, 'From Caste Consciousness to Class Consciousness Alleppey Coir Workers during Inter-War Period', *Economic and Political Weekly*, Vol. 20, No. 4, 1985, p. 5.

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid.*

took place in society. The introduction of the developments in travel and communication intensified and accelerated the process of transformation. For instance, Ezhavas were traditionally employed in occupation related to the cultivation of coconut palms such as toddy production and sales. Due to the profits accumulated from this trade many of them turned into small scales industrialists and capitalists. In all these enterprises the newly developed transportation facilities such as new roads, bridges and canals were greatly helpful.

The rise of working-class movement in shaping modern consciousness in Travancore. As a result of these changes, by the close of the nineteenth century, *janam*, meaning people, had been transformed into *pothujanam*, meaning the general public through diverse processes of socialization. This formation of civil body was distinguishable on many accounts in Travancore. Primarily, it points out the development of resistance as conscious political contrivance in a theological state and secondly, the birth of the liberated individual in a feudal society. However, following capitalist social transformation, Travancore society had already developed spheres of interaction and interventions, cutting across regional and caste stratifications. Thus we have missionary reports since the 1880s indicating the slowly changing attitudes of society towards religion, customs, practices and caste-codes.

The number of people speaking English doubled, and almost thirty Ezhava spoke English in Travancore. Throughout these periods, newspapers kept on remaining the *pothujanam* of the importance to follow progressive institutions, ideas and practices.¹⁰⁵ Availability of printing press, the building of roads, postage, etc coupled with Pax Britannica enabling the Ezhavas to

¹⁰⁵ Vineeth Mathoor, *Op. Cit.*, p. 234.

organize as never before.¹⁰⁶ It is well attested by M. N. Srinivas, a renowned social scientist. Literacy was higher among the factory workers of Travancore than anywhere else in India with possible exception of Bombay, and each literate worker read out his half-*anna* newspaper to a group of illiterate fellow workers.¹⁰⁷ T. K. Madhavan and Ayyappan through their respective journals *Deshabhimani* and *Sahodaran*, contributed considerably in spreading the message of freedom, equality and fraternity all over Kerala.¹⁰⁸ Kerala Kamudi had also great role in the rise of Ezhavas and growth of the SNDP movement.

Therefore, attempts to bring new forms of literature, such as novels and short-stories, and the importance of space for reading in society were repeatedly expressed in the newspapers and magazines by the late 1890s. These changes also facilitated the urge for new political ideologies, and the publication of the first Malayalam biography of Karl Marx came out in print in 1912, emphasizing the progressive outlook of Marxism as a revolutionary idea. Most importantly, all the educated people irrespective of religious and cast distinctions agreed on the obligation to transform society along modern lines; the condition of lower-castes attracted intellectual concern and newspapers carried out reports indicating the essentiality of being transparent in reforming the lower-castes.¹⁰⁹

The most revolutionary changes took place in the social position among the Ezhavas through reform movements, which was accelerated by the rise of industrialization capital investment. The conventional hierarchy based

¹⁰⁶ Mary Elizabeth King, *Gandhian Nonviolent Struggle and Untouchability in South India: The 1924-25 Vykom Satyagraha and the Mechanisms of Change*, New Delhi, 2015, p. 45.

¹⁰⁷ Louise Ouwerkerk and Dick Kooiman, *No Elephants for the Maharaja: Social and Political Change in Travancore 1921-1947*, New Delhi, 2011, p. 64.

¹⁰⁸ P. Chandramohan, *Op. Cit.*, p. 163.

¹⁰⁹ Vineeth Mathoor, *Op. Cit.*, p. 235.

on caste was shattered. The acquisition and ownership of the land by the tenants and the emancipation from bonded labour obligation liberated the down trodden castes from the injustice of caste inferiority.

Alongside the attempts at educational advancement and improvement of opportunities in gaining government service, the SNDP yogam also concentrated its attention on economic progress of the Ezhava community's industrial activities. According to C. V. Kunjuraman,¹¹⁰ the motto of the Ezhavas was 'if you cannot find any job, go and steal something. Do not sit idle. He who lives on other's charity without doing any kind of work is great gentlemen thief'. Another great inspiration for the Ezhava community was from the Sree Narayana Guru, spiritual leader of the community. He advised people to acquire different kinds of industrial training. The SNDP *yogam*, as stated earlier, had tried continuously for the educational development of the Ezhavas. It also aimed at securing opportunities for Ezhava youth in government service. Industrial areas also it tried to concentrate so that the Ezhavas could achieve economic progress. Sree Narayana Guru, the spiritual leader of the community was to secure industrial training. He took the initiative to open a weaving centre at his Ashram in Varkala. Here the youth were given training in spinning and weaving. In various parts of Kerala the wealthy and Ezhavas opened industrial units such as textile mills, and cashew factories following his advice.¹¹¹

By the collective endeavor of the of the Ezhava community the Travancore Ezhava Bank was established with an initial capital of Rs 2 lakhs, which could improve the economic background of the Ezhavas.¹¹² There was

¹¹⁰ C. V Kunjuraman, a prominent leader of Ezhavas and Chief Editor of *Kerala Kaumudi* Newspaper.

¹¹¹ P. Chandramohan, *Op. Cit.*, p. 106.

¹¹² *Ibid.*

also a Travancore Ezhava Bank at Kottayam.¹¹³ The organization and other industrial and economic activities together with reforms played a big role in keeping the identity of Ezhavas as a strong middle class in Travancore society.

Impact of Transport and Communication in Socio- Economic Scenario

Travancore was vitally interested in water transport. It is the policy of the government not to extend the railway system because of the ramified backwater communication which from one end of the state to the other has been replacing and can increasingly replace all other forms of transport especially in respect of heavy loads. It was for this reason that Travancore has not extended its railway beyond a hundred miles and has taken over the ownership and control of the state motor transport system.¹¹⁴ One of the most important impacts that happened after the formation of PWD was Hundreds of Ezhava women became PWD coolies. Indeed, the *sirkar* sought to demonstrate its enlightenment by ordering ‘the clothing of the upper part of the person a condition of the employment of women’. The 1875 census shows that eighteen per cent of the population as ‘labourers’, and most of these were affected by the spread of, and the rise in, wages.¹¹⁵

Coastal cities were mainly commercial centers. Till the development of air transport facilities the places where roads, routes of river navigation and sea routes joined together had grown into large business centres. The progress of Alappuzha in the 19th century is an example. The merchandise from High ranges, and Kuttanad were accumulated at Alappuzha, Quilon or Kollam also

¹¹³ The Bank hereby informs all its customers and other well-wishers, that the court having ascertained the security of its assets has issued directions, based on which the government has granted permission to stop its liquidation, and to resume the activities. Vide, Kerala Kaumudi, 1946, November 12, p. 3.

¹¹⁴ PWD, File No. 3472, Bundle No. 291, 1942, KSA.

¹¹⁵ Robin Jeffrey, *The Decline of Nair Dominance: Society and Politics in Travancore 1847-1908*, New Delhi, 2014, p. 83.

grew into a port town related to the commercial enterprises of hill products and cashew industries.¹¹⁶

There is a considerable difference in the urbanization of towns situated towards the sea coast and inland areas. While many markets grew up into towns due to the changes in agricultural production (examples are Kottarakkara, Kottayam, Muvattupuzha, Aluva etc.) the coastal towns depended on the changes in commercial activities. For instance, Alappuzha developed into a city based on the trade of coir and hill products.

Water transport facilities were finely used by the people in so many occasions. For instance, the members of *savrnajatha* in relation with Vaikkom Satyagraha. To cross the Ashtamudi Kayal many wafters were used. A new road was made from Panayira to Mayanadu for the speedy movement of *Savrnajatha*.¹¹⁷ In Mayyanadu pulayas distributed food and gave copper coins and it was widely accepted, without any caste distinctions. This event was a milestone in the social sphere of Travancore. In Anjengo, there arranged a floating bridge in order to cross the *kayal*.¹¹⁸ It was made out of, several boats which were tied together and wooden sheets were put on the surface. This was a technology used by the Germans at the time of War.

The back waters extend throughout the length and breadth of the land, interconnected with rivers and canals into the interior of the state facilitated water transport and transportation of goods.¹¹⁹

The Food Grains Transport by water is another important item of work to be considered in the Scheme of Water Transport. The Food Grains arriving at Cochin by Steam ships are stored in the Cochin Godowns under the custody of Government. In the initial stages when Travancore and Cochin

¹¹⁶ K. N Ganesh, *Op. Cit.*, p. 49.

¹¹⁷ E. Rajan, *Vaikkom Sathyagraham* (Mal.), Kozhikode, 2017, p. 229.

¹¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 230.

¹¹⁹ Survey Report on Water Transport in Travancore Vol. II, p. 13. Vide, PWD, File No. 8438, Bundle No. 814, 1950, KSA.

were separately administered, the transport of Food Grains from Cochin to all the important stations in Travancore was a very difficult and laborious problem. By the integration of the two states and Food Grains transport has been regularized and disabilities removed to the almost extent.¹²⁰

Vaikom can be considered as an important a traffic Centre for the co-ordination of road and water transport scheme.¹²¹ The Hill Produces from Palai, Kottayam, Thodupuzha, Erattupetta and Meenachil find their exit by water route to Cochin easily from Vaikom, where there was Jetty convenience and loading and unloading facilities.

Sasthamkottah adjacent to *kayals* was the major emporium of the products for sale towards the eastern places, like the *Pandi* regions.¹²² Sasthamkotta, in those days was the major market for the sale of agricultural and industrial products. From caravans of cargo carts drawn by bullock would arrive regularly on certain days of the week. They came to Sasthamkotta through the route of Achankovil, Thodeekandam, Matherumannu, Kakkapponnayan, Chaliyakkara, Pathanapuram, Parakkode and Adoor. These bullocks had to pull the heavy loads of paddy from the fields of *pandi* to these markets. Instead of money as its price the merchants preferred pepper from Travancore. This was the situation before sixty years. Still we can find the traces of the forest paths through which the bullock carts had travelled.¹²³ Other important destinations of trade routes were Alleppey-Kottayam, Alleppey - Changanacherry etc where exchanges of goods were made.

The Railway connection with the Port of Quilon will doubtless increase its sea borne trade and it is not improbable that efforts will be made to construct an artificial harbour. At Quilon, the great rocky Tangacherry reef keeps off the sand currents and also makes a safe base for the wall as the

¹²⁰ *Ibid.*

¹²¹ Mary Elizabeth King, *Op. Cit.*, p. 91.

¹²² C. Kesavan, *Jeevitha Samram*(Mal.), Trivandrum, 21015, p. 37.

¹²³ *Ibid.*

Isane reef does at Colombo, but Quilon possesses one great advantage over Colombo, in that its mount is turned to the quiet South-east where neither storm-wave nor ground-swell can enter. Quilon port was a roadstead of long standing prominence in Indian history as it was the one of the most convenient ports on the West coast protected on the East, West and North by the Varkala Jetty, Tangasseri Fort and the Quilon share respectively. During the Second World War period the trade dwindled and was diverted From Quilon to Cochin as a measure of safety to vessels and cargo. ¹²⁴

In Alapuzha beyond the road there were many cargo boats loaded with dried ginger and pepper filled in sacks. The wholesale merchants engaged in these spice trade had their business centre in various regions of the eastern areas. They would lend money on the security of ginger, pepper and other spices. Thus the entire products of high commercial value would come under the control of a single of merchant. If this kind of arrangement had continued within about 10 years no one in the country would be able to export a single piece of ginger or a handful of pepper. Thus an individual might fix the price of spices like pepper and ginger. This illustrates how monopoly system in capitalistic setup could establish complete control of prices over goods. ¹²⁵

This system was wide spread in Travancore especially among the farmers who produced spices. The representatives of the company called Hill Produce Marketing Agency would visit the farmers and lend them money to enlarge the cultivation of ginger, pepper etc. The entire products would be brought during the time of harvest. The farmers would be obliged to sell the products at the pre-decided price. This would make them helpless to claim the real market price of the hill products at the time of harvest. ¹²⁶

Government strongly felt the need for transaction of some kind to meet the huge expenses incurred in the construction and maintenance of roads and

¹²⁴ PWD, File No. 386, Bundle No. 769, 1949, KSA.

¹²⁵ Thakazhi Sivasankara Pillai, *Chukku* (Mal.), Kozhikode, 2015, p. 16.

¹²⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 100.

bridges and they hit upon the idea of introducing tolls. ¹²⁷ In view of the heavy expenditure that Government were incurring on the maintenance of roads and in view of the fact that this expenditure was on the increase year after year, the establishment of toll gates to tax the vehicles etc using the roads in order to realize, as a permanent source of revenue, a contribution towards the amount spent on road maintenance was introduced first in the year 1912. ¹²⁸ Thus the collection of toll was one of the revenue to the Travancore Exchequer.

Table 4. 4

Statement showing the Sanctioned allotment for the maintenance of roads as compared with the toll revenue for years 1921-22 to 1933-34.

Year	Metalled Roads	Unmetalled Roads	Total	Toll Revenue	Net Expenditure by Government	Total grant for ordinary public works
1921-22	2, 80, 898	2, 58, 309	5, 39, 207	59, 756	4, 79, 451	31, 60, 000
1922-23	2, 77, 192	2, 66, 978	5, 44, 170	61, 560	4, 82, 510	26, 73, 200
1923-24	2, 81, 910	2, 74, 080	5, 55, 990	85, 042	4, 70, 948	28, 25, 691
1924-25	3, 13, 470	2, 78, 660	5, 92, 130	1, 00, 740	4, 91, 394	31, 97, 500
1925-26	3, 38, 805	2, 88, 840	6, 27, 645	1, 57, 211	4, 70, 434	29, 40, 000
1926-27	3, 59, 892	2, 97, 546	6, 57, 438	2, 49, 079	4, 80, 369	30, 00, 000
1927-28	3, 74, 576	3, 50, 707	7, 25, 383	2, 82, 741	4, 42, 642	34, 00, 000
1928-29	3, 84, 252	3, 54, 714	7, 38, 996	4, 21, 661	3, 17, 305	43, 00, 000
1929-30	3, 74, 485	3, 55, 069	7, 29, 555	4, 49, 893	2, 79, 662	41, 88, 400
1930-31	4, 36, 109	3, 65, 657	8, 01, 766	5, 25, 137	2, 76, 629	41, 74, 530
1931-32	4, 42, 874	3, 86, 325	8, 29, 199	3, 87, 515	4, 41, 684	32, 48, 500
1932-33	4, 02, 773	3, 61, 365	7, 64, 138	4, 01, 835	3, 62, 303	29, 00, 000
1933-34	4, 74, 634	4, 20, 555	8, 95, 189	4, 25, 486	4, 69, 703	30, 56, 000
Total	47, 41, 971	42, 58, 805	90, 00, 776	36, 07, 656	53, 93, 120	

Source: PWD, File No. 1060, Bundle No. 467, 1934, KSA.

Transport and communications, too, underwent radical change and had far reaching effects, as stated earlier. Although the age of steam continued on India's railways, the internal combustion engine brought cars, buses and

¹²⁷ T. K. Velu Pillai, *The Travancore State Manual Vol. III*, Trivandrum, 1940, p. 474.

¹²⁸ The Travancore Directory for 1939 Part II, Trivandrum, 1938, p. 215.

lorries to the streets of Indian towns and cities and, aided by an expanding network of all-weather roads, brought new accessibility to the countryside.¹²⁹ By the 1930's buses and lorries were plying many rural routes, where railways had never reached, ferrying cash crops to market and fostering the growth of a new generation of small town entrepreneurs, even in the remotest villages. On the eve of the Second World War, India had 175, 000 motor vehicles in India. Similarly motors transport in the state also had very fast development. The first motor vehicle in the state was registered in 1911.¹³⁰ Upto 1921, 44 motor cycles, 50 cars, 51 buses and 7 Lorries were registered. During 1931 there were, the number of motor vehicles for hire including cars, buses and lorries was 1, 475. In addition, there were more than one thousand cars registered in the state. The number of Motor launches also increased from 36 in 1921 to 50 in 1930. The rapid improvement of motor transport could influence considerably the movement of population from one part of the country to the other. The below table shows the number of vehicles registered in the state.

Table 4. 5

The Number of Vehicles Registered in Travancore from 1936 to 1938

Type of Motor vehicles	1936	1937	1938
Cars	295	306	322
Buses	111	96	170
Lorries	50	49	43
Cycles	32	35	39
Total	488	486	574

Source: S. R. N. Badri Rao, Annamalai University, Chidambaram, 1941, p. 369.

Though modernization was effected through the introduction of industrialization transport, communication etc, the social taboos remained unchanged in Travancore. An incident showed that the car owned by of

¹²⁹ David Arnold, *Op. Cit.*, p. 206.

¹³⁰ Census of India, 1931 Volume XXVIII Travancore Part I- Report, Trivandrum, p. 78.

Alummottil Channan was not permitted to travel through the main road near the temple, as he belongs to Ezhava community. After reaching the eastern side of the temple, *Channan* had to walk through the side roads. On reaching the north side of the temple he could continue the journey in the car which would reach there, driven by a driver (Not an Ezhava).¹³¹ Thus the roads in Travancore were symbols of not only caste domination, but also means of protecting caste rules and rules of caste pollution.

The nationalization of state transport was done in 1938, it was a milestone in history of transport in the state. Nationalisation of Road Transport means the exercising of the right of the state to monopolise and the taking over the Bus routes and services hitherto in the possession and enjoyment of private corporations and individuals respectively and to make them state-owned and state-managed.¹³²

The Transport Department also undertook to carry loads of tea from Kannan Devan Hills, Munnar to Cochin Ports. On the return journey the vehicles carried rice bags from Cochin Ports to Munnar so that the problem of expenses could be solved. The rate of charge was four *annas* per mile for one ten of goods. The Transport Department work was profitable and efficient in those days. Regular services were operated at specified intervals. Due to the efficiency in the operation of the Transport Department a net profit of Rs. 61, 000 could be made for a period of 6 months. Appointment of Graduate Conductors, introduction of parcel system, concession system for return journey, hiring of state buses for private journeys, etc also could make the Department run profitably. The pay of the employees was also not very high and the operating cost was also kept down so that the functioning of the Department was encouraging. The operating costs are kept down, due to the low pay of the employees. The operating cost is also very low and works out

¹³¹ C. Kesavan, *Op. Cit.*, p. 172.

¹³² Nationalisation of Transport-Report of the Investigation Officer, p. 1. Vide, PWD, File No. 8438, Bundle No. 814, 1950, KSA.

to about 0. 3 *anna* per mile, while on the London Transport System it is nearly four times as much. ¹³³ The income extracted from the nationalization state transport was follows.

Table 4. 6
Revenue from Nationalization of State Transport in Travancore

Years	Profit
1942-43	Rs. 8. 71 lakh
1943-44	Rs 12. 86 lakh
1944-45	Rs 15. 30 lakh(Subject to audit)
1945-46	Rs. 18. 00 lakh (Anticipated)

Source:Saroja Sundararajan, *Sir C. P. Ramaswamy Aiyar: A Biography*, Chennai, 2002, p. 438.

Parcel Agents were appointed at important stations to receive and forward goods from consignors to consignees. Thus, besides monopolizing the passenger traffic on the routes operated, the Transport Department affords facilities for the quick and facile movements of goods of small bulk. ¹³⁴ For regular passengers concession tickets were issued by the Transport Department. The concession was 50% to students and 25% to other passengers for the travel for one month. The passenger was entitled to two journeys per day between the mentioned points. ¹³⁵The timings of the buses were so arranged as to bring them to the town in the morning and take them back to their homes in the evening. ¹³⁶ Thus transport department in the state was closely attached with the day to day life.

The development of motor transport has brought about marvelous changes in the social life and economic condition of the people. The growth of markets shows this, there were 579 markets in the state of Travancore in

¹³³ S. R. N. Badri Rao, *Road Rail Transport*, Chidambaram, 1941, p. 397.

¹³⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 379-380.

¹³⁵ *Ibid.*

¹³⁶ Census of India 1931, Volume XXVIII, Travancore Part I- Report, Trivandrum, 1932, p. 78.

1930 including public and private ones. There were daily, bi-weekly and weekly markets.¹³⁷ There was one market for every seven square miles wonderful changes could be achieved by the development of communications, motor transport and markets in the society and economic base of the country. As a result people started making short and long journeys. Formerly they had avoided tedious travel in rough bullock carts over bad roads. Towns developed due to improvement in trade and commerce. The convenience of moving goods from one place to another quickly and efficiency accelerated trade and commerce. Large quantities of goods could be transported by Lorries and other motor vehicles.¹³⁸

During the period of Second World War from Tanjavur Railway wagons loaded with 50, 000 bags of rice have reached Travancore on 5th August. At major centres of trade like Kottayam and Alleppey still the price of rice is remaining high.¹³⁹ The Department made special arrangements for conveyance of postal and Anchal mails and the transit of goods or parcels. In the second year the Munnar - Willingdon Island lorry service establishing a direct commercial link between the High Ranges and the Cochin harbour was inaugurated. The Trivandrum - Kottayam line was taken up in the third year and the Quilon - Shencotta line in the fourth.¹⁴⁰ The Administrative Report of the year 1945-46 shows that food grains were transported from Cochin to other parts of Travancore by back water route in *Valloms* or country boats. From Kottayam or Quilon the goods were transported by lorries to Trivandrum. Food grains were brought to Alleppey and Trivandrum ports by shuttle steamers. There was no shortage of storage facilities for the imported grains in Trivandrum.

¹³⁷ *Ibid.*

¹³⁸ Census of India 1941, Volume XXV Travancore, Part I Report, Trivandrum, 1942, p. 114.

¹³⁹ Kerala Kaumudi, 1942, August 8, p. 2.

¹⁴⁰ Census of India, 1941, *Op. Cit.*

Railways are considered to be another contribution of British rule towards the development of modern economic infrastructure. “India became”, writes a modern historian, “a nation with its local centres linked by rail to each other and to the world”.¹⁴¹ Yet, the very way the railways were constructed makes it clear that its main purpose was to serve the interests of the empire, rather than the needs of the Indian economy.

The implications of the railways, both far-reaching and ambiguous, extended far beyond the economy, Along with improved roads, steamships, and the post and telegraph service (and, in the twentieth century, telephones and the radio), the late-colonial revolution in communications was motivated in large part by, and contributed enormously to, the tightening of British politico-material controls.¹⁴²

The construction and operation of Railway were governed by the terms of an agreement between the Government of Travancore and the British controlled Railway companies. The terms of the agreement were not financially beneficial to the Government. In 1853 Lord Dalhousie took the decision to construct railways in India mainly to facilitate army movements. Gradually there arose another need to integrate the Indian market to open it to British imports, i. e., to connect the port cities to the internal markets and sources of raw materials. So British capital investments were invited with 5 percent guaranteed interests to be paid, if necessary, from Indian revenues. The companies were given free land with ninety-nine years lease, after the expiry of which the line would become government property. But any time before that-even a few months before the expiry of the lease-the companies could return the lines to the government and claim full compensation for all capital expended. In other words, they could enjoy 5 percent guaranteed profit for ninety-eight years and then get back all their capital. This made the railways projects, as Sabyasachi Bhattacharya described them, “an instance of

¹⁴¹ Sekhar Bandyopadhyay, *Op. Cit.*, p. 127.

¹⁴² Sumit Sarkar, *Modern Times: India 1880s-1950s*, New Delhi, 2017, p. 178.

private enterprise at public risk”.¹⁴³ As Dadabhai Naoroji put it: “We do pray to our British rulers, let us have railways and all other kinds of beneficial public works by all means, but let us have their natural benefits or talk not to a starving man of the pleasures of a fine dinner”.¹⁴⁴ The interest system guaranteed by the Government was advantageous to the company because the Government had least participation in the profit and the greatest risk in railway construction. In short the whole profit went to the companies and the whole loss to the Government. The Government was bound to pay the interest of the investment. Since the companies were not liable to bear the losses of the railways, they were not concerned about how the system worked.

Table 4. 7

**Statement of guaranteed interest
paid to the S. I. R Co. by the Travancore state.**

Year	Guaranteed interest paid to the S. I. R. Co. at the rate of 3. 5 per cent
1901-02	Br. Rs. 5, 80, 13
1902-03	2, 34, 122
1903-04	2, 41, 505
1904-05	2, 78,158
1905-06	2, 18, 787
1906-07	2, 38, 269
1907-08	1, 78, 121
1908-09	1, 88, 054
1909-10	1, 70, 971
1910-11	1, 65, 566
1911-12	1, 46, 093
1912-13	1, 19, 551
1913-14	1, 03, 121
1914-15	2, 99, 652
1915-16	2, 29, 70(for 6 months)
1916-17	3, 61, 038(for 3 years)

Source: Travancore Administration Report from 1901-02 to 1916-17

The Administrative Reports of Travancore from 1901 to 1917 shows that the guaranteed interest to the S. I. R. (South Indian Railway Company) at the rate of 3. 5 percent.

¹⁴³ Sekhar Bandyopadhyay, *Op. Cit.*, p. 127.

¹⁴⁴ Dadabhai Naoroji, *Poverty and Un-British Rule in India*, New Delhi, 1996, p. 172.

The Travancore Government had no control over the working cost of the railways. The burden of the huge interests on the investments for railways was harmful to the interests of the state. In 1921-22 the rate was raised to 6%.¹⁴⁵ The working expenses of the railway also increased considerably and together it resulted in considerable fall in the state's revenues. In 1923-24 (M. E. 1099) the major part of the loan i. e., 2, 87, 000 out of 3, 65, 000 fell for renewal. If renew it had only 4. 5% interest rate.

Table 4. 8
Statement of Income from Railway to the
Travancore from 1924-25 to 1941-42.

Year	Profit or loss from Quilon Shencotta railway
1924-25	2, 51, 694 profit
1925-26	1, 65, 817 profit
1926-27	2, 19, 055 profit
1927-28	9, 38, 90 profit
1928-29	5, 44, 85 profit
1929-30	1, 07, 96 loss
1930-31	2, 64, 98 profit
1931-32	7, 38, 67 loss
1932-33	5, 21, 24 loss
1933-34	5, 013 profit
1934-35	5, 77, 59 profit
1935-36	8, 51, 82 loss
1936-37	7, 03, 95 loss
1937-38	2, 83, 18 loss
1938-39	3, 97, 94 loss
1939-40	3, 77, 62 loss
1940-41	1, 40, 398 profit
1941-42	3, 64, 686 profit

Source: Travancore Administration Report from 1924-25 to 1941-42

The British Government found that in comparison with other states to return on capital investment for Railways in Travancore was unsatisfactory.

¹⁴⁵ Travancore Administration Report, 1921-22, p. 78

For instance the percentage of profits made was 7. 8 in Hyderabad in 1939. In Baroda it was 3. 87 in 1939-40, ie. Rs. 45. 558 lakhs, excluding 1. 25 percent set apart for depreciation fund. In Mysore in 1917-18, the first years of the opening the Arsikera Railway the earnings was 8. 39 percent of the capital investment.¹⁴⁶ There was never a deficit in the Cochin State railway and the net income variance from 1. 34 per cent to 8. 28 per cent on capital invested. In Cochin the net income was 4. 41 percent in 1939-40. In 1932 the government of India refused the contention of the Travancore government that the interest on the capital raised by the Secretary of State was to be only 3. 5 per cent but this request was conceded in 1939 and the financial gain there from was half a lakh of rupees. The British colonial administration was unwilling to extend the Railways from Quilon to Trivandrum, due to the reasons of inadequate profit to the company. The British colonial government of India permitted an officer appointed by the Travancore government to associate with the Examiner of Accounts at Trichinopoly for the purpose of auditing the accounts of the Travancore railway.¹⁴⁷

Similarly At that time train journey was very hazardous especially the commoners were connected. Journey in the third class compartments, with their wooden benches and total absence of amenities, into which Indians were herded, attracted horrified comment even at time. The third class passengers became a source of profit for the railways, since British merchants in India ensured that freight tariffs were kept low (the lowest in the world in fact) while third class passengers' fares were made the railway companies' principal source of profit. No effort was made, in building the railway lines, to ensure that supply matched the demand for popular transport.¹⁴⁸

¹⁴⁶ D. Bright Singh, 'Financial Developments in Travancore 1800-1940', Unpublished Ph. D thesis, The Travancore University, Trivandrum, 1944, p. 456.

¹⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 457.

¹⁴⁸ Shashi Tharoor, *An Era Of Darkness*, New Delhi, 2016, p. 210.

Table 4. 9

**Travancore Railway summary of passenger
Traffic carried during the Year from 1926-27 to 1946-47.**

Public Excluding Season Tickets					Season Tickets			
Class	Number	Passenger Mileage	Total receipts Rs.	Average receipts per passenger per mile. pies	Average distance travelled miles	Number	Equivalent in trips	Passenger mileage
1926-27								
First Class	2, 171	104, 25	11, 526	21. 19	48	-	-	-
Second Class	21, 679	880052	41, 760	9. 11	41	11	1, 700	23, 200
Third Class	3, 497, 713	65, 932, 233	12, 01, 5103. 50	19	44, 800	4, 88, 250	-	-
1930 -31								
First Class	1, 182	67, 184	70. 16	20. 05	57	-	-	-
Second Class	15, 214	5, 99, 655	29, 512	9. 45	39. 9	2, 150	11, 750	-
Third Class	35, 22, 742	62, 156	695, -10, 60, 895	328	18	10, 76	88, 200	87, 51, 150
1934-35								
First Class	1, 122	70, 346	6, 436	17. 57	63	20	3, 000	25, 050
Second Class	12, 316	5, 43, 993	26, 067	9. 20	44	461	33, 575	4, 17, 850
Third Class	3, 597, 763	60, 421, 221	8, 69, 313	2. 76	17			
1935-36								
First Class	916	65, 960	5, 386	15. 74	72	-	-	-
Second Class	11, 150	753, 620	27, 460	7. 00	68	19	2, 850	36, 600
Third Class	2, 953, 806	56, 060, 480	7, 66, 716	2. 63	19	565	43, 200	496, 850
1939-40								
First Class	2, 468	87, 698	6003	17. 03	27	-	-	-
Second Class	25, 613	5, 98, 181	24, 205	7. 77	23	6	900	10, 500
Third Class	3, 326, 887	50, 663, 046	718, 368	2. 72	15	956	81, 275	865, 150
1940 -41								
First Class	1, 013	75, 353	8, 312	21. 18	74	-	-	-
Second Class	7, 627	4, 95, 900	22, 104	8. 56	65	9	1, 250	10, 550
Third Class	2, 600, 559	43, 960, 432	689, 239	3. 01	17	1321	1, 18, 000	120, 3250
1944-45								
First Class	1, 291	2, 88, 387	31, 22	20. 72	12	1	150	6, 730
Second Class	56, 221	22, 11, 183	1, 15, 037	12. 39	39	130	27, 150	383, 660
Third Class	31, 39, 686	7, 19, 26, 166	14, 64, 389	2. 75	13	2641	2, 02, 470	24, 86, 100
1945-46								
First Class	4, 707	3, 57, 134	39, 076	21. 01	76	3	450	16, 200
Second Class	57, 944	26, 28, 824	1, 64, 238	12. 00	45	248	33, 400	448, 700
Third Class	41, 78, 603	8, 92, 21, 648	17, 41, 769	3. 75	21	2, 630. 5	2, 24676	25, 22, 700
1946 -47								
First Class	1, 482	3, 62, 611	39, 358	20. 84	81	3	300	12, 800
Second Class	64, 278	29, 73, 510	1, 80, 721	11. 67	46	353	40, 950	6, 06, 250
Third Class	53, 48, 471	10, 93, 69. 857	21, 28, 235	3. 74	20	3, 773	3, 00, 450	32, 91, 500

Source: The Statistics of Travancore from 1926 -27 to 1946-47.

This table shows the mass movement of the people from one place to another in search of jobs, education and livelihood. However, inspite of mass movement, racism had its strong influence in the soil of Kerala, as elsewhere in India.

Gandhiji spent a year deliberately traveling third class across the country to experience at first hand the woes of ordinary Indians. The railways were always vital for the countrywide movements that he inspired and organized, in significant part through his own incessant railway journeys.¹⁴⁹

The correlation between medicine and railway technology in colonial India thus demonstrates how knowledge about epidemiology was routed through technologies of mobility, governance and control. As railway themselves became central providing contradictory arguments about transfer through contagious contact, medical conclusions about epidemics became linked with anticipating the effect of quarantine on trade, commerce, and the colonial state's burgeoning investment in railway infrastructure.¹⁵⁰

Quinine sulphate was being supplied by the Madras government to the Travancore state. The Railway receipts in respect 2496 lbs, dispatched today by passenger train.¹⁵¹ The sale of quinine to general public through the agency of post - offices was commenced in 1892, a packet of 5 grams in powder being retailed at a piece. But a 5 grain dose of quinine is quite inadequate for the treatment of malaria and quinine in each piece packet was increased to 7 grams in 1904. A vigorous propaganda by means of posters, pamphlets and lectures on the value and use of quinine, the quantization of

¹⁴⁹ Sumit Sarkar, *Op. Cit.*, p. 184.

¹⁵⁰ Ritika Prasad, *Tracks of Change: Railways and Everyday Life in Colonial India*, New Delhi, 2016, p. 198.

¹⁵¹ Development, G. O. No. 2747, 1940, Tamil Nadu Archives, Chennai.

school children and the supply of treatment tubes of quinine, i. e., tubes containing 20 tablets each containing 4 grams of quinine.¹⁵²

Moreover, the Railways were used for bringing teak wood and naturally stations were set up nearly the plantation areas.¹⁵³ At Papanasum, near Ambasamudram, was the Tinnevely spinning and Weaving Mills; weaving is carried on many of the villages, but it is a declining industry owing to the supply of piece goods from Europe.¹⁵⁴ At Shencottah, there was considerable trade carried on in the sale of timber, bamboos and plantains from the Travancore forests. At Punalur on the western side of the Ghats, there was a timber depot.¹⁵⁵

Since the train passed through the midst of tea and coffee estates in Southern and central Travancore, the Britishers were the beneficiaries to extract the resources in various kinds. As reciprocal advantages, some industries were also set up by the Britishers in the native villages. The transport of timber from the forests to the towns was carried on by floating it down the rivers, but these were only useful in the monsoon months. By providing a station at Tenmalai, timber and forest produce could be obtained all the year round from a considerable tract of country at much cheaper rates than was available. It was stated that there was a large area of unbroken virgin forest land amounting to about 10, 000 acres near the line of railway, which was well suited for tea cultivation.

The extension of the line to the back-water at Quilon will tap the magnificent system of back-waters and canals which collect and distribute the produce. The trade between North Travancore and the Tinnevely District

¹⁵² Development, G. O. No. 806, 1922, TamilNadu Archives, Chennai.

¹⁵³ South Indian Railway Co., Ltd, Travancore Branch, Report on the Project for its construction, Survey of 1899-1900, Tamil Nadu Archives Library, Chennai, p. 32.

¹⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 31.

¹⁵⁵ *Ibid.*

goes via Cochin and the Madras Railway, but this will be entirely diverted. Travancore pays for the grain consumed by its people in special products such as coconut produce, pepper, areca nuts, ginger, tapioca, tamarind, cinnamon, & c., and the trade in these will vary materially benefit the inland towns and villages.¹⁵⁶

There had been practically no rail arrivals at the ports of Trivandrum, Quilon and Alleppey during the period from 1st April to 31st May 1942. It was reported by excise inspector, sea customs, Trivandrum central customs were transported to Valiathurai and stocked in government and private godowns. This was a measure to eradicate food scarcity in Travancore.¹⁵⁷

But nevertheless, when the British left, in 1946-47 there were 65, 217 kilometers of railway track in India, covering 78 percent of the total area. The railways had also encouraged the construction of feeder roads and a few other strategic roads interconnecting different regions of India. This was applied in the Travancore state too. This did certainly integrate the Indian market to some extent and provided a cheaper mode of transportation for both people and goods, which were taken advantage of by the Indian business at a later stage after Independence. And finally, the railways certainly had significant social and cultural impact on Indian society and nation; but those were, one should remember, the unintended results of British imperialism.¹⁵⁸ With their far-reaching material presence and manifold consequences, the railways constitute the most impressive and enduring monument to British rule in India, as stated earlier.

¹⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 32.

¹⁵⁷ Development, File No. 3509, Bundle No. 291, 1942, KSA.

¹⁵⁸ Sekhar Bandyopadhyay, *Op. Cit.*, p. 128.

The Anchal service which was prevailed in Travancore emphasized more on service sector rather than a profit motive establishment. The following table illustrates the details of Income and Expenditure Statement

Table 4. 10

Table Showing the Income and Expenditure of Anchal Service in Travancore from 1899-'00 to 1940-41

Year	Number of Anchal offices	Private and official covers carried.	Receipts. Rs.	Expenditure. Rs.	Net Revenue Rs.
1899-'00	101	2959541	61284	75994	loss, 14710
1904-05	150	3787696	78235	102548	loss, 24313
1909-10	192	8625758	90234	122657	loss, 32423
1914-15	211	10788171	189954	174489	Profit, 15465
1919-20	222	13104442	252778	197739	Profit, 55039
1924-25	241	17736568	325912	266680	Profit, 59232
1929-30	298	20977618	416925	383068	Profit, 33857
1934-35	340	21323394	418271	381406	Profit, 36865
1939-40	368	23, 965, 419	4, 84, 000	4, 00, 000	Profit, 84, 000
1940-41	371	24, 387, 146	4, 88, 000	3, 96, 000	Profit, 92, 000

Source: Travancore Administration Report from 1899-1900 to 1940-41.

The table shows that year 1900, the number of *Anchal* offices were 101 and the figures show a loss of Rs. 14710. At the same time during 1941 the number of *Anchal* offices were raised to 371 and registered a profit of Rs. 92, 000/-. However, it is a fact that *Anchal* service which prevailed in Travancore was more emphasized in the service sector rather than a profit motive establishment as stated above.

Anchal service one of the most popular and accessible department for common man in Travancore, the *Anchal* service functioned as a stockist and supplier of medicines like quinine, chlorodyne etc. Chlorodyne was a medicine used to treat cholera, Quinine is a medicine used to treat malaria and babesiosis. A sum of Rs. 1299 was collected during the financial year 1899-

1900 from the sale of both medicines.¹⁵⁹ All the *Anchal* offices were distributed quinine and chlorodyne during the year 1897-98.¹⁶⁰

The *Anchal* goods were transported from one office to the other by carriers as head loads. After accepting the bag from one office the messenger had to carry it on his head and run towards the next *Anchal* office. They were called “*Anchal* Runners”, who had to run seven or eight miles carrying the load. When he reaches the next office another runner would be waiting there from the neighbouring office with a similar load. After exchanging the loads the first runner had to run back carrying the load on his head. The time schedule fixed for covering the distance by running was 12 minutes per mile.

The *Anchal* runner was provided a baton of about two feet length and one inch diameter. On its top there would a bronze bell which had to be rung while he ran. Whoever who came across the path of this *Anchal* runner had to stop and give way to this man who carried the letters and messages. Nobody, not even the vehicles of the highest police officer had to stop and allow the *Anchal* to pass. This rule had to be followed very strictly. The violation of this rule would invite heavy punishment. This kind of relay running could cover a maximum distance of about 40 to 50 miles per day. Hence, a letter posted from Thiruvananthapuram could reach the northern border of Cochin State, viz. Kunnankulam after 4 or 5 days. The exchange of *Anchal* goods between the states took place at Aluva.¹⁶¹

The old and the new thus coalesced in the romanticized figure of the runner, whose more extraordinary exploits, which included being exposed to ‘mail dacoities’, tiger attacks, and cobra bites, provided fascinating source

¹⁵⁹ Travancore Administration Report, 1899-1900, p. 65.

¹⁶⁰ Travancore Administration Report, 1897-98, p. 90.

¹⁶² Kanippayyur Sankaran Nampoothirippad. *Ente Smaranakal Vol. III* (Mal.), Kunnankulam, 1963, pp. 199-200.

material for the newspaper and periodical press. The runners themselves frequently invoked the hazardous nature of their occupation in their attempts to negotiate better terms of employment. The hakara, carrying the familiar bamboo stick and mail bag with jingling bells on his shoulder, remained an important figure in the communication landscape even in the twentieth century, despite the introduction of more ‘modern’ means of communication.¹⁶²

In the early 20th century letters and messages sent through post or *Anchal* were carried from one post office or *Anchal* office to the next one and back by *Anchal* runners of ‘Post Runners’. The service of the *Anchal* post runner from Kumili to Munnar was stopped due to the opening of the motor road from Muvattupuzha.¹⁶³

Before that the *Anchal* runner had to leave the office at 6 am in the morning carrying the mail bags, run the distance of 12 miles through difficult routes. The bags would be handed over to the next runner who would carry it, and run the next twelve miles. In this way the mail bags would go forward and would reach the destination exactly at the stipulated time. Each *Anchal* runner would run back to his office carrying the return mail bags. To cover a distance of 65 miles two days were required.¹⁶⁴ The average speed of the *Anchal* runner had to be three miles an hour. The mail bags were carried only in day time because of the dangerous route and the presence of wild animals in the hilly and forest lands. Even after the stopping of the service of the runners officially, for extremely difficult places such as Kumili, Vandanmetu, Devikulam, Oodumbanchola their services were utilized. During the rainy

¹⁶² Amelia Bonea, *The News of Empire: Telegraphy, Journalism, and the Politics of Reporting in Colonial India, C. 1830-1900*, New Delhi, 2016, p. 46.

¹⁶³ Emily Gilchrist Hatch, *Travancore: A Guide Book For The Visitor*, Madras, 1933, p. 154.

¹⁶⁴ *Ibid.*

season the work of such *Anchal* runners would have been extremely difficult in the leach infected forest paths.¹⁶⁵

In literature too, there exist a same experience it shows how How the Advent of modernity had affected Traditional life. *Onakkan* had received the job of an *Anchal* Runner very early in life. Being a member of the lowest category social circle, the job was quite helpful to him. He used to carry out his duties running very fast even through dense forests. Then, due to the beginning of transport systems the practice of carrying *Anchal* goods by buses commenced. One morning *Onakkan* realizes that he has lost his job. The work done by him all those years had become unattractive and unwanted, due to the arrival of the bus service. His future also becomes uncertain. The story ends symbolically with his death by the same bus running over him.¹⁶⁶

Thakazhy Sivasankara Pillai, in his celebrated novel *Kayar* describes the life and work of a village postman in the 19th century. He writes about the times when the postman bringing money orders to the house as a symbol of good fortune and plenty. The Postman performed the duty of not only bringing letters to village houses, but also took the trouble of reading the letters to the villagers who were generally illiterate. The messenger who brought telegram messages was often regarded as an ill-omen, the symbol of the God of Death who came with the warrant of death. The novelist pictures the post man who brought telegrams as receiving the curses of the relatives of the dead man. In Travancore, the Post man had actually involved with the daily lives of the individual in society.¹⁶⁷ Post office junction at Nagercoil, declared as a bus stop.¹⁶⁸

¹⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 155.

¹⁶⁶ S. K Pottekkatt, *Pottekkattinte Kathakal Sampooranam Vol. I* (Mal.), Kottayam, 2014, p. 360.

¹⁶⁷ Thakazhi Sivasankara Pillai, *Kayar*(Mal.), 2014, Kottayam, p. 766.

¹⁶⁸ PWD, File No. 23, Bundle No. 758, 1949, KSA.

Due to the effort of Mooloor S Padmanabha paniker's efforts the *Anchal* office at Mezhuveli was opened to the public on 1st May 1930. Mooloor posted a letter there to Kandathil Varghese Mappila, the editor of the daily Malayala Manorama, and bought stamps and envelopes from the new post office.¹⁶⁹ He recommended a Pulaya Youth named Valayudhan to be appointed as peon, so that untouchability could be removed. He knew that the Savarnas would be forced gradually to accept the services rendered by the lower caste Government employee. Thus he tried to demolish the outdated customs and practices in the life of the people.¹⁷⁰

The services of *Anchal* offices were essential to all sections of the people. The employees of the *Anchal* services could visit and distribute letters to all homes in the villages irrespective of caste difference. The employee of lower castes thus got legal protection to use public roads and mingle with all sections of society.¹⁷¹ In short, the appointment of the lower caste employee could change the mindset of the people and bring in social transformation gradually.

The *Anchal* services could tremendously influence the formation of public life in modern Travancore. People could communicate with each other about the well being of others, exchange news and views on life, and also make personal enquiries. In short, a new public consciousness could be moulded through this medium.¹⁷² Mooloor made use of this opportunity well to the advantage of the society. Living in the small village of Elavumthitta he

¹⁶⁹ Anu. R, 'The Making of the Public Life of Travancore: The Role and Contributions of Sarasakavi Mooloor S. Padmanabha Paniker', Unpublished Ph.D thesis, Thiruvananthapuram, p. 268.

¹⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 268.

¹⁷¹ *Ibid.*, p. 269.

¹⁷² *Ibid.*, p. 269.

could spread his ideas far and wide through *Anchal* services. He sent letters that created similar mind sets in different people living in different areas.¹⁷³

Since a sizeable population moved to Ceylon in search of jobs, sanction was given to start a Post office in Mayyanad. The *Anchal* Post master after his official duties used to give lessons in English to the village students. In fact, he was, more than an individual, an institution. He was popular and respectable as a Post Master, teacher, and a writer for the people who could write letters and petitions in English and one who wrote a book in English.¹⁷⁴

The *Anchal* office was at the buildings of the Pozhikkara temple, in Quilon district where the so called *Avarnas* like Ezhavas etc were not allowed to enter the office. If one shouts aloud waiting outside at a distance for sometime the poen or master would be kind enough to come out and enquire what the need is. Then the officers would tell him to place the money and stand away. The price of a post card was 4 *kasu* and the cover had the cost of 8 *kasu*. After placing the money on a leaf one had to wait at a distance.¹⁷⁵ It was like a game of hide and seek involving movement like a weavers' shuttle. This illustrates that caste rigidity and segregation reigned supreme in Travancore during the 19th century. This kind of incidents was common even in Government offices which were situated near temples.

The activities of the *Anchal* Savings Bank in Travancore enhanced the people's habit of saving money, which strengthened their economic foundation. The savings Bank in *Anchal* offices which were only six in number in 1912-13 rose up to 166 in 1947-48. The famous dramatist and director N. N Pillai, in his autobiography, *Njan*, has written how an amount of Rs. 80 taken from his deposit of Rs. 83 in the *Anchal* savings Bank, had

¹⁷³ *Ibid.*

¹⁷⁴ C. Kesavan, *Op. Cit.*, p. 50.

¹⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 57.

helped him as a capital to go for Malaya.¹⁷⁶ It highlights the importance *Anchal* Savings Banks had in the lives of the people in those days. Like Money orders, *Hundi* service, together with *Anchal* service, had a significant role to play in the economic mobility of the state.

The diffusion of the inland telegraph followed the same pattern as those of other nineteenth-century imperial linkages, the postal system, steamship lines, and railroads.¹⁷⁷

The telegraph had consequences for disease surveillance, as well: information about disease now traveled faster than the disease itself, thus buying time for authorities to gird themselves for imminent outbreaks. By the same token, local crisis could tip more easily into cross-regional and global panics as news stories moved through the cables, sparking fears of approaching epidemics. Messages were expensive to send; given payment was per word, a compressed style of telegraphic communication developed.¹⁷⁸

In a telegram on 17th September, 1927, from Devicolam Commissioner requested to arrange for the Plague Vaccine. In reply to that telegram Parel Vaccine Institute, Bombay was arranged to the dispatch to the medical officer, Devicolam, 100 doses of Plague vaccine.¹⁷⁹ This incident shows the role played by the communication facilities to overcome the epidemics in Travancore.

The conveyance of mails was improved in the second half of the nineteenth century, with the development of roads and incorporation of new technologies like the railways, but the introduction of new means of

¹⁷⁶ N. N. Pillai, *Njan* (Mal.), Kottayam, 1982, p. 133.

¹⁷⁷ Daniel R. Headrick, *Op. Cit.*, p. 119.

¹⁷⁸ Robert Peckham, *Epidemics in Modern Asia*, Cambridge, 2016, p. 93.

¹⁷⁹ Development, File No. 1620, Bundle No. 240, 1928, KSA.

communication was gradual and by no means uniform throughout the Indian subcontinent. This meant that mail delivery was often dependent upon a combination of newer and older modes of communication, which during the 1850s and 1860s included runners, mail carts, boats, railways and horse-drawn vehicles like accelerators.¹⁸⁰

In the nineteenth century, with the expansion of the newspaper, press and the emergence of news agencies like Havas, Wolff, and Reuters, carrier pigeons were also used to transmit stock quotations between various European capitals. Business and newspapers often operated their own pigeon lofts.¹⁸¹ The nineteenth century was an age of scientific and technological advancement. The progress achieved in Europe was disseminated to the entire globe during this period. Under the background of colonialism considerable transfer of technology occurred and India was one among the countries that received the advantage. Among the states of India Travancore was the foremost in this regard because it had the benefit of a beneficial royal administration.

To an even greater degree than the railways, the rapid spread of the telegraph represented the importance of the military and political impetus behind technological change in nineteenth-century India. Although not a direct consequence of steam power, India's telegraphs, like those in many other parts of the world, progressed hand-in-hand with (and often in advance of) the railways. Part of the same technological complex, they often followed

¹⁸⁰ Amelia Bonea, *Op. Cit.*, p. 45.

¹⁸¹ Julius Reuter, founder of the eponymous news agency, famously established a pigeon post from Aachen to Brussels in the 1850s to cover a gap in the emerging telegraph network and to facilitate the rapid transmission of stock intelligence between Brussels and Paris. While the sphere of influence and activity of these agencies was inextricably circumscribed and shaped by geopolitical considerations. Vide, Amelia Bonea, *Op. Cit.*, p. 47.

the same cross-country routes and, without telegraphic communication, railway signaling could be neither effective nor safe.¹⁸²

The postal and telegraphic routes of communication developed on the basis of two major technologies, the steamer and the electric telegraph, to provide a more comprehensive account of the communications system in nineteenth century India and to show how more recent innovations including railways existed in a symbiotic relationship with other modes of communication by means of runners, horses and boats.¹⁸³ The following incidents illustrate the unique service provided by the Telegraph in the princely state of Travancore.

In a telegram message, the commercial Resident of Alleppey informed to the Government of Madras on 18 May 1936, about a communal riot that occurred on that day at Alleppey, causing loss of life to a Muslim.¹⁸⁴ On the same day the Travancore chamber of commerce sent a telegram to the dewan of Travancore on the riot and violence and the incapability of the local police authorities to deal with the situation. The local Lajanathul Association also sent a telegram to the dewan in which it blamed the armed Christians for the havoc and mentioned that Muslims were the victims. The magistrate of Alleppey depicted it as a riot in which both Muslims and Christians were involved. The vicar of Thumboly in a telegram to dewan accused the Muslims for the riot and added that the Christians, Ezhavas and Arayas were on the defensive. K. C. Karunakaran, Sree Moolam Popular Assembly member from Alleppey sent a telegram and stated that there were riots between Muslims, Ezhavas and Christians and the police were inefficient.¹⁸⁵ Similarly in the

¹⁸² David Arnold, *Op. Cit.*, p. 113.

¹⁸³ Amelia Bonea, *Op. Cit.*, p. 43.

¹⁸⁴ M. L Prema, 'The Alleppey Riot of 1936', *Journal of Kerala Studies*, Vol. VIII, Part 1-4, 1981, p. 249.

¹⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 250.

year 1924 Travancore had witnessed a devastating flood which has left an indelible memory in the minds of the people. The Government could rise up to the occasion and give timely warning to the people and carry out rescue and relief operations. The efficient use of telegraph had done considerable service during this period of urgency.¹⁸⁶

Table 4. 11
Working of the Telegraph offices in
Travancore from 1926-27 to 1946-47

Year	Number of Telegraph Office	Total Number of Messages Sent	Total Number of Messages Received
1926-27	28	129, 976	136, 437
1927-28	33	147, 006	153, 908
1929-30	38	142, 951	155, 486
1932-33	39	81, 003	78, 537
1934- 35	41	1, 18, 627	1, 17, 698
1935-36	42	1, 61, 309	2, 07, 109
1936-37	33	1, 39, 340	1, 74, 288
1937-38	36	1, 34, 468	1, 53, 063
1939-40	37	1, 56, 453	1, 09, 458
1940-41	39	1, 10, 348	1, 24, 290
1941-42	44	2, 02, 785	2, 11, 981
1944-45	56	2, 41, 475	2, 33, 378
1945-46	38	2, 92, 104	2, 97, 295
1946-47	40	2, 29, 296	2, 47, 595

Source: The statistics Reports of Travancore from 1926-27 to 1946-47.

The above table shows the wide circulation of Telegraph was prevailed in Travancore.

¹⁸⁶ Sebastian Joseph & Lekha Pillai, 'A Travancore Model in Disaster Management: Ducebat Viam for the Current Times', in Sebastian Joseph(ed.), *On Present (in/g) Histories*, Kottayam, 2017, p. 190.

Central authorities supplied Quinine in the native States of Hyderabad, Mysore, Travancore and Cochin and there is also stated that requirement in bulk and it was supplied through Durbar Physician, Travancore Government.

¹⁸⁷ The accessibility of the telegraph service helped for the smooth supply of quinine. As a matter of fact, the telegraph system thereby served the Indian middle-class and business communities as well as the administration. Statistics given an impression of the system's penetration into Indian life. In December 1856 the network had 46 offices and 6, 840 kilometers of line. Immediately after the Rebellion, there was a rush to put up telegraph; by 1865 the network was 28, 164 kilometer long, of which 4, 828 belonged to the railroads. By 1900 there were 4, 949 offices and 85, 150 kilometers of lines, and by 1947 the system was 188, 600 kilometers long. ¹⁸⁸

Print technology helped the health department in order to propagate the public, the preventive measures to be taken to avoid the spread of epidemics. 24, 677 copies of health pamphlets, Bulletins and posters were distributed during 1937. Press articles and pamphlets were newly published from time to time. ¹⁸⁹ In short the development of newspapers is tied up with the history of the Post Office, the railways and the telegraph, the development of the Post Office is tied up with the history of the railways and the telegraph, the development of the railways would have been hindered without the invention of telegraphy and the telegraph's development would have been slower without the railways. ¹⁹⁰ According to Statistics reports of Travancore, it was evident that a number of newspapers circulated through Anchal postal service

¹⁸⁷ Development, G. O. No. 278, 1922, Tamil Nadu Archives, Chennai.

¹⁸⁸ Daniel R. Headrick, *Op. Cit.*, p. 122.

¹⁸⁹ Report on the Administration of the Public Health Department for the year 1936-37, Kerala State Archives Library, p. 131.

¹⁹⁰ Ravi Ahuja, *Op. Cit.*, p. 67.

and British Posts and Telegraph. ¹⁹¹ There is much evidence to show, though one of the tools of imperialism how it was effectively used to co-ordinate the Vaikom Satyagraha. In one of the telegram sent by Gandhiji, K. Kelappan, the Secretary of the Vaikom Satyagraha Committee, on 4 March 1925, was instructed that the satyagrahis should on no account cross the boundary line. ¹⁹²

During the Vaikom Satyagraha, the news papers like *Deshabhimani*, *Mathrubhumi*, *Kerala Kamudi*, ¹⁹³*sahodaran*, The Hindu, Madras Mail, ¹⁹⁴*Malayala Manorama*, ¹⁹⁵ and The Times of India ¹⁹⁶etc., reported widely about the progress of the event. For twenty months, the Mathrubhumi published news accounts from vaikom three times a week and carried at least one editorial on the events at vaikom in each edition: it also published editorials from other paper also. ¹⁹⁷

Like the telegraph, the telephone also was a new scientific invention that brought an immense social transformation. It could make a deep impact

¹⁹¹ The Newspapers issued through *Anchal* postal service in the year 1927 were 1, 879, 644, while in 1935, it were 21, 57, 509. While through the Newspaper through Posts and Telegraphs issued during the year 1932-33 were 3, 298, 254.

While it in the year 1940- 41 were 244, 724. Vide, The Statistics of Travancore for the respective years.

¹⁹² P. Chandramohan, *Op. Cit.*, p. 182.

¹⁹³ C. V Kunjuraman, a prominent leader of Ezhavas and Chief Editor of Kerala Kaumudi wrote a editorial was like requesting each member of the Ezhava community to do a soul searching in order to know whether their community had sincerely worked towards the success of the satyagraha. Later he started a *pidiyari prasthanam* (a handful of rice contribution from each family every day) which helped to feed the satyagrahis. Vide. *Ibid*, p. 188.

¹⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 182.

¹⁹⁵ “*Malayala Manorama* in Kottayam had a policy of fighting for acknowledgement of the political acknowledgment of their political claims of forgotten communities” Vide, Mary Elizabeth King, *Op. Cit.*, pp. 100- 101.

¹⁹⁶ In one report was that of Vaikom Roads. Discussion in Travancore Council, that came in The Times of India on October 6, 1924. Vide, The Times of India, October 6, 1924, p. 9.

¹⁹⁷ Mary Elizabeth King, *Op. Cit.*, p. 100.

on business organizations and the administration of the country and the maintenance of law and order. The advertisement captions formulated by the telephone department were “The all Travancore trunk telephone service now linked with India provides you with the inestimable value of long distance telephone communication. Take full advantage of it, when business competition is keener than ever before” “You too can do so and save time and money by giving that personal touch” All business men build up their business with a phone on their side”¹⁹⁸ “Possessing marvelous speed the telephone beats the post and the air mail. ” Touring talkies are also worked throughout the Travancore”.¹⁹⁹ From all the above captions, it was understood the importance of telephone facility in the socio-economic sphere in the state.

In 1931, a telephone connection was installed between Devicolam and K. H. D. P’s headquarters at Munnar. As a result of this, during the time of the spread of plague, it did invaluable service for obtaining punctual information and for transport arrangements. By the introduction of telephone it also saved appreciable amount, that was spent by government through the several offices on account of travel allowance as very many journeys of a trivial nature.²⁰⁰

Role of Transport and Communication in controlling Epidemics

Colonialism used - or attempted to use - the body as a site for the construction of its own authority, legitimacy, and control. In part, therefore, the history of colonial medicine, and of the epidemic diseases with which it was so closely entwined, serves to illustrate the more general nature of colonial power and knowledge and to illuminate its hegemonic as well as its

¹⁹⁸ Travancore Directory for 1948, Part I, Trivandrum, 1947.

¹⁹⁹ *Ibid.*

²⁰⁰ PWD, File No. 175, Bundle No. 428, 1931, KSA.

coercive processes.²⁰¹ Lord Curzon proclaimed before a medical conference in 1899 that the British ‘gifts’ to India of law, Christianity, and literature might perhaps be questioned, but never that of science, particularly medicine. That, he declared, was based on ‘the bedrock of pure, irrefutable science’, and it could lift the veil of purdah and break down the barriers of caste without ‘irreverence’ or ‘sacrilege’. Medicine he believes was the best justification for British rule.²⁰²

Small pox was a scourge that took a heavy toll of life in Kerala. As early as 1802 vaccination was introduced in Cochin and for the first time it was demonstrated that the disease could be controlled by preventive medicine.²⁰³ A few years later at the instance of Col. Munro vaccination was introduced in Travancore also. It is well to remember here that it was only in 1798 that Edward Jenner made known his discovery and within a short period its benefits were made available to the people of Kerala.²⁰⁴

The Public Works Department also strengthened their efforts by constructing many new roads so as to make easy access to the dispensaries and hospitals for the public. The Malaria Relief Committee of the Medical Association, through Voluntary contribution, raised funds for the feeding of school children in deprived areas.²⁰⁵

At the time of famine distress, the engineering establishment known as the Public Works Department was usually given responsibility for overseeing

²⁰¹ David Arnold, *Colonizing the Body: State Medicine and Epidemic Disease in Nineteenth-Century India*, Delhi, 1993, p. 8.

²⁰² Sumit Sarkar, *Op. Cit.*, p. 58.

²⁰³ P. G. Edwin, ‘British Impact on Kerala’, *Journal of Kerala Studies*, Vol. V, Part II, June 1978, p. 281.

²⁰⁴ *Ibid.*

²⁰⁵ Sathesh Palanki, *Missionaries Women and Western Medicine in Colonial Kerala*, Kozhikode, 2016, p. 85.

relief.²⁰⁶ After the devastating famine in 1881, there spread epidemics like cholera and small pox spread throughout the state and people perished in large numbers due to hunger and disease.²⁰⁷ The monsoons had failed for three years continuously. Many items of food crops completely perished without traces. The Travancore state had to import food crops in large quantities. For that the ports of Colachel, Quilon, etc could be used and the goods were transported by railway to Tirunelveli. Though the prices were kept under control most of the people were so poor that they could not afford to buy the food grains from the market. The terrible epidemics of Cholera and Small pox also spread rapidly increasing the number of its victims.²⁰⁸

Mass education on health and hygiene was vigorously carried on through lecture campaigns and distribution of literature. Health Education Van purchased in 1930 and fitted with a micro phone, a loud speaker and a Gramophone pick-up. The propaganda equipment included a van fitted up with loud speaker apparatus, a portable cinema outfit, an adequate stock of health movies, a collection of musical and lecture gramophone records, magic lanterns and slides as also numerous sets of Health posters and models. The provision of this sound reproduction apparatus in the van was highly helpful for giving health talks to large concourses of people spread over an extensive area, particularly on occasions of festivals. The Health education van toured through different parts of the State.²⁰⁹ Its advent was always hailed with enthusiasm in rural areas. The health education work in the state is focused mainly upon popularizing the various health and prevention of diseases.²¹⁰

²⁰⁶ Sheldon Watts, *Epidemics and History: Disease Power and Imperialism*, London, 1997, p. 201.

²⁰⁷ Dick Kooiman, 'Mass Movement, Famine and Epidemic: A Study in Interrelationship', *Op. Cit.*, p. 295.

²⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 296.

²⁰⁹ The Travancore Directory for 1941 Part I, Trivandrum, 1940, p. 52.

²¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 53.

Four Lecture gramophone records on 'Malaria', 'Plague', 'Personal Hygiene' and 'Beware of Quacks' and two musical records on 'Fishes and Diseases', 'Tuberculosis' and 'Ante-natal and infant care' were used through Gramophone.²¹¹

There are, however, sufficient reasons to believe that the public Health Department had succeeded in bringing about a marked transformation in the outlook of the people towards the maintenance of health and sanitation.²¹² Small-pox vaccination which till a few years back used to evoke much opposition has now made remarkable headway in the State in a manner eliciting tributes of appreciation from public Health experts elsewhere. Campaigns for inoculation against cholera, Plague and typhoid are welcomed by the public with open arms in times of need. In the prompt reporting of the onset of any epidemic diseases, the public are exercising much vigilance and are extending their full co-operation.²¹³

An increase in the prevalence of malaria has been observed from 1941 October, last in the area from Aryanad in Nedumangad taluk to Kunnathukal in Neyyattinkara taluk, as a result of the failure of the south-west monsoon. The five malaria dispensaries located in the affected area are extending medical aid to the affected persons.²¹⁴ Besides these dispensaries, eleven treatment centres are also being run at convenient places. The malaria control staff, the sanitary staff of the Neyyattinkara and Nedumangad Sanitary circles and also a few additional Sanitary assistants are engaged in the

²¹¹ Report on the Administration of the Public Health Department for the year 1936-37, Kerala State Archives Library, Thiruvananthapuram, p. 132

²¹² The Travancore Directory for 1941, *Op. Cit.*, p. 54.

²¹³ *Ibid.*

²¹⁴ Travancore Information and Listener Vol. V, No. 5, 1945, p. 17.

investigation and reporting of malaria cases, distribution of quinine and intensification of control measures.²¹⁵

Though modern vaccinations introduced to eliminate small pox and other epidemics, the traditional society still followed their own beliefs and customs. For eg: Small pox had made its appearance in the village in the valley. It was spreading fast. Every day brought news of fresh deaths in the village and the burning of houses.²¹⁶ In those days the traditional Hindus had held the belief that small pox was caused by the wrath of a Goddess, and hence could be controlled only by pleasing the Goddess.

There were mixed responses from the society with regard to vaccination. Vaccination work could be made easier among people, by approaching them in open spaces such as markets and public places. At the same time vaccination among women was difficult as they rarely travelled out of their houses, and vaccinators had difficulty to approach them. Caste barrier also created difficulties for the success of the vaccination work. The Nairs and Syrian Christians welcomed the system of western medicine including vaccination. They accepted jobs such as vaccinators and many male and female candidates were ready to accept the job of the vaccinator from these castes.²¹⁷ The option of a job like vaccinator made the people an employee and gets them free from caste barriers.

²¹⁵ *Ibid.*

²¹⁶ It was rumoured that the people living near the temple had committed some crime. This enraged Bhagavathi...she threw a handful of small pox seeds all around, that too the virulent variety called *Karinjapatta*. The boils swelled up and burst open; the flesh split and pus oozed. People just fell down and died in hordes.... it was terrible. Vide, Narayan, *Kocharethi The Araya Woman*, Catherine Thankamam(trans.), New Delhi, 2011, p. 47.

²¹⁷ Aparna Nair, 'The Indifferent Many and The Hostile Few: An Assessment of Smallpox Vaccination in the 'Model Native State' of Travancore 1804-1941', *Working Paper No. 438*, Centre for Development Studies, Thiruvananthapuram, 2010, p. 29.

To popularize vaccination, community specific measures were also adopted. Vaccinators from different communities were appointed for working among each community. In 1866-67 it is recorded that about 2000 persons from the Pulaya community were vaccinated. It is seen that in 1870 two vaccinators were appointed from that community. The Christian missionaries were engaged in the work of training the vaccinators.²¹⁸ The modern medical education had its impact on Travancore itself. For example, Mary Ponnen, a Christian lady was appointed as doctor in 1924 and followed by other 13 women in Travancore medical service.²¹⁹

Probably the upper caste vaccinators must have been reluctant to vaccinate the lower castes for fear of caste pollution. Hence the missionaries had to train the lower castes or do the job themselves. Thus, after overcoming many obstacles the vaccination programme in Travancore could be implemented successful and the catastrophic threat of small of pox could be controlled.²²⁰ The improvements in the field of education had its impact on public health and the health infrastructure in the state such as hospitals could create the situations of better health for the population. Growth of education, though it was restricted among the higher castes, had the effect of bringing changes in the cultural and social background of the state.

When malaria was broke out on the construction sector of Neriamangalam - Pallivasal road precautions were taken to protect the health of the labour as well as that of the rural population. The following measures were proposed. (i) Location of the labour camp (ii) Mosquito control

²¹⁸ M. Kabir and T. N. Krishnan, 'Social Intermediations and the Health Transition: the Case of Kerala', *Working Paper No. 251*, Centre for Development Studies, Thiruvananthapuram, 1992, p. 33.

²¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 9.

²²⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 8.

measures and (iii) Free distribution of Quinine.²²¹ This was an example of the twin face of utilizing the labour force and exploitation.

Industrial Development

Like the improvement in agriculture industries also developed during this period. Spinning and weaving of coir and cotton, tiles manufacture, Cashew Industries etc. were introduced. As a result of these activities for about twenty years there was steady progress in Travancore.

In 1909 Monazite was discovered at the beach sands at Manavalakurichi in Travancore. This mineral was useful for the extraction of Oxide of Thorium. The industries also centred on the production of Ilmenite which was also a mineral content of the sand. Mining activities of these minerals started in Travancore in 1911, by London Cosmopolitan Company. It was taken over by Travancore Minerals Company in 1916. The mining of Zircon and Ilmenite began in 1922.

The production of electricity started in Travancore during the first decade of the 20th century. The first hydro-electric plant of the state was a generator of 200 KW capacity at Munnar established in 1906 by the Kannan Hills Produce Company. The electricity was for the use of the tea factories and the rope way connecting the nearby estate. In the year 1931-32 the company had constructed 22 miles of 11 KV lines and 30 miles of 22 KV lines for the transmission of electricity. In 1940 the Pallivasal Generation Station was commissioned.²²²

The Government of Travancore had understood the possibility of generating electricity using hydro-electric generation technology as early as

²²¹ PWD, File No. 939, Bundle No. 480, 1936, KSA.

²²² E. T. Mathew, 'Power Development in Kerala', *Social Scientist*, Vol. 6, No. 2, 1977, p. 53.

1918. Chief Engineer F. J. Jacob had reported this in his preliminary study. However actual construction work of the Pallivasal project began only in 1933, after investigation and further studies. The first stage of the project was completed in 1939-40.²²³ The Pallivasal Hydro- Electric Scheme has been inaugurated. Roads have been improved, and the State Transport system is providing facilities on a systematic scale which must in time bring about further progress in all branches of industry and commerce.²²⁴

Coir Industry

From records available, it is seen that the coir mats and matting industry was introduced into Travancore by the late Mr. James Darragh in 1859-60. At that time, most of the mats and matting were shipped from Alleppey to New York by sailing vessels. The business gradually expanded to the United Kingdom and, later to Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, indeed, to all parts of the world.²²⁵

The traditional industries of Kerala were the production of goods related to agriculture. The most well developed industry in the 19th century was coir industry. In 1801 the coir produced for export was only 1225 tons. In 1901 the export of coir and coir products was 39686 tons. During the Second World War period the export almost doubled. During the beginning the 19th century only coir fibre and coir were exported but in 1859 coir mats and carpets were made for commercial purposes. The share of export of coir products rose up to 40% by 1930. In the manufacturing sector of coir mats and carpets employees organization were formed. Later the industrialization of coir products progressed rapidly.²²⁶

²²³ *Ibid.*

²²⁴ The Travancore Directory for 1941 Part I, Trivandrum, 1940, p. 19.

²²⁵ Travancore Information and Listener for March 1943, Vol. III, No. 7, p. 19.

²²⁶ K. N. Ganesh, *Keralathinte Ennalekal* (Mal.), Thiruvananthapuram, 2011, pp., 87-88.

Besides adding to the picturesqueness of the naturally rich landscape of our country, the coconut industry is a vital factor in its economy. In 1938-39, the value of exports from Travancore of the products of the coconut palm was over Rs. 300 lakhs against the total value of all exports which amounted to Rs. 958. 01 lakhs. ²²⁷The cultivation of the coconut palm in Travancore is neither the result of capitalistic enterprise nor is it on a plantation scale. The cultivator is ordinarily a small unit, and his occupation may more rightly be described as a mode of living. Likewise, the coir industry.

The population recorded in the 1941 Census as engaged in “other fibres”- chiefly coir and depending on this means of livelihood were 169, 656 of whom approximately 48 percent are women. The total number of people engaged in the cultivation of coconut is returned as 2, 07, 577. ²²⁸ Besides those recorded under these two headings are large numbers of people to whom this industry finds employment by way of casual labour, transport and in the various trades connected with the manufacture and marketing of coconut oil, copra and coir and coir goods. It would be no exaggeration to say that about three hundred thousand families, about a fifth of the population of Travancore - are in some manner dependent upon this important industry. Those engaged in the coir industry alone form nearly 25 percent of the total industrial workers in the country. These facts give the coconut industry key position in the economy of Travancore. ²²⁹

Parcels of all varieties of coir yarn are landed in Alleppey, which is the chief centre of both the baling and the mats and matting manufacturing industries. Baling is also carried on very largely in Cochin, so much so, a considerable quantity of yarn produced in Travancore is exported to Cochin.

²²⁷ Travancore Information and Listener for March 1943, Vol. III, No. 7, p. 13.

²²⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 14.

²²⁹ *Ibid.*

²³⁰ For purposes of baling, yarn is purchased on ‘baled weight’ basis and it is dried again and sorted and rehanked before taken to the hydraulic presses. A very large number of women are employed in these processes. Prior to the war, our principal markets were the United Kingdom, Germany, France, Belgium and other Continental countries, the United States, Canada, Africa, Australia and Japan. Shipments are made in uniform bales of 3 cwts. Each and shipment of coir yarn in bales from Alleppey was approximately 250, 000 cwts a year. ²³¹

Forest Industries

The Forest Industries Travancore Ltd, a company owned by the Government, started functioning in 1946 at Aluva. The Government granted 113 square miles of forest land in Malayattoor Reserve to the company for procuring the fuel required for FACT, Aluva and to exploit the balance timber and other forest resources. The round longs from this forest was sold to the producers of Match box, plywood, frames, etc as well as wood industries and the contractors of construction works. The logs were sold through the company’s depot at Kalady.

The minor items of forest produce consist of reeds, sandalwood, rattan, honey, wax, rubber and ivory, besides firewood, charcoal, cardamom, bamboo and medicinal herbs. The tusks and scivelloes of elephants that die in the forest yield about 790 lbs. annually and are sold at high prices. Elaborate research was conducted on suitable adhesive of wood to wood and the peeling and bending characteristics of timber with a view to develop the wood industry. The most important products of wood industry are toys, articles of plywood furniture, trays and wood-wool. The manufacture of plywood on a commercial scale was successfully tried and possibilities

²³⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 18.

²³¹ *Ibid.*

established by an experimental contract with a tea company in the High Ranges. ²³² A new method improving the quality of timber is the 'ascu'treatment of wood. Buildings and bridges have been constructed and electric poles set up of wood so treated and though this process is claimed to enable wood to be a substitute for concrete as building.

The conservation of forests was the declared policy of the Government. However, the uncontrolled encroachments made by private parties caused large scale destruction of forests. This not only endangered one of the main sources of the country's income, but also adversely affected the ecological balance. It also affected the country's plans to start industries using forest products and resources. But with the coming of transportation many roads approached to forests were constructed. Moreover in order to construct railways sleepers²³³ and making charcoals logs were cut down enormously led to deforestation. ²³⁴

Tourism

Tourism which developed into a large and lucrative industry had its beginning during the days of C. P. Ramaswamy Aiyer's period of administration. ²³⁵ Expecting that as soon as the Second World War ended there would be a continuous flow of tourists to Travancore, the Dewan started activities to encourage tourism here. He constructed tourist bungalows at Thekkady, which was the Head Quarters of the Periyar Wild Life Centre,

²³² Census of India, 1941, *Op. Cit.*, p. 108.

²³³ Travancore Administration Report, 1928-29, p. 162.

²³⁴ Kerala Kaumudi, 1941, October 2, p. 3.

²³⁵ A. Sreedhara Menon, *Triumph and Tragedy in Travancore Annals of Sir CP's Sixteen Years*, Kottayam, 2001, p. 111.

established in 1933 near Periyar lake.²³⁶ He arranged all conveniences for tourists there, as part of the tourism promotion project.

As a result of the talks between Dewan C. P Ramaswamy Aiyer and the representatives of Messers Thomas Cook and Sons, an agreement was signed to exhibit products from Travancore at the company's offices at New York, Paris, Berlin, Colombo, Bombay, etc with effect from January 1939 with a view to promote tourism.²³⁷ Following the agreements in their Bombay Office an exhibit window was completely devoted to Travancore. In High Range region towns like Munnar and Devikulam were developed for the purpose of tourism. In Kumili - Munnar area a Sanatorium, having an area of 430 acres, and at Devikulam a palace in 70 Acres were constructed.²³⁸ A large Bungalow near the lake beside the Hydro electric project at Munnar was bought by the Government for conflicting a tourist resort.

The first person to recognise the tourist potential in Travancore was C. P Ramaswamy Aiyer. The appointment of Thomas Cook as Travancore tourist agents to advertise the state's attraction the world over may be appreciated. Travancore Rooms, Travancore windows were opened in London, Paris, New york, Singapore, Colombo and Rome.²³⁹ Kottayam was a place where both land and a water travel facility were there. The tourists who visited Kottayam did not face any difficulties as there was Express bus service of state transport. It covered the 96 miles south Trivandrum and 57 mile north Alwaye as well as 70 mile east Munnar.²⁴⁰

²³⁶ *Ibid.*

²³⁷ Saroja Sundararajan, *Op. Cit.*, p. 439.

²³⁸ A. Sreedhara Menon, *Op. Cit.*

²³⁹ M. Sumathy, 'C. P. Ramaswamy Aiyer: The Man and His Vision, Exercises' in K. N. Ganesh, (ed.), *Modern Kerala History*, Kottayam, 2012, p. 184.

²⁴⁰ Mathrbhumi Weekly, Vol. 38, Book No. 25, Kozhikode, September 4, 1960, p. 72.

Papanasam is situating at the place where the Tambraparni river comes out of the mountains in five falls-many thousands of pilgrims annually wash away their sins in its scared waters.²⁴¹ Courtallam is situate in a recess of the mountains about 450 feet above the sea; it enjoys a delightful climate from the middle of June till September or October owing to the mists and light rains, which penetrate from the western to the eastern side of the range, and rounder the air ten degree cooler here than it is ten miles further East. It is a favourite place of resort for the Officers and residents of the District during the season, ample accommodation being provided in the several good bungalows which have been built here. The roads are excellent and the hill sidewalks very pleasant. The falls of the Chittar at Courtallam are famous amongst Natives for their virtue in cleaning from sin, and to Europeans for delightful bathing. The ruler of Travancore has a residence here, and it is a favourite resort of Travancoreans. With the opening of the railway, it will certainly be resorted to the Europeans who will be able to spend short leave during the months of August and September when the climate and Tuticorin and Tinnevely is not agreeable.²⁴²

Before the middle of the 19th century the agricultural production of Travancore was mainly food crops such as rice, vegetables, coconut, etc and products for export like pepper, cardamom, cloves, etc. After the development of plantations products like tea, coffee and rubber changed the pattern of agricultural production. Commercial crops for export had to be transported to the ports and hence improvement of facilities for transport became necessary. This led to the growth of trading centres into commercial towns. Employment opportunities developed and there was growth of income to Government and the people. There was increased demand for consumer goods like food grains,

²⁴¹ South Indian Railway Co., Ltd, Travancore Branch, Report on the Project for its construction, Survey of 1899-1900, Tamil Nadu Archives Library, Chennai, p. 33.

²⁴² *Ibid.*

which had to be imported.²⁴³ Moreover the goods imported needed distribution throughout the State, which also stressed the requirement of good roads. The result was that a vast network of roads was constructed helping the system of road transport.

The facilities for the transportation of goods from the plantations of High Ranges to nearby trading centres were inadequate. Quick means of transport was absent. Earlier goods were transported by means of mules, carts or head load. Later rope ways and mono railways were used from the hill station at Munnar. Tram ways were also used to transport plantation products to the ports for export.

The cost effective transport facilities like broad back water area and a network of roads boosted the internal trade. The main export companions were Colombo, Karachi, Calcutta, Rangoon, Bombay, Jaffna, Cochin, Calicut etc. Coconut palm, pepper, ginger, turmeric, arecanuts, cardamoms, rubber, tea, cashew nut, tapioca, illmenite, monazite, zircon, timber, hides, fruits, eggs etc. were the major items that exported in bulk. Rice, paddy, luxury items were also imported in large volumes. The following table shows the total Value of Exports and Imports, Value of Imports and Total Value of Trade from 1854-55 to 1936-37.²⁴⁴

²⁴³ *Ibid.*

²⁴⁴ T. K. Velu Pillai, *The Travancore State Manual Vol. III, Op. Cit.*, p. 50

Table 4. 12

Table showing the Total Value of Exports and Imports, Value of Imports and Total Value of Trade from 1854-55 to 1936-37

Year	Value of Exports Rs.	Value of Imports Rs.	Total Value of trade Rs.
1854-55	18, 11, 408	6, 36, 938	24, 48, 346
1864-65	46, 47, 829	Not available	Not available
1874-75	75. 5 lakhs (approximately)	45 lakhs (approximately)	120. 5 lakhs (approximately)
1884-85	1, 08, 21, 137	85, 53, 948	1, 97, 75, 085
1894-95	1, 68, 67, 834	1, 03, 67, 530	2, 72, 35, 364
1904-05	1, 71, 48, 056	57, 41, 246	2, 28, 89, 302
1914-15	4, 18, 20, 726	2, 93, 36, 797	7, 11, 57, 523
1924-25	9, 70, 96, 131	5, 70, 98, 244	15, 41, 94, 375
1925-26	10, 26, 54, 128	5, 93, 79, 863	16, 20, 33, 991
1926-27	11, 40, 65, 138	6, 16, 43, 268	17, 57, 08, 406
1927-28	11, 84, 08, 817	8, 23, 81, 910	20, 65, 49, 787
1928-29	11, 80, 42, 935	9, 32, 90, 681	21, 63, 33, 616
1929-30	11, 29, 39, 039	9, 36, 10, 748	20, 65, 49, 787
1930-31	9, 65, 15, 615	7, 65, 58, 897	17, 30, 74, 512
1931-32	7, 51, 16, 153	6, 49, 29, 804	14, 00, 45, 957
1932-33	7, 71, 08, 954	6, 43, 99, 262	14, 15, 08, 216
1933-34	7, 78, 97, 856	6, 29, 16, 056	14, 08, 13, 912
1934-35	8, 37, 66, 683	7, 91, 51, 379	16, 29, 17, 762
1935-36	8, 16, 00, 000	7, 43, 00, 000	15, 59, 00, 000
1936-37	9, 22, 92, 577	7, 42, 39, 341	16, 65, 31, 918

Source: T. K. Velu Pillai, *The Travancore State Manual Vol. III*, Trivandrum, 1940, p. 51

Push- Pull factors of Migration

One of the most significant concepts of the migration²⁴⁵ is Everett lee's Theory of Migration referred to as the 'push-pull' theory.²⁴⁶

²⁴⁵ Migration and settlement is a common phenomenon in the social history of different countries. An Encyclopedia defines migration as follows: "(it is) the permanent residential place of an individual or a social group. It can be classified as internal or international, voluntary or compulsory, etc. Generally voluntary migration occurs in

The migration to Malabar started during the 1930's. In this context, the words of Thakazhi Sivasankara Pillai, the famous novelist are memorable. "The history of mankind tells the story of man's thirst and insatiable greed for land. Empires were built and shattered for the same cause. The basis of man's transformation in every sense is also due to his thirst for the possession of land".²⁴⁷

As elsewhere in the world, the Great Depression of the 1930's produced concern in the state about the fall of agricultural prices, rising debts, high problem of unemployment, famine and contagious diseases, etc. Rural population was in great distress. The capital investment in the agricultural sector resulted in huge loss to the capitalists due to the fall in the price of commercial crops, after the First World War. Though not 'extravagant', the agricultural community of Travancore found that the money invested in land was failing their dreams.²⁴⁸ The tendency to concentrate on cash crops at the expense of food cultivation has prevented Kerala from attaining self sufficiency in the matter of food. "The situation", as George Woodcock has rightly pointed out "is not only the most important cause of Kerala's recent

search of a better life. Migration from Africa to other continents occurred about fifty thousand year ago. The migration from the middle Asia had taken place in the beginning of known history. The migration of British settlers to American States had become a landmark in the history of the world. Vide, Varghese Thottekkad, 'Malabar Kudiyyettante Naalvazhikal' in Varghese Thottekkad(ed.), *Malabar Kudiyyettam Charithram Varthamanam* (Mal.), Thiruvananthapuram, 2014, p. 29.

²⁴⁶ Lee in his Theory of Migration categorizes the process into the area of Origin, area of Destination, Intervening obstacles and Personal factors. The factors which motivate people to leave their places of origin and to reach a new destination, which he calls, push factors. Similarly, some attractions may compel to leave their place and to reach some other destinations which he calls the pull factors. More over some intervening obstacles like distance and education and personal factors also compel to leave one place and to migrate some other destinations for details see, Everett S. Lee, 'A Theory of Migration', *Demography*, Vol. 3, No. 1, 1966, p. 50.

²⁴⁷ Quoted in K. M Mathew Kottupalil, 'Malabarkudiyathente Niyamapachathalam, 'in Varghese Thottekkad(ed.), *Malabar Kudiyyettam Charithram Varthamanam* (Mal.), Thiruvananthapuram, 2014, p. 31.

²⁴⁸ V. J. Varghese, 'The Alluring Music of Labour: Modernity, Migrations and Recreation of the Syrian Christian Community', *Op. Cit.*, p. 513.

food crisis; it have also produced an economy exceptionally sensitive to changes in living patters elsewhere in the world and to completion in any of its special areas of cultivation such as the recently developing rivalry of Malaya in the pepper trade. ”²⁴⁹

There was a sharp depression in 1930’s which a worldwide economic phenomenon was and as part of it the prices of cash crops like rubber, pepper, coconut and ginger also dropped. The price of rubber of Rs. 400 per 100 pound in 1922 fell down to Rs. 250 in 1925 and further down to Rs. 27 in 1935. Such depression in the price of cash crops was a severe blow to the small farmers. This was also a reason to the large scale migration of farmers to Malabar in search of new lands for cultivation. Another aspect of the situation was during Depression of 1930 provided an opportunity to wealthy and land hungry Syrian Christians enjoyed better access to financial resources to purchase cheap lands abandoned by European planters.²⁵⁰

As stated, the food crisis in Travancore during the 1930’s was due to over importance given to commercial plantation instead of food crop production. The cultivation of tapioca, which was a substitute for rice, was not produced or available in the required quantity. Its production increased from 411500 acres in 1921. In 1931 it was 494142, in 1941 it was 575631 acres and in 1947 it rose to 503522 acres.²⁵¹ Travancore had to depend on the import of rice due to this shortage in food supply. Moreover the population was increasingly alarmingly while the cultivation of paddy declined during the period from 1921 to 1947 to production of coconut increased by 30 percent and that of rubber increased more than 100 percent. The cultivation of

²⁴⁹ P. G. Edwin, *Op. Cit.*, p. 275.

²⁵⁰ V. J. Varghese, ‘Land Labour and Migrations: Understanding Kerala’s Economic Modernity’, *Op. Cit.*, p. 37.

²⁵¹ V. J. Varghese, ‘The Alluring Music of Labour: Modernity, Migrations and Recreation of the Syrian Christian Community’, *Op. Cit.*, p. 512.

tapioca increased by 25 percent and the production of tea increased more than 100 percent.²⁵²

The tendency for war and famine goes hand in hand as pointed out by several scholars. A number of the numerous food crises associated with Second World War occurred within India. The famine in Bengal resulted in the death of 1.5 million to 3 million people. Madhusree Mukherjee writes that the principal cause of the famine was the fact that Churchill and his advisors used the resources of India to wage war against Axis powers, which caused scarcity and inflation within India. Before 1939, India used to import one to two millions of rice annually from Burma and Thailand. With the Japanese conquest of South-East Asia in 1942 this source was stopped.²⁵³ These interrelated events entailed significant consequences for the small princely state of Travancore located in southern India (as both provinces were suppliers of rice to Travancore). Despite the State Government's efforts to ameliorate shortages, Travancore experienced famine conditions by 1942. When previously committed rice imports from the nearby Madras Presidency also failed to arrive, both Travancore and the neighbouring state of Cochin faced rising prices and starvation.²⁵⁴ The migrations of people within this region as a consequence of war-induced food shortages and political motivations are explored along with their experiences of a forest frontier, which involved a great deal of conflict with problematic wildlife, particularly elephants.

²⁵² *Ibid.*, p. 513.

²⁵³ Kaushik Roy, *India and World War II: War Armed Forces and Society, 1939-45*, New Delhi, 2016, p. 129.

²⁵⁴ Meera Anna Oomen, 'Famine and Elephants: Remembering Place-Making Along Travancore's Forest Fringe' in Katie Holmes, Heather Goodall(ed.), *Telling Environmental Histories: Intersecting of Memory Narrative and Environment*, London, 2017, p. 245.

The Government found it difficult to maintain the supply of food grains. People had to depend on tapioca etc for food. Scarcity of food contributed to the spread of diseases. Famine spread over Travancore claiming many lives, the number of people who died in Travancore due to many causes including food shortage and diseases were 10387257 in 1940-41, 100629 in 1941-42, 120956 in 1942-43 and 127880 in 1943-44. The number of death registered was 67, 131 in 1941-42, 80, 637 in 1942-43 and 85, 253 in 1943-44.²⁵⁵

As in most other contexts, wartime deprivations resulted in disproportionate burdens for the poor and the marginalized. A number of accounts from the period point to the severity of the crisis in Travancore. In 1941, the Venerable Archdeacon T. G. Stuart Smith commented that “It would be a hard heart that could be unmoved by the sight of little walking skeletons”. During the same year, another observation was that “It might sound rather strange, but one felt that tearful and insistent demands for food by children were few and far between. The cruel experience of the months seems to have shown them that crying for food is as useless as crying for the moon. They lay here and there unable to talk or walk.”²⁵⁶

To deal with the situation the Government of Travancore adopted the programme called ‘Grow More Food’. Peasants were allowed to cultivate forests lands and lands that were unused and considered waste. Syrian Christians who were hungry for land used the favourable, encouragement to their advantage and dared to migrate to the high ranges to face the challenge of malaria than dying of starvation and famine. The continuing legacy of the famine period is manifested through skirmishes along the forest fringe where

²⁵⁵V. J. Varghese, *Op. Cit.*

²⁵⁶ Meera Anna Oomen, *Op. Cit.*, p. 245.

people oppose top-down environmental protection through acts of everyday resistance, protests and occasional retaliatory killings of wildlife.²⁵⁷

To combat the food crisis, the Grow More Food campaigns (under the recommendation of the Food Grains Policy Committee) were initiated in 1942 by the Government of India and the various provincial and state governments. Prompted by the then Dewan of Travancore, C. P. Ramaswamy Aiyar, two forms of agrarian expansion was undertaken in Central Travancore. The first focused on reclamation and backwater paddy cultivation in Kuttanad, and the second targeted forest clearance in the Ghats and migrations into the forest frontier.

E. M. S. Namboodiripad, the stalwart of the communist party, called for a pledge from the people not to leave even an inch of land uncultivated. Individuals such as K. G. Sivaswamy, an administrator involved in the famine surveys, labelled the migrants as “national assets”.²⁵⁸

The improved roads, the facilities offered under the railway system, the wonderful development of the mercantile marine, the habit of travelling about, and the increasing knowledge of workmen, have all tended to facilitate the flow of people from spots where they are not wanted to fields where their labour is in demand.²⁵⁹ The formation of towns, market economy etc paved the way for the rise of middle class, as stated earlier. Migrants from far-off regions, especially the rice-growing areas of Kuttanad, would travel by bullock cart or bus until the road head (Vadaserikkara or Chittar 20-30 km away) and walk the rest of the way.²⁶⁰

²⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 242.

²⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 246.

²⁵⁹ E. G. Ravenstein, ‘The Laws of Migration’, *Journal of the Statistical Society of London*, Vol. 48, No. 2, June 1885, p. 167.

²⁶⁰ Meera Anna Oomen, *Op. Cit.*, p. 249.

The overwhelming response to newspaper and journal articles that explored and examined possible destinations for migration and settlement indicates that migration had come to stay in the malayalee mind as the right conduit for mobility and progress.²⁶¹

One of the reasons for this large scale migration is the increase in population in Travancore. During the first three decades of the 20th century there was large increase in the percentage of population in the Meenachil, Muvattupuzha and Thodupuzha regions. Secondly the British pioneers in plantations had shown the example of large profit making enterprises by the establishment of plantation in forest areas. A large number of small scale farmers from Travancore also started the process of migration to Malabar and establishing plantations for cultivating rubber, pepper, coffee, tea, etc.

Migration from one part of Travancore to other parts and mid-Travancore to Malabar increased due to the enhanced communication and transport facilities. Moreover due to the partition of ancestral property in Christian families the availability of land per family and individuals was narrowed down to small pieces. Under these circumstances the news that large areas of land were available at low prices attracted many people to Malabar. They sold their lands in Travancore and started their migration to Malabar.²⁶² The peculiar economic problematic of Travancore structured during colonialism and the consequent economic peril in the princely state quickened the change. A 'forward looking community' fashioned accordingly was ready to leave its native places in search of virgin soil, which became the most valued asset by then for progress and mobility.²⁶³

²⁶¹ V. J. Varghese, 'Land Labour and Migrations: Understanding Kerala's Economic Modernity', *Op. Cit.*, p. 55.

²⁶² Varghese Thottakkad, *Op. Cit.*, p. 30.

²⁶³ V. J. Varghese, 'Land Labour and Migrations: Understanding Kerala's Economic Modernity', *Op. Cit.*, p. 49.

Christian leaders such as R. V. Thomas, T. M. Varghese, P. T. Chacko, A. J. John, Akkamma Cheriyan, Annie Mascreean, Rosamma Punnoose and others gave leadership to the struggle for independence. This made them the enemies of C. P. Ramaswamy Aiyer, the Dewan of Travancore. C. P's actions such as the liquidation of Quilon Bank,²⁶⁴ the closing up of Malayala Manorama,²⁶⁵ etc. had also prompted some free thinking lovers of freedom to leave Travancore, says Bishop Valloppilly. There were many reactionary social practices among the Christians like Pillayoottu, Pulakuli, Shradham, Wedding Ceremony, etc., which required unnecessary spending of money. This avoidable expenditure had ruined many Christian families.²⁶⁶ This was the one of the reason purely based on 'economic', and one of the push factor.

The average prices of an acre of land in 1925 were Rs. 144. 87, Rs. 53. 78 and Rs. 697. 48 in Meenachil, Thodupuzha and Muvattupuzha,

²⁶⁴ It is believed by many in Kerala that the liquidation of the Travancore National and Quilon Bank was the manifestation of the anti-Christian feeling of Sir C. P. Ramaswami Aiyar, the Dewan of Travancore (1936-47). But for the vindictive attitude evinced by the Dewan these people believe, the bank could have had smooth functioning, unaffected by the alleged mismanagement and like rumours advertently disseminated by its enemies. As there was a real competitions between the well-to-do sections of the Christian community and the Dewan – his financial policy was vis-a-vis the vested interests-it was easier for the critics of C. P. Ramaswami Aiyar to link the Bank episode with his so called anti-Christian attitude. Actually it was his financial and educational policies which made the Christian community staunch critics of the Dewan, though earlier instances of ill-feeling were also on record. But there were factors like financial mismanagement, political involvement etc., which hastened the liquidation step of the government. Vide, P. S. Suman, 'Sir C. P. and the Liquidation of the Travancore National and Quilon Bank', *Journal of Kerala Studies*, Vol. VI, Parts III & IV, September-December 1979, p. 485.

²⁶⁵ Since 1890, the year of its birth, the Malayala Manorama and its founder editor, Varghese Mappila, supported the political cause of back ward communities of Travancore. In the twentieth century it actively participated in the agitation for responsible government in Travancore initiated by the State Congress. Therefore the government confiscated the Press in 1938 and arrested its editor Mammen Mappila. He was kept in jail till 1947. The publication although appeared for some time from Cochin, it came out from Kottayam only after Indian Independence. Vide, K. K. N. Kurup, 'News Papers and Press Reports as Sources of Modern History of Kerala', *Journal of Kerala History and Culture*, Vol. I, March 1996, p. 74.

²⁶⁶ Varghese Thottakkad, *Op. Cit.*, p. 31.

respectively an acre of land could be bought in parts of Malabar at Rs. 4. When the price of land increases up to Rs. 290. 14, Rs. 95. 23 and Rs. 807. 20 in Meenachil, Thodupuzha and Muvattupuzha in 1931, while land in Malabar was accessible around Rs. 10 per acre. By 1947, average price of an acre fetched Rs. 702. 20, Rs. 1247. 99 and Rs. 314. 66 (a decrease from 1931) in Meenachil, Thodupuzha and Muvattupuzha, land was still being sold at Rs. 35 per acre in parts of Malabar. The low prize for an acre of Cultivable land in Malabar was attracted by the both small and big farmers of Travancore, this was one of the 'pull' factor.²⁶⁷

The improved roads, the facilities offered under the railway system, the wonderful development of the mercantile marine, the habit of travelling about, and the increasing knowledge of workmen, have all tended to facilitate the flow of people from spots where they are not wanted to fields where their labour is in demand.²⁶⁸

Settlements were organised by religious institutions as well as secular organisations such as the Sree Narayana Dharma Paripalana Yogam. The Ezhavas too quickly recognised the economic potential of migrations for progress and well - being of their people, though they could not intervene in the enterprise in an organized manner as the Nair Service Society did. In the 1930's the Ezhavas of Travancore also began to look at migration to other places as a way to escape from the poverty, unemployment and marginalization of the country.²⁶⁹ They decided to migrate to other countries or to remote areas like the high ranges of Kerala or to north Malabar. They

²⁶⁷ P. K Michael Tharakan, 'Intra - Regional Differences in Agrarian Systems and Internal Migration: A Case Study of the Migration of Farmers From Travancore to Malabar, 1930 - 1950', *Working Paper No. 194*, Centre for Development Studies, Thiruvananthapuram, 1984, p14.

²⁶⁸ E. G. Ravenstein, *Op. Cit.*

²⁶⁹ V. J. Varghese, 'Migrant narratives: Reading literary representations of Christian migration in Kerala, 1920-70', *The Indian Economic and Social History Review*, 43, 2, 2006, p. 238.

hoped to engage in agricultural work, join the army, or to do various jobs in the urban areas of other parts of India.²⁷⁰

The Nair community who were not interested in leaving their native locality to seek jobs had looked down upon people like Syrian Christians for their migration, began to admire the spirit of migration. Mannathu Padmanabhan, the leader of the Nairs advises his followers to “migrate, colonise ten or twenty acres of land and cultivate”.²⁷¹ He had regrets to see the Nair Youth wasting their time and energy by laziness. He was sorry to see the “white foreigners(were) making the awful hills in the eastern side heavenly”²⁷² while his community was slowly deteriorating. He advised the Nairs to follow the method of the Christian who acquired wealth toiling in the eastern hills. He was convinced that “any community that refuses to migrate would not progress anywhere at any time”.

Mannath Padmanabhan wanted the Nairs to change their mentality start cultivating the land. He told them to migrate to Malabar Mysore or wherever they could get land cheaply. He said “Get at least ten acres of land each, if you die of malarial fever let it be, it is better to die by doing hand work for life than dying of starvation without employment and food”. Following his advice the NSS made efforts to start Malabar migration by opening Nelliampathy estate, and Panathady colony, as well as the attempt to take on lease Kottiyoor Devaswom land.²⁷³

Unsurprisingly the “sacrificing migrant heroes” with “strong self reliance, amazing ability of hard work and ceaseless courage”, became

²⁷⁰ V. J. Varghese, ‘Land Labour and Migrations: Understanding Kerala’s Economic Modernity’, *Op. Cit.*, p. 54.

²⁷¹ V. J. Varghese, ‘Migrant narratives: Reading literary representations of Christian migration in Kerala, 1920-70’, *Op. Cit.*, p. 237.

²⁷² *Ibid.*

²⁷³ V. J. Varghese, ‘Land Labour and Migrations: Understanding Kerala’s Economic Modernity’, *Op. Cit.*, p. 53.

subjects of Malayalam literary creations as early as 1948.²⁷⁴ It also concentrates on the importance of transportation facilities to reach their destination.

*Vishakanyaka*²⁷⁵ of S. K. Pottekatt was one of the fine literary specimens which contain the real life experience faced by the migrants in the new land. “In a remote corner of Travancore, through a rough path that creeps between a mountain side and a large paddy field a bullock cart moves slowly, the rattling sound of which can be heard from a distance. The vehicle could be seen clearly when it reached near. It was fully loaded with house hold article boxes, book, copper pots, cooking wares tin lamps, leaf mats, poultry cages, coir and pulley, sieves, partition and even hard looms were among the articles stored one above the other. Then they started towards Aluva railway station in a small bus carrying forty four passengers, and the family belongings of the twenty families.²⁷⁶ The bus crawled forward coughing and spitting like a patient suffering from tuberculosis. We can feel that the availability of transport facilities had greatly helped the settlers to Malabar.

*Orotha*²⁷⁷ of kakkanadan, contains a fine literary experience about the Malabar migration. The flow of settlers from Travancore to Malabar is an

²⁷⁴ *Ibid.*

²⁷⁵ The most comprehensive and heart touching book written on the theme of the Malabar settlers is Pottekatt's novel *Vishakanyaka* Dealing with the experiences of the early batches of the immigrants, it takes us towards the tragic predicament of the people of Travancore who had abandoned their native place to seek their luck in the unknown virgin lands of Malabar. Its theme is the tragic end of the farmers who fought and failed against the hostile nature, epidemics and wild animals in a strange land. There is no caste or communal enmity or persecution, and not slavish obedience before the corruption of authority and royal power. They left their native lands with the hope to live freely in a land without fetters, without the agony of poverty and suffering. They had the dreams of peace and plenty and longed for a life of happiness, wealth, and power. The novel ends where all their hopes are shattered since the virgin land turns into a land of poison. Vide, S. K. Pottekatt, *Vishakanyaka* (Mal.), Kottayam, 1993.

²⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 18.

²⁷⁷ *Orotha* in the embodiment of the human will power that came forward to tame and conquer the wild nature of Malabar. *Orotha* and other settlers of Malabar had to fight

important incident in the history of Kerala. *Orotha*, her husband Kunju Varkey and children joined a large group consisting of many friends, relatives and also strangers. They travelled up to Cochin by bullock cart. The journey by train was more wonderful. Seeing Ernakulam town and realizing its largeness she felt that the Pala town that she had seen was only a cow shed. Seeing the strange animal like vehicle bellowing, and spitting fine, hissing “*chak, chak*” the children were scared. As the engine rolled forward roaring like a mad elephant, the wagons gathered spread and pieces of coal were scattered and fell on the people like somebody throwing stones. They had to spend a day at Shoranur. The next day they entered a line bus that ran on charcoal gas. Then they continued the journey by bullock carts, and at last reached the destination, chemberi when it was dark.²⁷⁸ By the above mentioned elements, it was understood the importance of transport factors facilitated for the migration process.

The migrations of people within this region as a consequence of war-induced food shortages and political motivations are explored along with their experiences of a forest frontier, which involved a great deal of conflict with problematic wildlife, particularly elephants. The continuing legacy of the famine period is manifested through skirmishes along the forest fringe where people oppose top-down environmental protection through acts of everyday resistance, protests and occasional retaliatory killings of wildlife.²⁷⁹

against the hazards of Malaria, soil erosion, the attack of herds of wild goats called ‘*Kezhas*’ wild boars, leopards and tigers etc. they transformed the hostile wild forests into inhabitable dwelling lands for younger generations. When *Orotha* was published in 1982, the story of the legendary migration and settlement had been completed. The settlers had reached the conveniences of civilized life like any other people. The novel deals with the heroic struggles of the early settlers through the heroine *Orotha* whose struggles have almost a mythical magnitude. She was an orphan child who had been saved from the terrible floods of 1924. Vide, Kakanadan, *Orotha* (Mal.), Kollam, 2014.

²⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 44.

²⁷⁹ Meera Anna Oomen, *Op. Cit.*, p. 242.

The Christian population in Malabar which stood at around 53, 000 out of a district total of over 30 lakhs in 1911, increased to around 1, 54, 000 in a total of around 47 ½ lakhs in 1951.²⁸⁰ From the 1930s into the 1960s, over 70, 000 petty capitalist planters from the Syrian Christian community of Travancore streamed into the highlands of Malabar (northern Kerala), in an enormous concreted purchase and clearance of the vast tracts of private forestland here.²⁸¹ Due to large scale encroachments on forest lands for the plantations of rubber, coffee, pepper and other cash crops the ecological background of the hilly area of Malabar were affected. The transformation effected by that single generation of settlers has destroyed nearly all the natural forest cover of the region and has converted the former jungle lands into commercial plots of rubber, pepper, arecanut and cashew. With this wholesale destruction of the forests and their fauna, the way of life of those who subsisted from these resources was simultaneously effaced, leaving only the memories of survivors as direct testament to their forest culture.²⁸²

The Bicycle as a harbinger of Change

Machines are among the most evident emblems and instruments of our modernity; they more emphatically than anything else, divide us from the technologies of the Pre industrial age.²⁸³ Since the late nineteenth century in particular, our time and space, of body, self and “other” technological innovation and by the incorporation of new and ever changing technologies into our daily existence.²⁸⁴

²⁸⁰ P. K Michael Tharakan, *Op. Cit.*, p. 2.

²⁸¹ Rich Freeman, ‘Folk Models of the Forest Environment in Highland Malabar’, in Mahesh Rangarajan and K. Sivaramakrishnan, (ed.), *India’s Environmental History: Colonialism, Modernity And The Nation*, New Delhi, 2012, p. 170.

²⁸² *Ibid.*

²⁸³ David Arnold, *Everyday Technology: Machines and the Making of India’s Modernity*, London, 2013, p. 5.

²⁸⁴ *Ibid.*

In recent years, discussion of technology in the nineteenth and early twentieth century colonial world has moved away from earlier insistence on the centrality of imperial agency and the instrumentality of empire's technological 'tools' of conquest and exploitation. Scholars now commonly eschew emphasis on the implanting of 'big technologies' such as railroads, telegraphs, steamships, modern weaponry, major irrigation works, and electrification systems (capital-intensive, often state-managed technologies that figured proudly in the rhetoric of imperial achievement), in favour of the ways in which these were understood, assimilated, and utilized by local agency.²⁸⁵

New Everyday technological products were introduced in the society such as sewing machine, wrist watch, the radio, the type writer, camera and the bicycle.²⁸⁶ The bicycle represents a conspicuous example of how new "everyday technologies," despite their foreign origin, could be rapidly assimilated into colonial society and in the process acquire new contexts and meanings.²⁸⁷ A wide range of opportunities were opened. All sections of the society could not afford to own even bicycles and hence their theft was common.²⁸⁸ The bicycles could bring in economic prosperity to the people and they were also symbols of social position. Women and the untouchables were not commonly familiar with their uses and advantage.

In a different way, the bicycle was the property of the upper caste people in Kerala in Kerala in the early part of the twentieth century. When the first Malayalam film *Vigathakumaran* was released in 1928, the hero, a Nair

²⁸⁵ David Arnold and Erich Dewald, 'Cycles of Empowerment? The Bicycle and Everyday Technology in Colonial India and Vietnam', *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, Vol. 53, No. 4, 2011, p. 972.

²⁸⁶ *Ibid.*

²⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 995.

²⁸⁸ *Ibid.*

youth appeared on the screen riding a bicycle which shows that the bicycle was the mark of modernity and it was reserved to the upper classes.²⁸⁹

BA degree holders and cycles were rare commodities in those days; both had high value in society. K. N. Govindan's cycle was very attractive. It had a bell and a horn. The shining handle bar had a flood of hangings and chairs of bells attached to it. Seeing ones cycle the owner's size and statue could be guessed. Both the person and the vehicle were topics of criticism among others.²⁹⁰ C. Kesavan in his autobiography describes how he acquired the skill of cycling and instructed many of my friends the technique. The writer remembers the incident of falling from the cycle, while instructing his friend the art of cycling.²⁹¹

The Hercules cycle owned by M. A. Muhammed Kunju is lost. Corporation License No. 393, Frame No. 4696.²⁹² Cycle No. 6649 without Gear case is lost. Those who find it please inform the matter. Suitable reward will be given, to those who give information.²⁹³ The news paper reports appeared in the daily Kerala Kaumudi speaks about frequent thefts of cycles in Travancore.²⁹⁴ Twenty two inch frame, wooden handles, Frame No. 2853, Back seat having two layers of leather. The above cycle was hired by one K. Madhavan Nair, Thazakkanathu House, Pangode, for the purpose of going to Neyyattinkara. One enquiry it is found that he travelled towards the Quilon route. The person is black in colour, 5 ½ feet tall, with full mustache and

²⁸⁹ P. Sivadasan, 'Wheels of Social Transformation: The Bicycle in Early Twentieth Century Keralam', *South Indian History Congress*, XXXVI Annual Session Proceedings, Puduchery, 2016, p. 1180.

²⁹⁰ C. Kesavan, *Op. Cit.*, p. 115.

²⁹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 119.

²⁹² Kerala Kaumudi, October, 28, 1940, p. 4

²⁹³ Kerala Kaumudi, March 1, 1944, p. 4.

²⁹⁴ Kerala Kaumudi, November 29, 1946, p. 3.

about 30 years old. He had been discharged from military service. Those who find the vehicle will be rewarded suitably.²⁹⁵

Modernity acts its role in day today life in the state. Traditional lamps such as *Nilavilakku*, Chain lamps, *Changla Vilakku*, *Thokku Vilakku* or hanging oil lamps were used by the Travancoreans. But after the introduction of kerosene into the market, people widely used petromax lights, Gas lights etc. At the period of Second World War, there arises a scarcity for kerosene not only because of the shortage of supply but also increased consumption.²⁹⁶ During the days before the advent of the Kerosene oil, people here cultivated plants and trees like Punna, Marotti etc from there dried seeds prepared oil which could be used for lighting lamps.²⁹⁷

In short, it can be seen that modernity in Travancore was the direct result of British colonization and the social and economic reforms were accelerated by the introduction and development of transport and communication. Thus modernity experienced a series of novel reforms in all fronts which brought Travancore from traditional to modern ways of life.

²⁹⁵ Kerala Kaumudi, November 11, 1946, p. 4.

²⁹⁶ Kerala Kaumudi, 1942, June 19, p. 2.

²⁹⁷ Kerala Kaumudi, 1943, September 10, p. 3

CONCLUSION

The society of Travancore was traditionally caste dominated. The upper castes or *Savarnas* had dominated, the state, while the lower castes or *Avarnas* had to face numerous restrictions, that acquainted for their which caused social backwardness. As liberty of every kind was decided by the *Savarnas* the lower castes had no right to personal safety and respectability. Even the freedom of movement enjoyed by domestic animals such as walking through the main road near the temples was denied to the *Avarnas*.

Thus the social restrictions imposed upon the lower castes by the upper castes with the support of the government had affected all aspects of their life. The most degrading among them had developed from the notions of untouchability, unapproachability and unseeability of the outcastes, which were followed strictly by the upper castes with fanatical rigour. The untouchable lower castes faced other forms of caste discrimination also. For instance they were not supposed to wear clean clothes, their women were not allowed to wear any kind of head dress. Due to caste restrictions the lower castes had no right to keepmilch cows. Wearing of foot wear and ornaments and fine clothes was prohibited to them. The untouchables were obliged to perform forced labour and had to use a kind of self-degrading language when speaking to the higher castes. There existed even the notions of various distance of unapproachability or distance of pollution among the castes decided by the higher castes, intensifying the segregation which made Swami Vivekanda comment on Travancore a “lunatic asylum”. The direct consequence of the social injustice of pollution or *tindal* was that the lower castes were not allowed to use public roads freely, enter market places, courts and temples admit their children to schools and government jobs.

The Subsidiary Alliance Treaty of 1805 brought Travancore under the complete control of the East India Company. During the middle of the 19th century in waves of transformation became stronger in the traditional caste based society of Travancore, due to a series of challenges from within and without. The technological innovations and developments introduced by colonial modernity were accepted and implemented by the royal administration of the state. The system of government administration was modernized like the introduction of examination for government appointments. Commercial monopolies were regularized and reforms were introduced on the rights Government tenants. A large number of schools were established and Christian missionaries were allowed to expand their educational activities, which benefited the *Avarna* section of the Hindu population. Through the Christian missionaries were interested in activities of conversion, they could influence the British administration and accelerate the series of changes in the social life of the downtrodden. In short the missionaries in Travancore offered protection, education, jobs and opportunities for a better life for thousands of people whose life was full of sufferings in Travancore.

After rapid industrial development all over the world in the 19th century, the increased production of goods in the industrialised nations could influence their colonies also. The process of industrialization in the west wanted to exploit the resources of Travancore, such as the raw materials and agricultural products. As a part of the utilization of the Travancore's wealth, the imperial forces supported the fight against social inequalities and oppressions of the traditional society such as slavery, *uzhiyam*, *viruthi*, etc. The missionaries also supported the cause of the suppressed such as the Shanar rebellion against the ban on the covering of breasts by low caste women. The Government of Travancore also adopted progressive proclamations and legislations to safeguard the interests of the tenants. The

abolition of slavery in 1855 and consequent emancipation of slaves was a mile stone in the social history of the country which brought far reaching changes. The British estate owners and plantation managers found a good opportunity for recruiting low paid workers from the newly liberated ex-slavers.

The high caste feudal lords, who owned much of the land were very powerful. After the acquisition of the temple owned land by the government, a large part of the cultivable land in the country came under state ownership. The rulers of Travancore issued many proclamations regulating tenurial rights which reduced the ownership rights of the land lords. During the middle of the 19th century about eighty percentage of the cultivated land was under government ownership and the remaining twenty percentages was owned by land lords or *janmies*.

The tenurial changes initiated in the 19th century and the encouragement given by the progressive attitude of the government triggered drastic changes in agricultural production. More waste lands were reclaimed for cultivation and agriculture became a profitable occupation. The traditional pattern of cultivation changed and even the coastal region was utilized for cultivation of coconut trees. In short the commercialization of agriculture and industrialization of agricultural products were the hall marks of modernization in the 19th century.

These innovative measures and progressive proclamations of the royal government were mile stones in the path of social changes. The appointment of Col. Munro as the Resident in 1811 could bring a new era of agriculture development in the state. Through the proclamations of 1818, 1819 waste lands and hilly tracks were made suitable for cultivation. The *pattom* proclamations of 1836 and 1837 intensified agricultural activities. In short the land tenure legislations in Travancore during the 19th and 20th centuries could

bring about effective transformation and progress socially as well as economically in the agricultural sector. The *Pattom* Proclamation of June 2, 1865 could change the entire pattern of ownership of the land. The cultivable land of the country was entirely freed from Government ownership and was distributed under the ownership of the actual cultivators of the land.

Land became a saleable commodity, a more and more transactions of land took place which accelerated economic activities in the land. All reclamation activities of land undertaken by both European's and natives had the support of the government which increased the total area of land brought under cultivation. The beginning of plantation activities in the High Ranges during this period could increase export of agricultural commodities. The short comings of the land reforms Proclamations such as the *Pattom* Proclamation in matters of *janmi – kudiyan* relations could be later corrected through the *Janmi-Kudiyan* Proclamation was issued in 1867. Through this Proclamation it was clarified that the tenants coming under the *Kanam* rules were not redeemable. The tenants were made permanent with the only obligating paying the rent and other fees in force. The defects of the Proclamation could not be settled even by this. Both the *Janmies* and the *Kudiyans* were dissatisfied with the Proclamation of 1867. The insecurity of the tenants who actually cultivated the land had affected the total agricultural production of the land. To solve the problems the Government passed the *Jenmie-Kudiyan* Act of 1896. Though the government tried to regulate the relation between the *janmies* and *Kudiyans* in Travancore, the conflicts and confrontation between them continued. Finally in 1932 the Government passed the *Janmie-Kudiyan* (Amendment) Regulation. By this regulation the tenants were granted absolute freedom to use the land held by them. They could convert the nature of the land for the cultivation of any agricultural crop of their choice.

A large number of Europeans became owners by land in Travancore. The commercial goods, such as agricultural products from the plantations and estates had to be brought to the nearest ports for export. This intensified the need for better roads and road transport had to be improved. The traditional mode of water transport was cheap, but slow and tedious country vessels, rafts or *valloms* were used in this transport. Kerala being naturally gifted with the presence of a large number of rivers and backwaters, there was good scope for the progress of inland navigation and water transport.

The facility for speedy road transport could be achieved after the formation of Public Works Department in 1860. The construction of Kottayam-Kumili road, and other roads like Main Central Road, Main Southern Road, Kottayam-Peermedu road etc could change the road map of Kerala. The well built roads provided a network that interconnected the country which made possibilities for better trade by helping the movement of goods from the High Ranges to the low lands. All kinds of vehicles ranging from bullock carts to speedy motor cars were used for this trade. On important roads Toll Gates were established. The State Transport Service was nationalized in 1938, which became a land mark in the history of transport service in the State.

The opening of the Public Works Department could commence many activities to improve in land navigation and road transport. The construction of AVM Canal from Trivandrum to Shoranur, was the foremost among them. The Ports such as Alleppey, Quilon and Colachel were improved during this period. Export of agricultural products increased considerably and Travancore had an important place in the trade routes with foreign countries. The use of steam boats for inland navigation added greater mobility to the transport of goods and passengers. The colonial government, finding that the existing system of water transport facilities were insufficient and needed modifications to suit the purposes of colonial administration, decided to start improvements.

Activities such as deepening of rivers, connecting rivers with lakes and backwaters through lands and tunnels, etc were part of it.

The introduction of the railway was a short in the arm for the colonial administration of Travancore. It provided the occasion for satisfying their aim of exploiting the wealth of the colonies. The primary aim of establishing the railways in the state was to provide facilities for moving the raw materials, from their source to the manufacturing centres, from where the finished goods could be re transported to the interior markets for sale. So that huge profits would be made to the European companies. In 1904 the railways were introduced between Quilon and Shencotta, and later it was extended to Trivandrum. In the High Ranges the Kannan Devan Hill Plantation Company introduced Mono rail. For the extraction of resourced from the plantations Kundale Railway and rope ways were also introduced. In 1936, for the first time Air transport was introduced in Travancore. It was a rare achievement among the princely states in British India. With that all the modern facilities of Transport were available in the state.

To make the picture complete the new developments and achievements in communication system also needs to be mentioned. Being a state is moving rapidly forward through the path of progress, a better mode of communication was essential. The Travancore government had an indigenous postal service system known as 'Anchal'. Upto 1861 the *Anchal* service was only for official purposes such as conveying royal messages, orders etc. In 1861 the *Anchal* services were made available to the public also. Various services like Money order, Value Payable Postage, Savings Bank, *Hundi* service, Insurance facility, etc were made available in *Anchal* offices. The *Anchal* Department had two divisions- Departmental and Non-Departmental *Anchal* Offices. The former was under the direct control of the State Government while the latter was Quasi-Government institutions. The country was well connected by

means of numerous Village Post Offices and village delivery system, introduced by the Anchal Department.

The British government had introduced the Postal Service in Travancore in 1857 at Alleppey. The British Post offices were situated only at important Trade centres, due to their colonial interests. The British Postal Service also had introduced the services of Money order, Savings Bank, etc but the people used them only for communication with places and persons outside the State. It is to be noted that both the Postal Service and the *Anchal* Service existed in the state side by side in friendly terms. At that time the Telegraph was a highly sophisticated technological advancement. In 1864 the modern system of telegraph was introduced in Quilon and in 1883 the Postal Department of the British Government and the Telegraph Offices were merged together and the Department was renamed as Posts and Telegraph Department.

It can be observed that all developmental activities introduced or undertaken by the British government in Travancore had the ultimate objective by benefiting the colonial administration. For instance, even in the allotment of amounts for road making it could be seen clearly. Priority was given in the allotment of funds for connecting market centres, and ports in the coastal area. Like that emerging business centres and agricultural tracts were preferred for development, instead of hilly tracts and backward areas where people needed transport facilities badly for their day to day life.

As stated earlier the series of Proclamations, Acts, Regulations and Legislations of Land Tenure can be called land marks in the social history of Travancore, as they brought in far reaching changes of social mobility. Market economy developed due to the commercialization of agriculture. Money transactions became very common and agriculturists and industrialists needed more money for capital investment for which the service of the money

lenders became necessary. The new system of lending and borrowing or monetary transactions developed in Travancore. The system of bonded labour such as *Uzhiyam*, *Viruthi*, Slavery, etc. were abolished and the establishment of the PWD are related. The women of lower castes were employed as labourers in the Public Works Department. They were required to wear covering of the breast which enhanced their social position. Thus the practice of following the ban on breast covering could be completely stopped in Travancore. The Government had to issue an order making it mandatory for women workers to cover their breasts. According to the Census Report of 1875, 18% of the population of Travancore were 'labourers' who were benefited by the increase in their wages, which was paid to them in the form of money.

The Christian Missionaries had served the downtrodden lower caste people of the state who had no source of help or protection during the period of social discrimination. Though there were occasional accusations of religious conversion and activities of profit making against them, the missionaries had always stood by the people in times of need such as relief operations during famine, floods, natural calamities and the spread of epidemics. They always tried to get to help and support of the British administration which was favourable to them, and secured men and materials for relief work. In addition to all these their service in the fields of education and medical and were invaluable and would be remembered in the history of the state.

From the 1880's onwards the number of tea estates in Travancore increased rapidly. Many factories making products of tea were also stated in the State. The industrial growth is in directly related to the need for better road facilities. While new opportunities of employment were opened for laboures under the PWD, more opportunities appeared in the tea estates also.

They entered new areas of economic enterprise such as contractors, commission agents, cash crop cultivators, traders and business activities. The money they earned was used to buy more land so that they became land owners.

Due to the relaxation of rules regarding the monopoly of pepper trade and commerce developed in the state. The income of farmers increased considerably due to the rise in the price of cash crops. Hence more people turned to cash crops cultivation. Which required more capital investment. The origin and development of banking operations in Travancore were the direct result of increase in trade, commerce and growth of plantations. The long scale production of commercial crops and their successful industrialization quickened trade and export in the state for which large capital investment was needed. Thus the system of private Banks and their financial transactions became necessary.

The middle class emerged in the Travancore society as part of influence of western influence was Syrian Christians and Ezhavas. Syrian Christians also could achieve wealth and social position by the cultivation of cash crops, mainly tea and rubber. They also owned the majority of banking institutions. Western education was another factor for the development of Syrian Christians. Newspapers like *Malayala Manorama* and *Nazarani Deepika* helped much to make them aware about the importance of acquisition of lands and cultivation of cash crops. Similarly, the Ezhavas were traditionally employed in coconut cultivation and related industries, such as the coir making. They also employed in toddy tapping. Many of them became wealthy due to the progress in industrial development initiated by the British. Moreover, the social reform movement like SNDP had a great role for the emergence of the Ezhava society. Sree Narayana Guru, the spiritual leader from the Ezhava community also stressed the importance of working habit to

achieve the financial security mainly through indulging in Industrial activities. Imparting the Western Education also paved for the rise of the Ezhava community. Introduction of print technology and News papers, Magazines also played its role effectively for the Ezhava assertion.

Though the conservation of forests was the accepted policy of the Government, the encroachments by private parties including the powerful European owners caused large scale destruction of forests. The utilization of forest lands for plantation purposes affected adversely the ecological harmony between man and nature. The forest resources and wild life were also severely affected. The country's natural wealth was exploited, considerably which was also one of the drawback of colonialism.

However, a great social transformation took place in Travancore society during the 19th century, which the indirect result of the colonial modernization. The changes in the agrarian economy had caused this to a great extent. The changes in social structure and relations were inevitable because the process of production and distribution were linked to the market economy. Moreover, the commercialization of agricultural production brought in permanent changes in social relations. Similarly the change in the pattern of traditional land utilization made necessary the practice of borrowing money from financial institutions originating banking activities in the state.

Though the traditional society of Travancore could modernized by the introduction of many progressive steps, the old traditions continued unchanged in many aspects of social life. Numerous instances can be cited from many contemporary literary works of the period to highlight the sorrows and sufferings of the people in those days. Thakazhi Sivasankara Pillai, the veteran novelist and short story writer of Kerala has drawn the pathetic picture of postman in his epic novel "Kayar". S. K. Pottekkat in his short

story 'Mail Runner' had portrayed the equally touching story of an "Mail Runner" whose life literally ended with the coming of the bus to carry the mail bags which itself is a symbol of modernity.

A serious development which caused social transformation was the commercialization of agriculture. Due to the changed focus in the production of crops, cash crops received more attention as they were more profitable, and it caused the shortage of food crops in Travancore. The Great Depression of the 1930's and the Second World War period made to an acute food shortage in Travancore. People were forced to leave their home land and migrate in large numbers with their families started to settle in the High ranges of Travancore and Malabar. The historic Malabar migration was a mile stone in the social history of Kerala. True to life descriptions of this phenomenon in the novel *Visha Kanyaka* of Pottakkat and Kakkanadan's *Orotha*. Similarly social evils like untouchability or *tindal* were practiced in Ancha post office which functioned near temples, even in the 20th century. C. Kesavan, records about it in his autobiography *Jeevitha Samaram*.

The famous Malayalam poet known as *Sarasa Kavi*, Muloor S. Padmanabha Panicker was a social reformer, who after much difficulty could obtain the appointment of one Velayudhan who belonged to the 'Untouchable' caste of Pulaya as an Anchal runner. As he had the official authority to enter all premises including the public spaces which were dominated by the upper castes.

Similarly the experiences of a rich member of the lower caste also open our eyes against the social inequality that existed in Travancore due to caste inferiority. Alummoottil, Channan who was rich enough to buy his own car could not travel in it before the temple, on the public main road. He had to get out of his car and after passing the temple had to continue the journey in it. This incident is recorded in the memories of C. Kesavan. The car used by

Channan was a product of colonial modernity. It could be bought and kept by the rich though he belonged to the 'lower' caste. But its uses could not be completely enjoyed due to social restrictions. This was the situation that existed in Travancore during the 20th century.

The system of preventing contagious diseases through vaccination was a success achieved by colonial modernity. It was a great service done to our society by the colonial administration. It had the unacknowledged objective of dealing the victory of science over traditional superstitions. In fact vaccination had been the metaphor that exposed of the failure of traditional systems in matters of public health.

The native Anchal office, the British Post Office and the Telegraph offices did the service of distributing essential medicines like Quinine, chlodyne etc. More over these official establishments effectively popularized the modern methods of medical treatment against contagious disease. The propaganda against the spread of epidemics could be brought about successfully by the Anchal and the Postal departments. The necessity of vaccination was proclaimed throughout the country by 'Postal markings'.

Though the members of the higher castes such as the Nairs, and the Syrian Christians were entrusted with the responsibility of conducting vaccinations, the work was not popularized among the lower castes. The missionaries, who were the agents of colonialism had do perform hard work to enable the lower castes as vaccinators to receive its benefits.

The telegraph facilities also did commendable service in the fight against contagious diseases. The authorities could be informed of the epidemics before they became wide spread and the need for medicines could be sent to Madras Presidency administrative authorities, for urgent action. The quick transporting facilities offered by the railways could also help the supply of medicines from Madras. During the time of the devastating famines in Travancore, the railways functioned as a source of help by bringing rice and

food grain from different parts of British India. Thus, though the British had introduced the railways for exploiting the resources of the contrary, it could bring relief to the people during the time of need. As it was a friend in need, it was really a friend indeed to the people of Travancore.

Though many incidents and innovations had occurred and introduced in Travancore during the 19th and 20th century, which had left deep impressions in the annals of the country, the changes brought about by the introduction of transport and communication reforms were highly penetrating and far reaching. However sufficient information about their relevance and significance have not been highlighted. In brief they functioned as the most powerful motivating power in the progress towards modernity that affected all aspects of human life.

The growth of science and the development of technology were implemented most effectively in Travancore by the colonial administration. The introduction of the motor car, the motor bike, motor boat, telegraph, telephone, the radio etc amply illustrates this. They have become essential things in our life these days. Though these products of modernity were invented in other parts of the world, they were introduced here by colonial modernity, and have remained here as the memorials of the imperialist administration.

In short the activities of development and progress, though were beneficial to the well being of the people superficially, basically they were introduced by the colonial powers for satisfying their own objectives and requirements. The instances are numerous, such as the transport development which was intended primarily for the movement of raw materials and soldiers of needed from one place to another. Similarly, the inter-portal Trade convention entered into between the Government of Travancore and the Government of India was an example of unjust treaty imposed on the state. The Act VI of 1848 of British India freed the coasting trade from all customs duties on goods passing from one part to another within that country.

Therefore this act was known as the Free Inter-portal Trade Act. The Native states were excluded from the benefits of the Act as they were considered as dependent states and therefore Travancore in common with the other native states suffered much in the development of its trade. The articles of export and import were subjected to customs levy, being a treaty for foreign commodities. This Act, also benefit to the British government. In addition, Once submarine cables were completed between India and Britain in 1870 (paralleling the opening of the Suez Canal to steam navigation in 1869), the telegraph integrated India more completely than ever before into administrative, military and commercial network of the British Empire. Always the basic intention of the colonial Government was to make their administration profitable to them. They also wanted to perpetuate and enlarge their imperial intentions in the colony. However, the infrastructure development of the transport sector had the indirect result of the growth of social mobility. Similarly the construction of roads in the High ranges had the effect of attracting people from the low lands to migrate and settled in the hilly regions of the state as workers and farmers. The availability of more facilities for travel movement of the people became common and forest areas were converted into settlements. Markets and trading centres developed in such places as the economy and life style of the people improved.

In short, the basic intentions of colonial rule everywhere in the world were the extension of political and cultural authority, expansion of economic hegemony, achievement of commercial objectives such as monopoly and investment expansion of European capital. All developmental activities undertaken by the colonial powers were based on these fundamental objectives which was true in the case of Travancore also.

GLOSSARY

Adiyan	-	Form of self description used by the lower castes
Anchal ottakaran	-	Postman
Angelus	-	Messenger
Anna	-	Coin, One- sixteenth of a rupee
Avarna	-	a backward or depressed caste
Bhanghy	-	Parcel
Brahmasvam	-	Land owned by Brahmins
Chackram	-	Coin, twenty eight and a half chackram make one rupee
Chitti	-	an indigenous saving system
Coir (kayar)	-	The fibre of the coconut husk used for making ropes and mattings
Dalawa	-	The title used in Travancore to signify the Office of the Chief Minister in the eighteenth century
Devaswom	-	Property belonging to temples
Dewan Peshikar	-	A divisional officer
Dewan	-	Chief administrator of the state
Fanam	-	57/8 of a British Indian Rupee
Hutchery	-	A government office
Huzur rayasam	-	Government Secretariat
Huzur-hutchery	-	The Dewan's Office
Janmam	-	Absolute tax-free land of Brahmins
Janmi	-	Landlord
Janmikkaram	-	Tax paid by the tenant to the landlord through the government.

Jatha	-	Procession
Kanam	-	A Kind of land tenure
Karam	-	Tax.
Kasu	-	Coin, One-twentyeighth of a chackram
Kayal	-	Backwater.
Kudiyar	-	A kanam tenant.
Malamkrisi	-	Paddy cultivation on the slopes of hills.
Melvicharippu	-	General Superintendent.
Murajapam	-	A sexennial ceremony conducted in Sri Padmanabha Swamy Temple.
Nadus	-	Group of land.
Naduvazhi	-	Chief of Nadus.
Naly	-	About less than half an hour.
Otti	-	A Kind of land tenure.
Pandaravaka	-	Land directly owned by the state.
Pattom	-	A kind of tenancy, standard assessment fixed for each land in reference to variety applicable to it, Rent
Porampoke	-	Unsurveyed government lands
Pothujanam	-	The Public
Pravanthikar	-	Revenue officer
Rajabhogam	-	The king's share of produce of the soil
Rajapatha		Path for the King
Savarna	-	Caste Hindu
Sekarippus	-	One who collect letters
Sirkar	-	Government
Sirkar-pattam	-	Lands owned by the State and leased out under an irksome tenure

Sri Padam	-	Belonging of the eldest female member of the Travancore royal family
Taluk	-	A Revenue Sub division Consists of Many Villages
Thiruithamkur	-	Old name of Travancore
Tindal	-	Unapproachability
Tola	-	Very small weight
Uzhiyam	-	Compulsory labour rendered by low castes to the caste Hindus, temples and the government
Varuthicars	-	Letter delivery peons
Vilipad	-	The distance of a call, about a quarter of a mile.
Virutti	-	Land assignment at concessionary rent in return for the performance of certain services
Viruttikkar	-	Holders of land under virutti

APPENDICES
ALPHABETICAL INDEX TO LIST
OF ROADS AND CANALS

	Road No.	Length in Miles
Achencoil – Mokkara – Pamblipattanam	120	17
Adoor – Mannady	175	4
Adoor – Pattazhi	177	5
Adoor - Punalore	142	18½
Adoor – Punalore Road 31 st mile to Kamugumcherry	130	3
Adoor - Thumpamou	178	6¼
Adoor - Sasthankotta	147	11¼
Adoor - Sasthankotta Road 10 th mile Kottakara	123	10 ⁷ / ₈
Aloncholay – Kuzhithurai	51	12¾
Allencode – Kilimanur	100	6¾
Allencode – Meerankadavoo	101	5 ³ / ₈
Alleppey – Aroor (via Shertallai)	206	28 15/16
Alleppey – Quilon	136	53¼
Alleppey – Road NO. 3	212	1 ¹ / ₈
Alleppey – Sherthalai	206	13
Alwaye – Angamali	282	7
Alwaye – Edappalli	281	8½
Alwaye Kizhakkambalam road – Perumbavur – Puthencruz	278	8 ⁵ / ₈
Alwaye – Kottayam (via Vaikom)	310	53
Alwaye – Parur	280	10
Alwaye – Munnar road	271	71 ³ / ₄
Alwaye – Munnar Raod 18 th mile to Muvattupuzha – Kothamangalam Raod 3 rd mile 6 th fug	301	3
Alwaye – Vengola	273	9 ⁵ / ₈
Amaravila – Ottasegaramangalam	66	9
Amaravila - Ravananchira	64	4 ³ / ₈
Ambalapuzha – Quilon	136	45 ³ / ₈
Ambalapuzha Temple Approach road	114	³ / ₄
Ambara – Mankumbu	230	7
Ammanayanakanur – Munnar (via Boimettu)	305	81
Do (via Top Station)	308	22 ½
Ammanayanakannur – Kottayam (via Kumili)	219	146
Anachady Estate road	133	1
Anchalpetty – Ramangalam	296	3 ⁷ / ₈
Anchal – Punalore	128	7 ¼
Anad Branch Road	95	3 ⁵ / ₈
Angamali – Alwaye	282	7
Angamali – Kalady	286	7
Anjugramam road	8	6 ³ / ₈
Anthinad – Melkavu	8	6

	Road No.	Length in Miles
Anthinad – Melkavu)4 th Mile) – 6 th mile Thodupuzha Arakulam	299	1 ½
Aracozha road	266	7¾
Areekal Thodu – Karingalchira	276	2 ½
Arakulam – Thodupuzha	260	12
Aramboly – Thittivilai	22	6 ⁵ / ₉
Aramboly – Trivandurm	2	50 ½
Aranmula – Pandalam	181	7
Arasayarkal Bank Road	25	1
Aroor – Alleppey	206	28 15 /216
Arukutty – Shertallay	209	14m 7¼ fug
Arumanur – Pulluvila	69	2¾
Arumanai – Panachamood Road & Trace	57	6
Arumanai- Atoor road	52	3½
Aruthengal - Shertallay	211	4 ¼
Aruvikkara- Katohani	105	3 ½
Aruvikarav road 2 nd mile- Kachani 3 rd mile	104	¾
Arvikarai-9 th mile T. S. road	103	2
Aruvikara Road	46	½
Aryanad Palode	93	14 ³ / ₄
Aryanad-Vellanad	92	3 ½
Athirampuzha-Lalom	231	12 ⁵ / ₈
Attingal-Chirayinkal	99	4 ¼
Attingal-Trivandrum	4	21
Attingal-Venjaramood	98	6 ½
Attoor-Arumana Road	52	3 ½
Ayoor- Ithicarai	113	14 ¼
Ayoor-Kulattupuzhi	114	5 ½
Avaneeswaram to Pattanapuram	125	16
Avayarammaucoil road	19	5 ½
Balamore- Nagercoil	24	23 ¼
Balamore road 9 th mile-Puthukulam	20	3 ¼
Balaramapuram- Kattakadai	74	6 ½
Balaramapuram- Poovar	72	7 ¼
Balaramapuram- Vizhinjam	73	4 ⁷ / ₄
Bastow road	198	3 ³ / ₈
Bharananganam-Wazhamattam road	235	4 ¼
Bhoothapandy- 44 th mile M. S road	16	5
Bonacord - Vithurai	107	12 ¼
Bramore – Palode	106	9 ⁵ / ₈
Cape- Nagercoil	5	13
Cape- Trivandrum (via Nagercoil)	312	53 ⁷ / ₄
Cape road 48 th mile- Tamarakulam	7	3 ½
Do. 47 th mile – Anjugramam	8	6 ³ / ₈
Do. 46 th mile- Marungoor	9	3
Cape road 44 th mile- Manakudi	13	6 ³ / ₄
Do. 43 rd mile-Dharmapuram	14	5 ³ / ₄

	Road No.	Length in Miles
Caps Comorin- Panagudi Frontier	6	4 ³ / ₈
Cardamom Hill road (Bridle path)	226	58
Cavanal- Rajampara 167	167	12 ¹ / ₄
Chakkuvall- Kulasekarapuram	145	7 ³ / ₄
Chadayamangalam- Pallikkal	110	6 ¹ / ₈
Chandanapally- Konni	183	7 ³ / ₄
Changanacherry- Kaviyur	188	8 ¹ / ₂
Changanacherry- Trivandrum	1	84 ¹ / ₈
Changanacherry- Wazhur	205	19 ¹ / ₂
Changanacherry- Wazhur road 7 th mile-Madappally	202	6
Charummood- Mankankuzhi	172	4 ¹ / ₄
Chathanoor- Paravoor	112	6
Charumood-Sasthankotta	146	9 ¹ / ₄
Chavara- Pattacadavu	139	5 ³ / ₈
Cheekalkadavu - Kadambanad	174	4 ¹ / ₂
Cherupagaramanputhooor road	17	3 ¹ / ₁₆
Chengal- Pallipot thodu road	285	3 ¹ / ₂
Chengannoor- Eraviperur	196	4 ⁵ / ₈
Chengannoor- Mavelikkara	156	7 ¹ / ₄
Chengannoor- Trivandrum	1	74
Chengannoor- Vanchithara	159	7 ³ / ₈
Chennampally- Vallachira	182	5
Cherupungal - Marangathapalli road	233	4 ³ / ₄
Cheruvaraconam road	62	2 ² / ₃
Cherukunnam – Vettiyoor	194	5
Cherukolpuzha – Poovanacadavu	193	13 ¹ / ₂
Cherukolpuzha – Kozhencherry	163	1 ⁵ / ₈
Chinnar – Munnar (Northern Outlet road)	309	36 ³ / ₄
Chirakay road	48	2 ¹ / ₈
Chirayinkal – Attingal	99	4 ¹ / ₂
Chithrapuzha – Kizhakkambalam	274	7 ¹ / ₂
Chittar Estate Mannarkulanji	166	14 ³ / ₄
Church Hill road	224	5
Church Hill road 3 rd Mile – Pumbanar	225	5 ¹ / ₂
Cochin Frontier Kamathukadavu		1 ¹ / ₄
Colachal Eravipudookadav		8 ¹ / ₂
Colachal - Mulagumood		7
Colachal Sea Port- Nagercoil		14 ¹ / ₄
Colachal – Rajakamangalam road 9 th mile-Nagercoil (via Friday Market)	28	7 ² / ₅
Colachal Port – Nagecoil)via Rajakkamanala and Manavalakurichi)	27	14 ⁷ / ₈
Kulasegaram - Maycode	38	
Danapadical - Karthigapally	153	
Daranamcpe - Shorlacode	21	
Devicolam – Cutcherry - Munnar	295	
Devicolam - Periakanal	306	

	Road No.	Length in Miles
Deviolam – Cutcherry to Deviolam Periakanal Road	307	
Dharmapuam road	14	5 ¼
Eathenkattumabadam road	10	7 ¾
Eattapadappu road	116	12
Edacode road	54	6
Edamon - Yeroor	131	9
Edapalli - Alwaye	281	8 ½
Edapalli - Muvattuupuzha	279	7 ¾
Edapunom Erumakuzhi	179	4 ⅓
Elamballur (Kundara) - Quilon	137	7 ⅝
Elanji - Piravom	256	5
Elanthayambalam - Moykode	37	4 ¼
Elathoor – Achemputhur – Puthukulam Pambilipattanam	121	5 ½
Edayar - Kuttical	223	5 ¾
Eranile - Muttom	31	6
Erankuam – Munner (via Kothamangalam Perumbavoor and Alwaye)	314	82 ⅝
Eraniel – Rajakamangalam road	30	7 ¼
Erattupettah - Kanjirapally	222	7 ½
Eraviperoor - Chengannur	196	10
Eravipudoorkaday - Colachel	43	4 ⅝
Eramakuzhi - Edapamon	179	8 ½
Erumeli - Kanjirapally	218	9 ⅝
Ettumanoor - Trivandurm	1	173
Ettumanur - Vaikom	240	17 ½
Haripad - Quilon	136	32
Haripad to Nelpura Landing road	154	¾
Hereford Estate road	117	6
Hill Sde road (Marhandom – Pachipara)	44	13 ½
Ithikarai - Ayoor	113	14 7/2
Kadkad - Kaipathur	160	5 4/5
Kadambanad - cheekalkadavu	174	4 ½
Kadanad road	239	2 1/9
Kadavazha - Sasthankottah	173	5
Kaduthuruthy - Meenachil	243	14 ¾
Kaipathur - Kadakkad	160	5 2/5
Kalady – Angamali	286	7
Kalainkadud road	23	5 ¾
Kaliar Estate – 3 rd mile Thodupuzha Udumabanoor road	262	6
Kaligasam - Ponmanai	41	7 ½
Kalikavilay – Parasala road	62	7 2/3
Kaloor – Muvattuupuzha – Thodupuzha road	298	27
Kallambalam - Wakalai	102	7
Kallarkode – Pazhaveedu	213	1 ¼
Kaluthuruthy estate road	132	5
Kamankulangal - Kozhithottam	133	5/8
Kamanathichamputhoor Road	12	1. 52

	Road No.	Length in Miles
Kambathukadavu – Cochin Frontier	277	5 ½
Kamugamchery – Adoor Punalore road 31 st mile	130	3
Kanjirapalli - Erattupettah	222	10
Kanjirapalli - Erumeli	218	9 5/8
Kanjirapalli - Kottayam	219	24 3/8
Kanjirapalli -Kunnumbhagom	216	9 ¾
Karamana - Thiruvellam	82	3 ½
Karimannur Market - Vandamattom	300	3 ½
Karingal Marthadom	45	4 ¾
Karingal - Thengapattanam	49	5 ½
Karingalchira – Arakalthodu	276	2 ½
Karikode - Velliamattom	268	7
Karikode – Sankarapilly	297	6
Karthiapalli - Danapadical	153	1 5/8
Karugachal - Mallapally	191	3
Karugachal - Kottayam	204	10 ¾
Karugachal – Kunnumbhagom	203	9 ¾
Katchani – Aruvikara	105	3 ½
Katchani – Aruvikara road 2 nd mile	104	¾
Kattakadai - Balarampuram	74	6 5/8
Kattakadai – Veeranakavu	75	4 3/8
Kaviyur – Changanacherry	188	8 ½
Kayemkulam - Mannur	148	10 ½
Kayemkulam – Punalore	142	35
Kayemkulam – Quilon	130	24
Kayemkulam – Adoor road – Mavelikara (Kuttitheru)	149	6
Kazhakuttam – Shearem	85	4 ¼
Kazhanad – Nedumangad	88	4 ½
Kidangannoor – Mulakozha	184	3
Kidangannor Mannarkad	195	5 ¼
Kilamanoor – Allencode	100	6 ¾
Kizhakkambalam – Chithrapuzha	274	7 ½
Kodaikanal (from Kottayam via Kumili)	219	146
Kodanand road	233	61
Kodukulanji road	157	5 ¾
Kodukulanji – Pulacadavu	158	3 ½
Kollencode – Parassalai	61	5 ½
Konni Market – Agricultural school	185	2 ¾
Konni Estate road	165	3 ½
Konni – Chandanapally	183	7 ¾
Koodallur ryots road	242	4
Kottical – Kuruppampadi	272	6
Kothamangalam – Muvattupuzha	288	7 ¼
Kothamangalam – Perumbankuttu	289	21 7/8
Kothamangalam river to 7 th mile 4 th furlong Moovattupuzha – Kothamangalam road	304	¾
Kothamangalam – Vazhakulam	294	11

	Road No.	Length in Miles
Kottapuzhakkal – Thazhava	144	8 3/8
Kottar – Dharmapuram	14	5 3/4
Kottakara Sasthankottah road	123	10 ⁷
Kottarakka – Quilon	119	15 1/4
Kottaraka – Trivandrum	1	46
Kottarakara – Velinallur	122	9 1/2
Kottayam – Alwaye (via Vaikom)	310	53
Kottayam - Kanjirapalli	219	24 3/8
Kottayam – Karugachal	204	10 3/4
Kottayam - Kumili	219	70
Kottayam – Mundakayam	219	33 1/2
Kottayam - Peermade	219	46 1/2
Kottayam – Trivandrum via Kottakkaa and Kottayam (Kundara)	313	103 7/8
Kottayam – Trivandrum	1	95 1/2
Kottoor - Pappanamcode	81	18 1/4
Kozhencherry – Mannakulanji	169	9 1/4
Kozhencherry - Kumbazha	162	10
Kozhencherry - Thiruvalla	186	10 1/4
Kozhencherry – Cherukolpuzha	163	1 5/8
Krishnan Nayar Road	138	3/4
Kulanadai - Omaliur	197	2 3/4
Kulesekharapuram - Chekkuvalli	145	7 3/4
Kulathupuzha –Ayoor	114	16
Kulathupuzha Chowkey road	135	5 1/8
Kulathurchavady - Udayankulangara	65	5. 06
Kumbanad - Ranni	201	5
Kumbazha - Kozhencherry	162	10
Kumili - Kottayam	219	70
Kumili – Kodaikanal - Ammanayanakannur	219	76
Kundankadavu - Malyinkil	79	3 4/5
Kundara - Vakakkekara	118	7 1/4
Kunnumbhogom Karugachal	203	9 3/4
Kunnumbhogom - Kanjirapally	216	9 3/8
Kuruvilangad – Kuruppanthara	249	4 5/2
Kuruppampady - Koottical	272	2
Kuruppanthara - Kuruvilangad	249	4 5/8
Kuruppankulam – Sherthalai Muttathangadi	214	1 mt. 23. 2350ft
Kuthattukulam – 112 th mile M. C. road via Uzhavur	253	8
Kuthattukulam – 2 nd mile Pachaccha Piravom road	254	2 1/2
Kuthattukulam – Ramapuram	252	7
Kuthattukulam – Thalayolaparambu	244	13 3/4
Kuttical Endayar	223	5 3/8
Kuttitheru road	149	6
Kuzhikandom – Varapatty	292	1 1/2
Kuzhithurai causeway road	58	3/8

	Road No.	Length in Miles
Kuzhithurai – Alencholay	61	12 ³ / ₄
Kuzhithurai – Thenhapattanam	47	7 ¹ / ₂
Kuzhithurai – Trivandurm	2	23 ¹ / ₂
Lalam – Athirampuzha	231	12 ⁵ / ₈
Lalam – Ponkunnam	221	13
Lalam – Poonjar	227	10 ³ / ₈
Lalam – Ramapuram	228	7 ¹ / ₈
Lalam – Thoodupuzha	218	17 ³ / ₄
Madathurai - Palpally	109	20 ¹ / ₄
Madathurai – Pinnamannar	111	2
Main Central Road	1	15 ⁵ / ₈
Do 112 th mile to Kuthattukulam via Uzhavoor	253	1
Do 114 th mile to Muthulpuram	257	1 ¹ / ₂
Do 137 th mile to Vengola	270	7
Do 145 th mile to Malayattu (Kadanad road)	263	3
Do 145 th mile to Vallom landing	234	³ / ₄
Main Southern road	2	93
Do. 48 th mile to Thazhakudy	18	3
Do 44 th mile to Bhoothapandy	16	5 ¹ / ₂
Do 41 st mile to Cape road	5	13
Do 6 th mile to Ooruttambalam	76	2 ¹ / ₄
Do 5 th mile to Vellayani	78	1 ¹ / ₄
Malayattur 114 ⁷ / ₈ th mile M. C. road (Kodanad)	283	6
Malayinkil – Kundankadavu	79	3 ⁵ / ₈
Mallapally – Changanchery Wazhur road 7 th mile	202	6
Mallapally – Karugachal	191	3
Mallapally – Thiruvella	187	8 ³ / ₄
Mallapally – Thottabhagom	192	5
Manakudi – 4 th mile Cape road	13	6 ³ / ₄
Mangad road (Road to Minohirai)	55	5
Manimala – Ranni	229	10 ³ / ₈
Mankankuzhi – Kidangoor	172	4 ¹ / ₄
Mankombu – Ambara	230	7
Mannady – Adoor	175	4
Mannar – Kayenkulam	148	10 ¹ / ₂
Mannarkad – Kidangoor	195	5 ¹ / ₄
Mannarkulanji – Chittar Estate	166	14 ³ / ₄
Mannarkulanji – Kozhencherry	169	9 ¹ / ₄
Mannathur – Marady	293	5
Marady – Mannathur	293	5
Marthandam – Panchamood Road	56	1
Marangathupally – Cherpungal road	233	4 ³ / ₄
Marthandam – Karingal	45	4 ¹ / ₄
Marthandam – (Thoduvatty Pachipara)	44	13 ¹ / ₂
Marungur road	9	3 ¹ / ₁₆
Mavelikara – Chengannur	186	7 ¹ / ₄
Mavelikara – Kayankulam Adoor road (kuttitheur)	149	6

	Road No.	Length in Miles
Mavelikara –Pandalam	185	10 ¼
Mavelikara – Pulikeel landing	152	8 ¼
Mavelikara – Thiruvella	151	12
Mavelikara – Thrikunnapuzha	150	10 ¼
Minachil – Kaduthuruthi	243	14 ¾
Meerankadavu – Alencode	101	5 3/8
Melkavu – Anthinad	259	6
Meycode – Colasegaram	38	4 3/8
Meycode – Elanthayambalam	37	4 ¼
Monday Market – Puthukadai	35	11 ¼
Monday – Market – Thiruvattar	33	10 1/8
Monday Market – Thiruvattar Road 8 th mile to Marthandam Pachipparai road	34	2. 37
Moolaikonam – Neyyattinkara	71	4 ½
Midland Road	50	2 ¾
Minchira to Mangad road	55	5
Muhamma – Thanneermukkom	208	3
Mulangumood – Oelachal	42	7
Mulakaza Kidangannoor	184	3
Mulakazha - Puthencavu	170	2 1/8
Mundakayan - Kottayam	219	33 1/8
Munnar – Ernankulam road (for Cochin Harbour) via Kothamangalam Permbavoor and Alwaye	314	8 5/8
Munnar – Ammanyanakannur via Bodimettu	305	81
Munnar – Ammanayanarkannur via Top Station	308	22 ½
Munnar – Chinnar (N. O. road to Udampalpet)	309	36 ¼
Munnar – Devikulam Cuthcharry	295	56 ¼
Muvattupuzha – Kothamangalam road 7 th mile 4 th fug. to Kothamangalam river	2304	¾
Munnar – Alwaye road	271	71 ¾
Muvattupuzha – Kothamangalam road (3 rd mile 6 th furlong) to 18 th mile Alwaye Munnar road)	301	3
Murukampuzha – Pothencode	97	6
Muthulapuram – 114 th mile M. G. road	257	14
Mutholy Ferry to Church road	234	½
Muttom Eramiel	31	6
Muvattupuzha – Edappally	279	7 3/8
Muvattupuzha – Kothamangalam	288	7 ¼
Muvattupuzha 2 nd mile Palaoozha Thodupuzha road	266	7 ¾
Muvattupuzha – Pirvavom	264	8 ¾
Muvattupuzha – Thodupuzha	263	13
Muvattupuzha – Thodupuzha road – Kaloor	298	2 7/8
Muvattupuzha – Trivandrum	1	130 ½
Muvattupuzha – Western Frontier	265	16 1/8
Nagercoil – Balamore	24	23 ¾
Nagercoil – Cape Comoria	5	13
Nagercoil – Colachal port	32	14 ¼

	Road No.	Length in Miles
Nagercoil – Colachal port (via Rajakkamangalam and Manavalakurichi)	27	14 1/8
Nagercoil – Trivandrum	2	43 3/4
Nedungayom – Punalore	2	43 5/8
Nedungayom – Rock barrier road	126	2
Nedumangad – Town road	127	2
Nedumangad – Kazhanad	87	1
Nedumangad – Shorlacode	88	4 1/4
Nedumangad – Vembaya	63	89
Neducacad via Pothinikad – Varapetty	89	5
Nemom – Vizhinjam	303	5 3/4
Neyyattinkara Cutcherry road	80	5 1/3
Neyyattinkara – Moolaiconam	76	1/2
Neyyattinkara – Poovar	71	4 3/4
Neyyattinkara – Trivandrum	67	6 1/2
Neyoor Hospital – Trivandrum	2	12
Northern outlet road (Munnar – Chinnar and hence to Coimbatore)	309	36 3/4
Olungassery – Theroor	15	3 1/4
Omaller - Kulanadai	176	7 1/2
Omaller – Peryaram	171	4 3/4
Ooruttambalam – 6 th mile M. S. road	77	4 3/4
Ottasegaramangalam – Amaravila, 14 th mile M. S. Road	66	9
Pachallur – Venganur	84	4 1/2
Padanayarkulangara – Sasthananootta	140	6
Palaoozha – Piravom	255	10
Palaoozha – Piravom road 2 nd mile-Kuthattukulam	254	2 1/2
Palaoozha – Thodupuzha	258	9 7/8
Palaoozha – Thodupuzha road 2 nd mile-Muvattupuzha	266	7 3/4
Palamoottah (British) – Trivandrum	2	90
Palankadavu to Thalayala parambu road	246	13
Pallikkal – Chadayamangalam	110	5 1/8
Pallikkal – Puthyakavoo	180	5 1/2
Pallipot thodu – Chengal road	285	5
Pallipuram – Vembayam	96	8
Palode – Aryanad	93	14 3/4
Palode – Braemore	106	9 5/8
Pambaran Church Hill road 3 rd mile	225	5 1/2
Pamblipattanam Makkara and thenoo to Achen coil	120	3 1/2
Pambilipattanam Puthukulam – Achenputhoor Elathoor	121	5 1/2
Panachimood – Parassalai	60	2 1/2
Panachamood – Arumunai road and trace	57	6
Panachamood – Marthandom road	56	1
Panagudi Frontier Cape	6	4 3/8
Pandalam – Aranmula	181	7
Pandalam – Mavelikara	155	10 1/4
Pappanamoode – Kottoor	81	18 1/4

	Road No.	Length in Miles
Parassalai – Kollencode	61	5 1/5
Parassalai – Panachimood	60	9 1/2
Parasala – Kalikavila road	62	2 2/5
Paravoor – Chathannoor	112	6
Paravoor – Paripally	108	6 1/4
Paripally – Paravoor	108	6 1/4
Paripally – Madathura	109	20 3/4
Pariyaram – Omallur	171	4 3/4
Paravathiagaram – Cape	5	13
Parur – Alwaye	280	10
Patianapuram – Avaneeswaram	125	5 1/2
Pathanapuram – Ranni	164	24 1/2
Pathanamthitta – Yezhankulam	161	10 5/8
Patiacadavu – Chavara	139	5 3/8
Pattakadavu – Sasthankotta	141	3 1/2
Pattazhi – Adoor	177	5
Pazhaveedu – Kallarkode	213	1 1/4
Pachipara – Martandam (Thoduvatty)	44	13 1/2
Peermade – Kottayam	219	46 1/2
Peermade – Trivandrum via Wazhur and Changanacherry	311	132
Periakanal – Devioolam	306	9 1/2
Periakanal Devioolam To Devioolam Cutchery Road	307	11/16
Periyar Dam and Lake – Thekkadi	219	68 7/8
Periyar Estate Road	290	2 1/4
Perinad – Poovathumkadavu road	168	1 1/4
Perumbankuthu – Kothamangalam	289	21 7/8
Perumbavoor – Puthenoruz	269	11 1/4
Perumbavoor – Puthernnoruz Road – Alwaye Kizhakkamabalam road	278	8 5/8
Perumbavoor – Trivandrum	1	142 1/2
Pinnamannar – Madathurai	111	9
Piravom – Elanji	256	5
Pirvaom – Muvattupuzha	264	8 5/8
Pizhagu – Ramapuram	251	2 1/2
Plasanal Privithram road	237	4 1/2
Ponkunnam – Lalom	221	15
Ponmanai – Kaligasam	41	7 1/2
Ponmanai – Valiattumugom	39	2 2/5
Ponmudy – Trivandrum	94	38
Privithranam Plasanal road	237	4 1/2
Privithanam Church road	289	7 8
Poonjar - Lalom	227	10 1/4
Poovarkadavu – Cherukolpuzha	193	15 1/2
Poovar – Balaramapuram	72	7 1/4
Poovar – Neyyattinkara	67	6 1/2
Poovathumkadavu – Prinad Road	168	1 1/4
Poovar – Songurity	70	4

	Road No.	Length in Miles
Poovar – Trivandrum	83	17 $\frac{1}{4}$
Pothencode - Murukumpuzha	97	6
Pudukady – Monday Market	35	11 $\frac{1}{4}$
Pudupally – Thenganal	190	9 $\frac{3}{8}$
Pulakadavu – Kodukulanaji	158	3 $\frac{1}{2}$
Puliannur – Wazhur	220	11 $\frac{3}{4}$
Pulikeel landing - Mavelikara	152	8 $\frac{1}{4}$
Pullikauakku road	143	2 $\frac{1}{2}$
Pulluvila – Thiruvatiar	68	3 $\frac{1}{2}$
Pullavila Arumanoor	69	2 $\frac{3}{4}$
Punaloor – Adoor	142	18 $\frac{1}{2}$
Punaloor – Anchal	128	7 $\frac{1}{4}$
Punaloor – Kayenkulam	142	35
Punaloor – Nedungayam	126	2
Punaloor – Quilon	119	27 $\frac{1}{2}$
Punaloor – Saliakara Estate	129	4 $\frac{5}{33}$
Punuathara Tile Factory road	241	1 $\frac{1}{4}$
Punnathara Church approach Road	232	$\frac{1}{2}$
Puthenvavu – Mulakazha	170	2 $\frac{1}{4}$
Putheyakavoo – Pulikeel	170	2 $\frac{1}{4}$
Puthercruz – Perumbavur	180	5 $\frac{1}{2}$
Puthenvelikara – Cochin Frontier	269	11 $\frac{1}{4}$
Puthukulam – Balamore road 9 th mile	20	3 $\frac{1}{4}$
Puthoor – Yenady	123	4 $\frac{1}{4}$
Quilon – Alleppey	136	55 $\frac{1}{4}$
Quilon – Amabalapuzha	186	46 $\frac{3}{8}$
Quilon – Elamballur	137	7 $\frac{4}{8}$
Quilon – Haripad	136	32 $\frac{7}{8}$
Quilon – Kayenkulam	135	24
Quilon – Kottarakara	119	18 $\frac{1}{4}$
Quilon – Punalur	119	27 $\frac{1}{2}$
Quilon – Shenoottah	119	59 $\frac{2}{8}$
Quilon- Trivandrum	4	44 $\frac{1}{4}$
Ramamangalam Road	267	5 $\frac{1}{4}$
Ramamangalam – Anchalpetty	296	5 $\frac{1}{4}$
Ramapuram – Kuthattukulam	252	7
Ramapuram – Lalom	228	7 $\frac{1}{4}$
Ramapuram – Pizhagu	251	2 $\frac{1}{4}$
Rajakamangalam – Eraniel	30	7 $\frac{3}{4}$
Rajamangalam – Villikkiri	29	8 $\frac{1}{4}$
Rajampara – Cavanal	167	12 $\frac{1}{2}$
Ranni – Kumbanad	204	5
Ranni – Manimala	229	10 $\frac{5}{8}$
Ranni – Pathanapuram	164	24 $\frac{3}{4}$
Ranni – Vennilulam	260	6 $\frac{1}{2}$
Ravananchira – Amaravila	64	4
Saliakara Estate – Punalofe	129	4m. 800 ft.

	Road No.	Length in Miles
Samboorvadakara – Shencottah	134	11
Sukarapilly – Karikode	297	6
Sasthankotta – Adoor	147	11 ¼
Sasthankotta Charumood	146	9 ¼
Sasthankotta – Kadavazha	173	3
Sasthankotta – Padayarkulangara	140	6
Sasthankotta – Pattakadavoo	141	3 ¼
Sendurny Estate road	115	5
Sengurutty – Poovar	79	4
Shencottah – Quilon	119	59 ² / ₈
Shencottah – Trivandrum	3	64 ¼
Shearem – Pothencode	86	6
Shearem – Kazhakkuttom	85	4 ¼
Sherthallay – Alleppey	206	13
Sherthallay – Arukutty	192	14m. 7 ½ fuga
Sherthalay – Aruthungal	211	4 ⁷ / ₈
Sherthallay – Muttathagadi – Kuruppankulam	214	1m. 2350 ft.
Sherthallay – Thannirkulam	207	4 ½
Sherthallay – 5 th mile Arukutty road to Thavanakadavoo	210	5/8
Shorlacode – Darisananamcope	21	6 ³ / ₄
Shorlacode – Nedumangad	63	89
Sri. Mulavilasom road	189	6 ¼
Suchindram – Vellamodom	11	4 ³ / ₈
Tap Road	34	2. 37
Thadikkaranmonam – Thuckalay	36	14 1/3
Thalayolaparambu – Kuthattukulam	244	13 ³ / ₄
Thalayolaparambu Market loop road	215	½
Thaloyalaparambu Market to Pulankadavu	246	1/3
Thamarkulam – 48 th mile Cape road (Nagercoil P. W. D. Division)	7	3 ⁷ / ₈
Thamarakulam road Sasthancottah – Charamood (Quilon P. W. D. Division)	146	9 ¼
Thanneerkukkam – Muhama	208	3
Thanneelkakkom – Sherthalai	207	4 ½
Thavanakadavu to 5 th mile Sherthalay – Arukutty road	210	3/8
Thazhakudi – Thovala	18	3 ½
Thazhava – Kottapuzhakkal	144	8 ³ / ₈
Thelliyar – Vennikulam	199	2
Thenganal – Pudupally	190	9 ⁵ / ₈
Thengapattanam – Karingal	49	5 ¹ / ₈
Thengapattanam - Kuzhithurai	47	7
Tharoor – Olunganssery	15	3
Thikkurlchi road	53	5
Thiruvanchiyar road	247	6 ½
Thiruvathur - Pulluvila	68	3 ½
Thiruvathur – Monday Market	33	10 ¹ / ₃
Thiruvalla – Kozhencheri	186	10

	Road No.	Length in Miles
Thiruvalla – Mallapalli	187	8
Thiruvalla – Mavelikkara	158	12
Thiruvalla – Trivandrum	1	79 ⁷ / ₈
Thiruvallam - Karamana	82	3 ¹ / ₂
Thirravilai – Aramboli	22	6 ³ / ₄
Thodupuzha – Arakulam	260	12
Thodupuzha – Arakulam road 6 th mile Anthinad Malkavu road 4 th mile	299	1 ¹ / ₂
Thodupuza – Kaliayr Estate	262	6
Thodupuzha – Lalom	248	17 ³ / ₄
Thodupuzha – Muvattupuzha	263	13
Thodupuzha – Palacoza	258	9 ¹ / ₄
Thodupuzha – Udumbannoor	261	9
Thoduvetty – Pachipara	44	134
Thottabhagom – Mallapally	192	5
Thovala –Thazhakudy	18	2 ¹ / ₂
Thoovaghi road	26	2 ¹ / ₄
Thumpamon – Adoor	178	6 ³ / ₄
Thuckalay – Thadikaranconam	36	14 ¹ / ₂
Thucklai – Trivandrum	2	52 ¹ / ₂
Tinnevelly (Br.) Trivandrum	2	95
Trikariyoor Loop Road	291	2 ¹ / ₂
Trikariyoor – Vettilapara	302	4 ¹ / ₂
Trikunnapuzha – Mavelikkara	150	10 ¹ / ₄
Trivandrum – Aramboly (For Palamoottah)	2	50 ¹ / ₂
Trivandrum – Attingal	4	21
Trivandrum – Cape (via Nagercoil)	312	53 ¹ / ₂
Trivandrum – Changanacherry	1	84 ³ / ₄
Trivandrum – Chengannur	1	74
Trivandrum Ettumannur	1	103
Trivandrum – Kottarakara	1	46
Trivandrum – Kottayam via Kottiyam (Kundar) and Kottakara	315	105 ¹ / ₂
Trivandrum – Kottayam (M. C. road)	1	95 ¹ / ₂
Trivandrum – Kuzhithurai	2	23 ¹ / ₂
Trivandrum – Muvattupuzha	1	130
Trivandrum – Nagercoil	9	43 ¹ / ₂
Trivandrum – Neyyoor Hospital	2	34 ¹ / ₂
Trivandrum - Neyyattinkara	2	12
Trivandrum – Palamoottah (Br.)		90
Trivandrum – Peermade (via Changanacherry, and Vazhur)	311	132
Trivandrum - Perumbavoor	1	142
Trivandrum - Ponnudi	94	38
Trivandrum –Poovar (via Tiruvellam and Vizhinjam)	83	17 ¹ / ₂
Trivandrum - Quilon	4	13 ¹ / ₄
Trivandrum - Shencottah	3	64
Trivandrum – Shencottah 14/1- Venjaramood	90	11 ¹ / ₂
Trivandrum – Shencottah road 9 th mile - Aruvikara	103	2

	Road No.	Length in Miles
Trivandrum - Thiruvellah	1	76
Trivandrum – Tinunevelly (Br.)	2	95 ½
Trivandrum - Thuckalai	2	32 ½
Udhayakulangara Kulathoor Chavady road - Sengurity	65	504
Udayamperoor - Vaikom	256	12 ½
Udayambanoor - Thodupuzha	261	3
Vadakkemkar - Kundara	112	7 ½
Vaikom - Ettumanoor	240	17 ½
Vaikom – Vetchoor road	287	5 ½
Vaikom - Udayamperoor	250	17 ½
Vallachira Chennampally	172	¾
Vallam landing 1345 th mile 31 G road	236	1
Vallimattom - Karikode	25	7
Valiathumugom- Ponmanai	52	3 ½
Valiavankad Estate Road	40	1 ½
Vanchithra - Chengannur	159	7 ¾
Vandamattom – Karimannur market	300	3 ½
Vandiperiyar (K. B. Road) - Kottayam	219	60 ¾
Varapetty - Kuzhikaudam	291	1 ½
Varapetty – Neduvacad – via Pothanieand	303	5 ¼
Vazhakulam - Kothamangalam	294	11
Veerankavu - Kattakadai	75	4 1/8
Veeramangalam Road	16	5
Velinallur - Kottarakarai	122	9 ½
Velangapracadavoo Washmattom Road	236	4
Vallamadom - Suchirdram	11	4 3/8
Vellanad Road	91	7 3/8
Vellanad Aryanad	92	3 ½
Vellayanil 5 th mile M. S. Road	78	1
Vembayam - Nedumangad	89	5
Vembayam - Pallipuram	96	8
Vengannur - Pachallur	84	4
Vengola - Alwaye	273	9 5/8
Vengola – 137 th mile M. C. road	270	7 5/8
Venjaramood - Attingal	98	6 ½
Venjaramood – 14/1 T. S. Road	90	11 ½
Vennikulam - Ranni	200	6 5/8
Vennikulam - Thelliyur	199	2 ½
Vettilapara - Trikariyoor	302	4 ½
Vettiyoore - Cherukunnam	194	5
Villikiri - Rajakkamangalam	29	6 ¼
Vithurai - Bonacord	107	12 ¼
Vizhinjam - Balarampuram	73	4 7/8
Vizhinjam - Nemom	80	5 ½
Warkalai - Kallambalam	102	7
Wazhur - Puliannur	220	11 7/8
Wazhur - Changanacherry	205	19 ½

	Road No.	Length in Miles
Wazhamattom Bharagaganam Road	235	4 ¼
Wazhamattom Velangaparacadavoo Road	236	4
Western Frontier Road	265	16 ½
Yenady - Puthoor	123	10 7/8
Yeroor - Edamom	131	9
Yezhaankulam - Pathanamthitta	161	10 ¼

NAVIGABLE WATER ROUTES

BACKWATER AND CANAL ROUTES

Alleppey – Amabalapuzha canal	17	7
Alleppey – Changacherry (Water route)	16	19
Alleppey – Commercial canal	27	2 ¼
Alleppey – Kottayam	15	17 ½
Alleppey – Palace canal	28	¾
Alleppey to Wadai canal	26	2
Alleppey to Thalavady	37	22
Alleppey – West junction canal	29	3 fun
Alleppey – Ernakulam by river	12	20
Ambalapuzha – Alleppey canal	17	7
Ambalapuzha – Puracaud canal	3	3 ½
Anchumana canal	35	1 ½
Ananda Victoria Marthandom Canal	22	8
Aroothooty canal	14	2 ½
Arukutty - Thanneermukkom	9	18
AVM Canal	8	8
Changacherry – Alleppey	16	19
Changacherry – Kottayam	18	12
Chenganda River	25	1
Chengannur – Kaipuzha	6	16
Commercial canal, Alleppey	27	2 ½
Danapadical Canal	4	7
Desuthodu	33	8
Erakodikadavu (Ambalapuzha) T. S. Canal 79 /18 mile	20	1
Eranakulam - Alwaye	12	20
Kakkazham canal	21	¾
Kalpalakadavoo - Kovalam	2	6 ½
Kandanad - Vaikom	10	15
Karipuha canal	5	5
Karipuzha – Chengannur (by river)	6	16
Kayenkulam –Salt Bank shall canal	7	5
Kottayam - Alleppey	15	17 ½
Kottayam -Chananacherry	18	12
Kottayam - Vaikom	13	16 ½
Kovalam - Kalpalakadavu	2	6 ½

Kuthiyathodu canal	31	$\frac{3}{4}$
Mannancherry – Vembanad Lake	44	1
Maraveetil canal	36	$1\frac{1}{4}$
Meenachil river – Puthenthodu near Kottayam	14	$2\frac{1}{2}$
Mohamma Canal	23	$\frac{3}{4}$
Muvattupuzha – Vaikom (by river)	11	41
Poochakkal canal	33	$1\frac{1}{4}$
Puracaud – Ambalapuzha (canal)	3	$3\frac{1}{4}$
Puvar – Thengapattanam (A. V. Canal)	8	8
Puthenthodu (near Kottayam) – Meenachil river	14	$2\frac{1}{2}$
Salt bank shall canal (Changanacherry)	34	$\frac{1}{4}$
Thanneermukkom – Arukutty	9	15
Thanneermukkom – Puthenthodu canal	19	1
Thalavady to Alleppey	37	22
Thengapattanam – Puvar (A. V. M. canal)	8	5
Trivandrum – Trichur and Shornnur (by canal)	1	128
Trivandrum – Shornur 79 $\frac{1}{8}$ mile Erakodikadavoo Amabalpuzha	20	$11\frac{1}{2}$
Vaikom - Kandanad	10	15
Vaikom - Muvattupuzha	11	41
Vaikom – Kottayam	13	$16\frac{1}{2}$
Veluthully Canal	30	3
Vembanad lake - Mannanchery	24	1
Wadi canal, Alleppey	26	2

Source: P. Narasimha Iyer (Compiled), *Route Book of Travancore*, Travancore Government. Press, Trivandrum, pp. 10-23.

MAPS

Map of the Madras Presidency



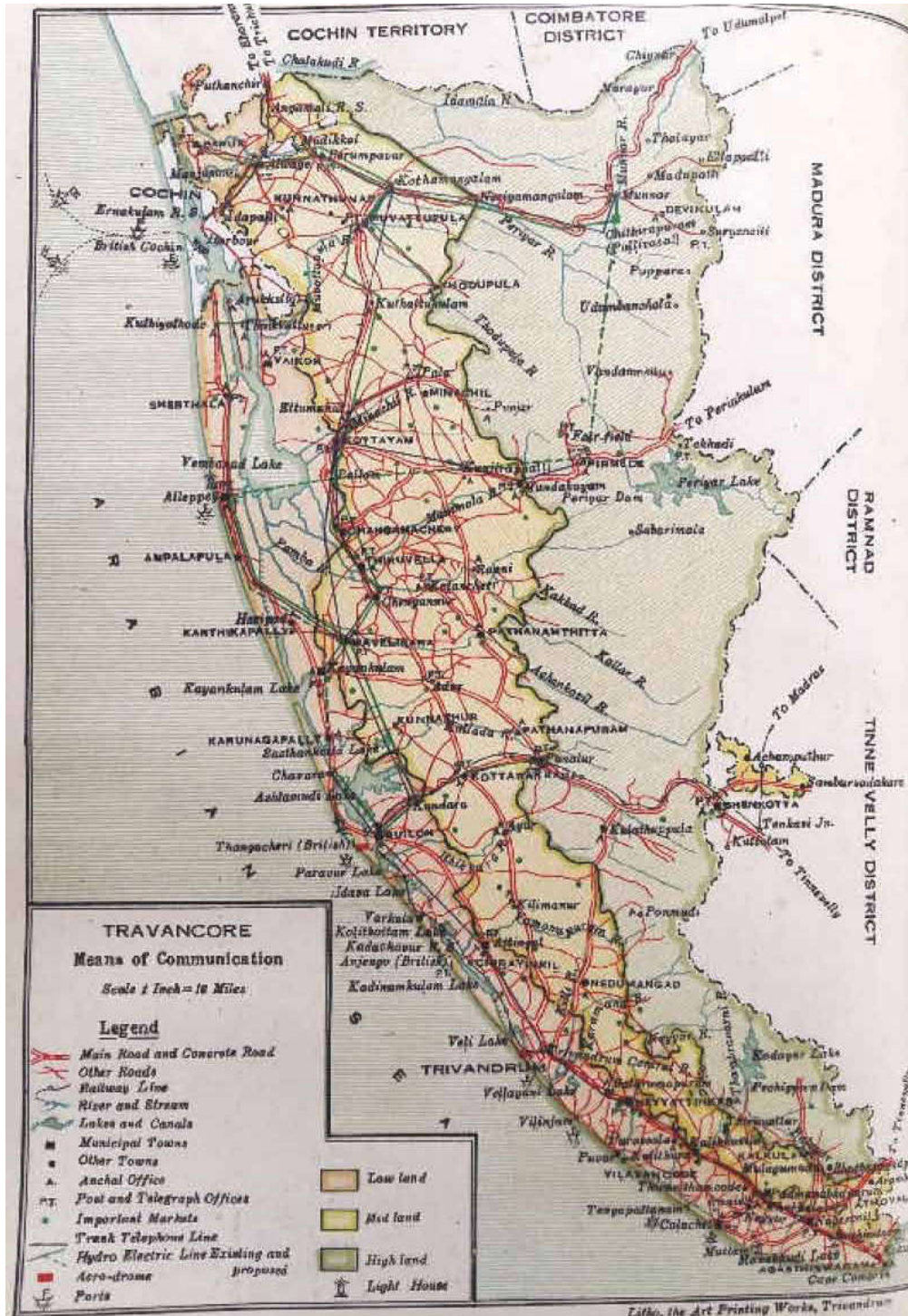
Source: Report on the administration of the Madras presidency for the year 1917-18, Government press, Madras, 1918.

Map of the Erstwhile Princely State of Travancore



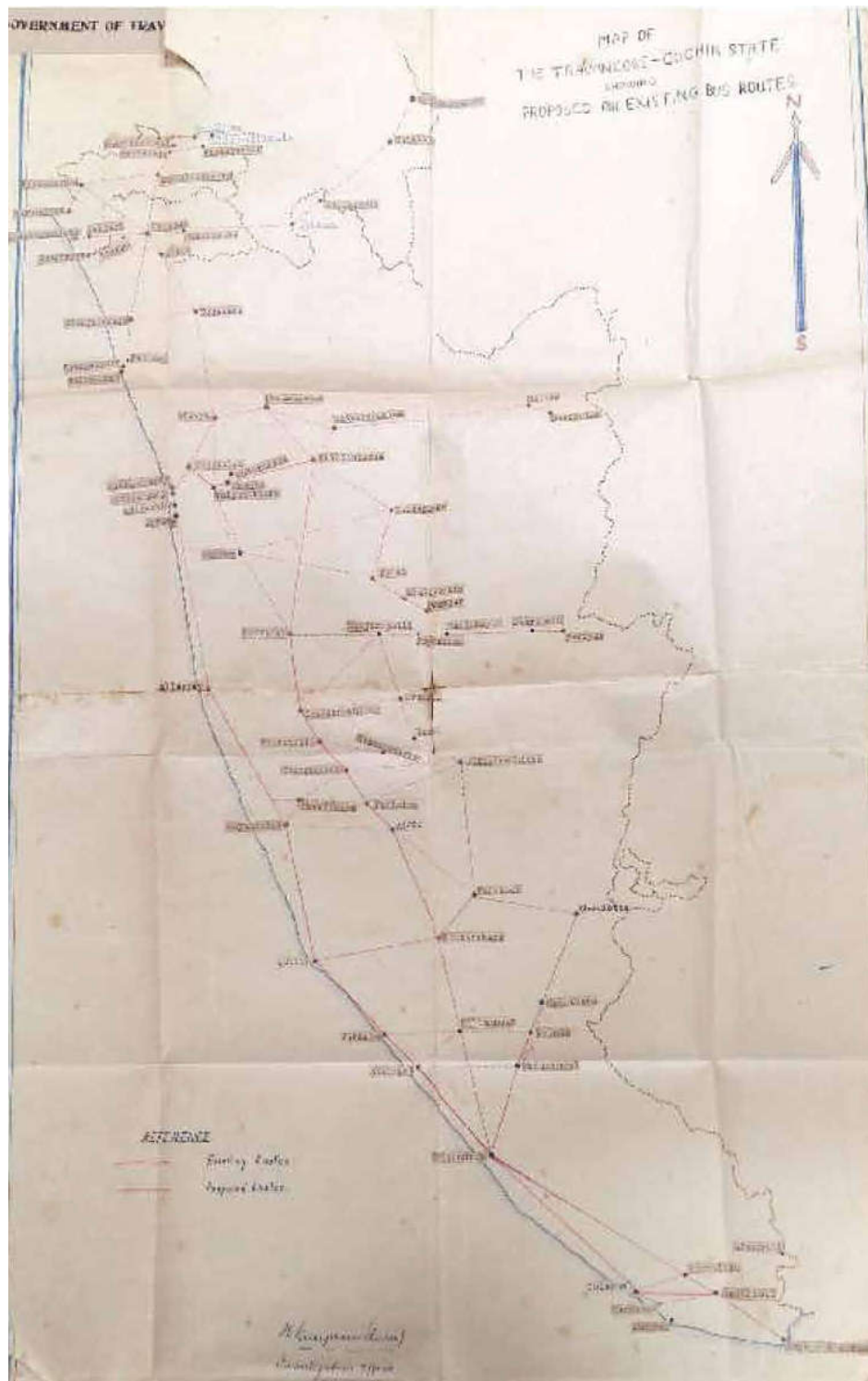
Source: Census of India 1941, Volume XXV Travancore, Part I Report, Government Press, Trivandrum, 1942.

Map of means of communication in Travancore



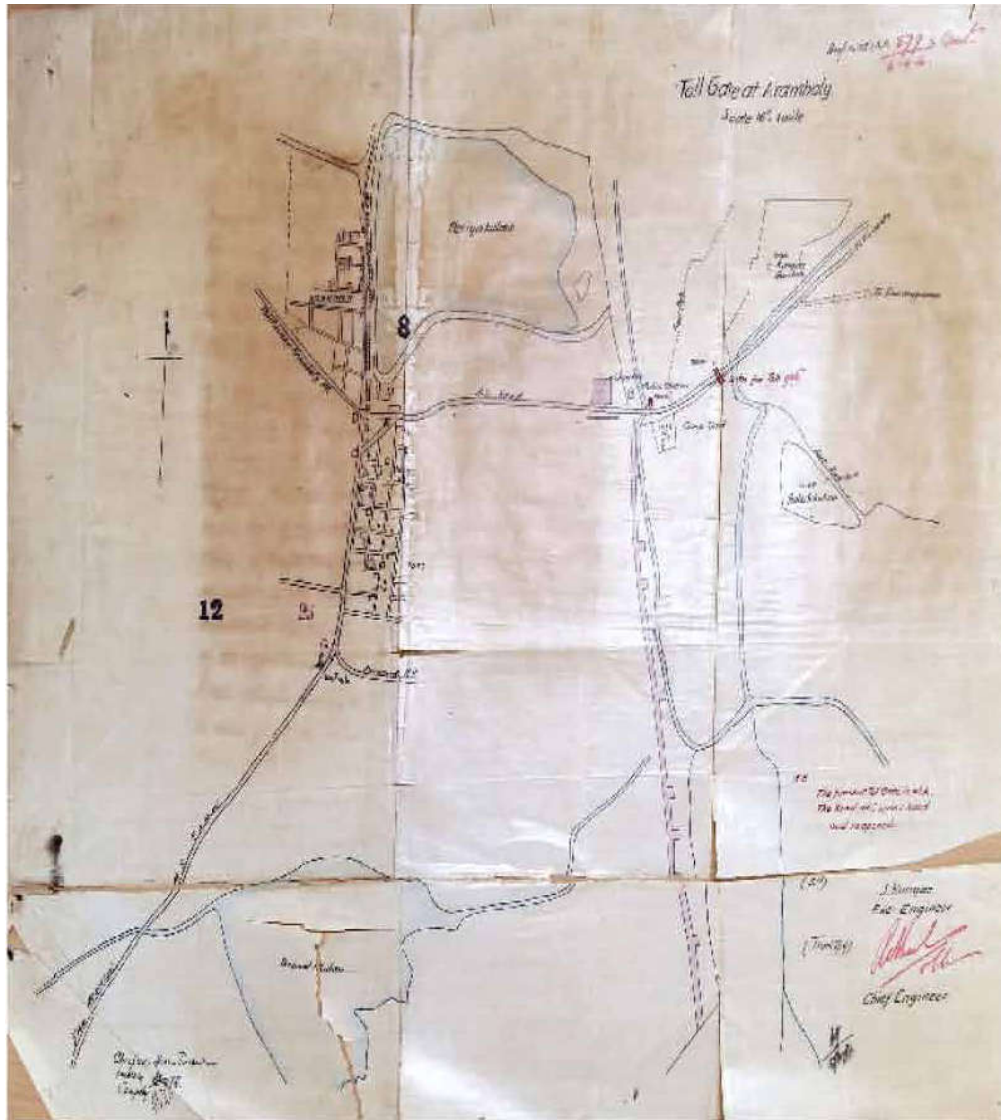
Source: Census of India 1941, Volume XXV Travancore, Part I Report, Government Press, Trivandrum, 1942.

Map of Means of Nationalization of Road Transport



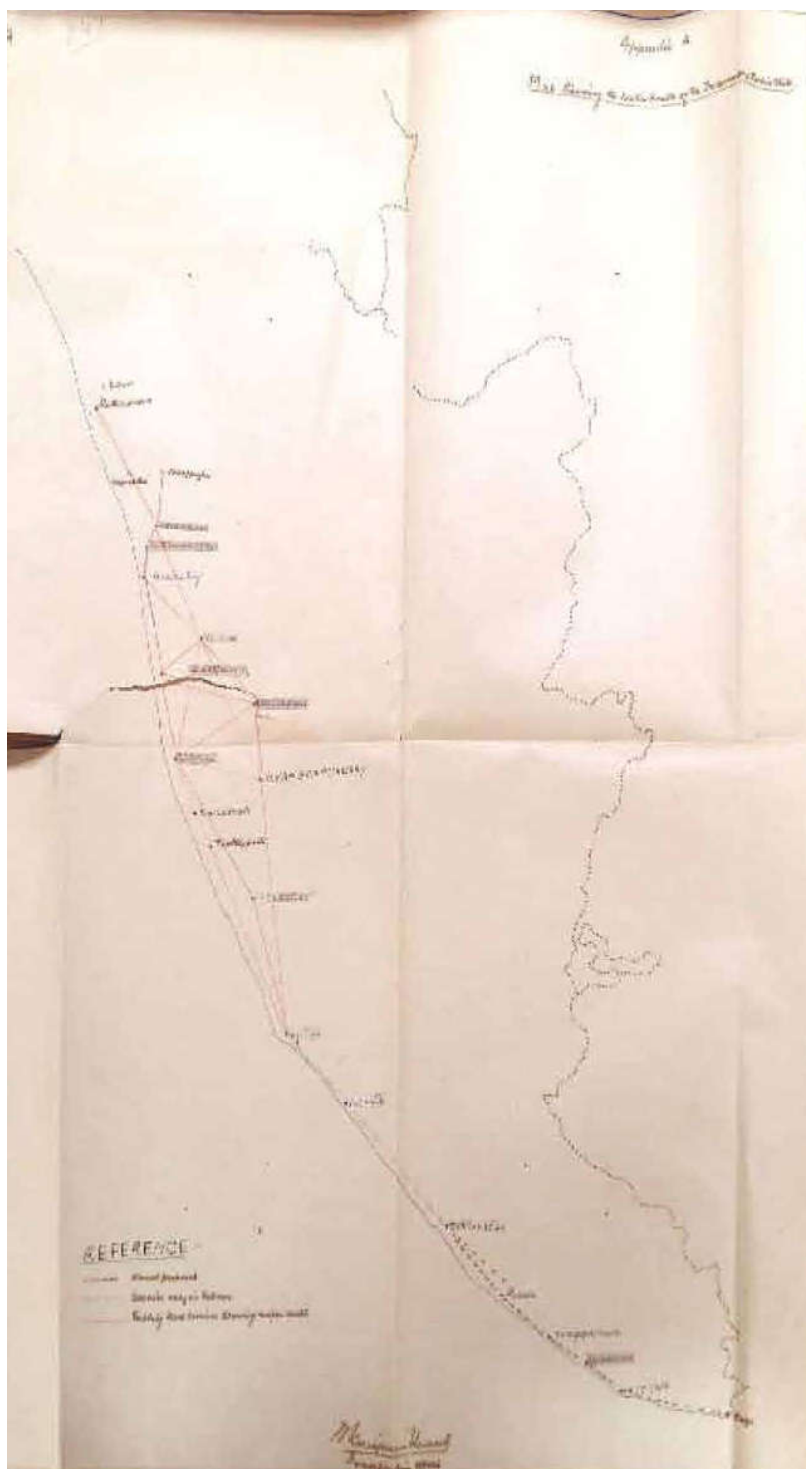
Source: PWD, File No. 8438, Bundle No. 814, 1950

Map of Toll gate at Aramboly



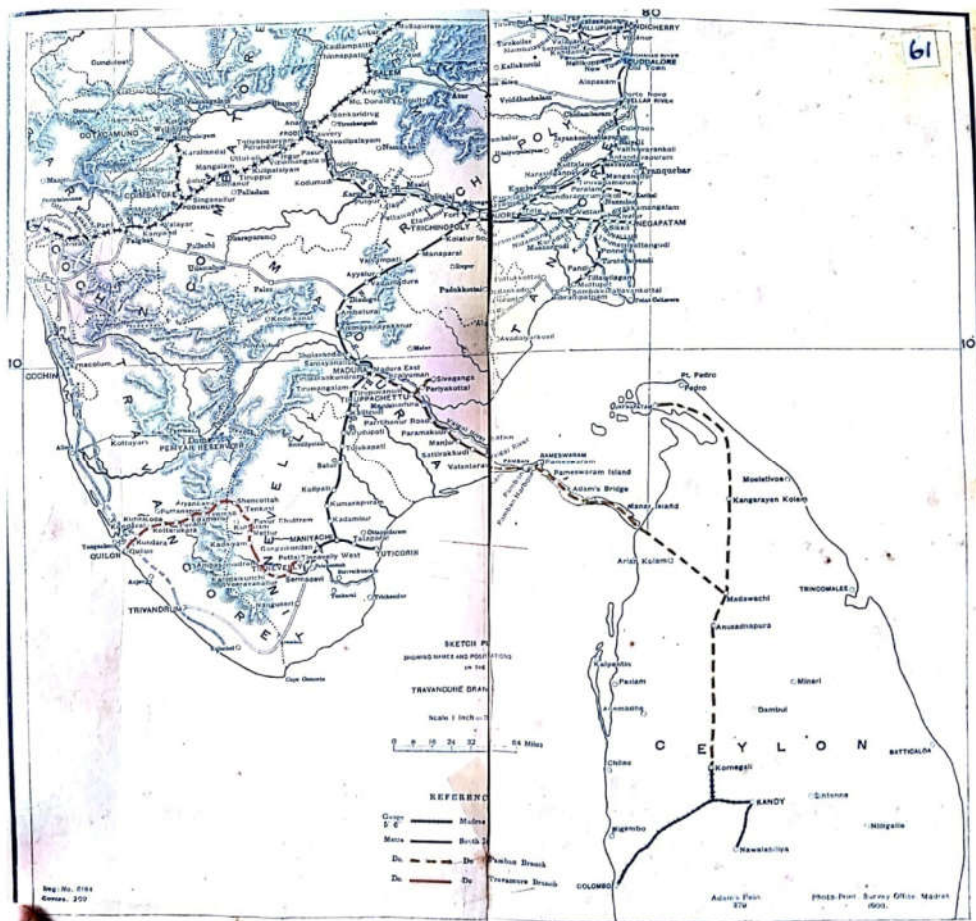
Source: PWD, File No. 561, Vo. VI. 1911

Map of Nationalisation of Water Transport



Source: PWD File No. 8438, Bundle No. 814, Vol. II, 1950, Kerala State archives, Thiruvananthapuram

Map of South Indian Railway



Source: South Indian Railway Co. Ltd., Travancore Branch Report on the project for its construction Survey of 1899-1900, Tamil Nadu Archives Library, Chennai

Map of Anchal postal Service in 1883



Source: Serial No. 17, Bundle No. 2, 1883, Kerala State Archives, Thiruvananthapuram

Map of Anchal postal Service in 1902



Source: Serial No. 1, Bundle No. 1, 1902, Kerala State Archives,
Thiruvananthapuram

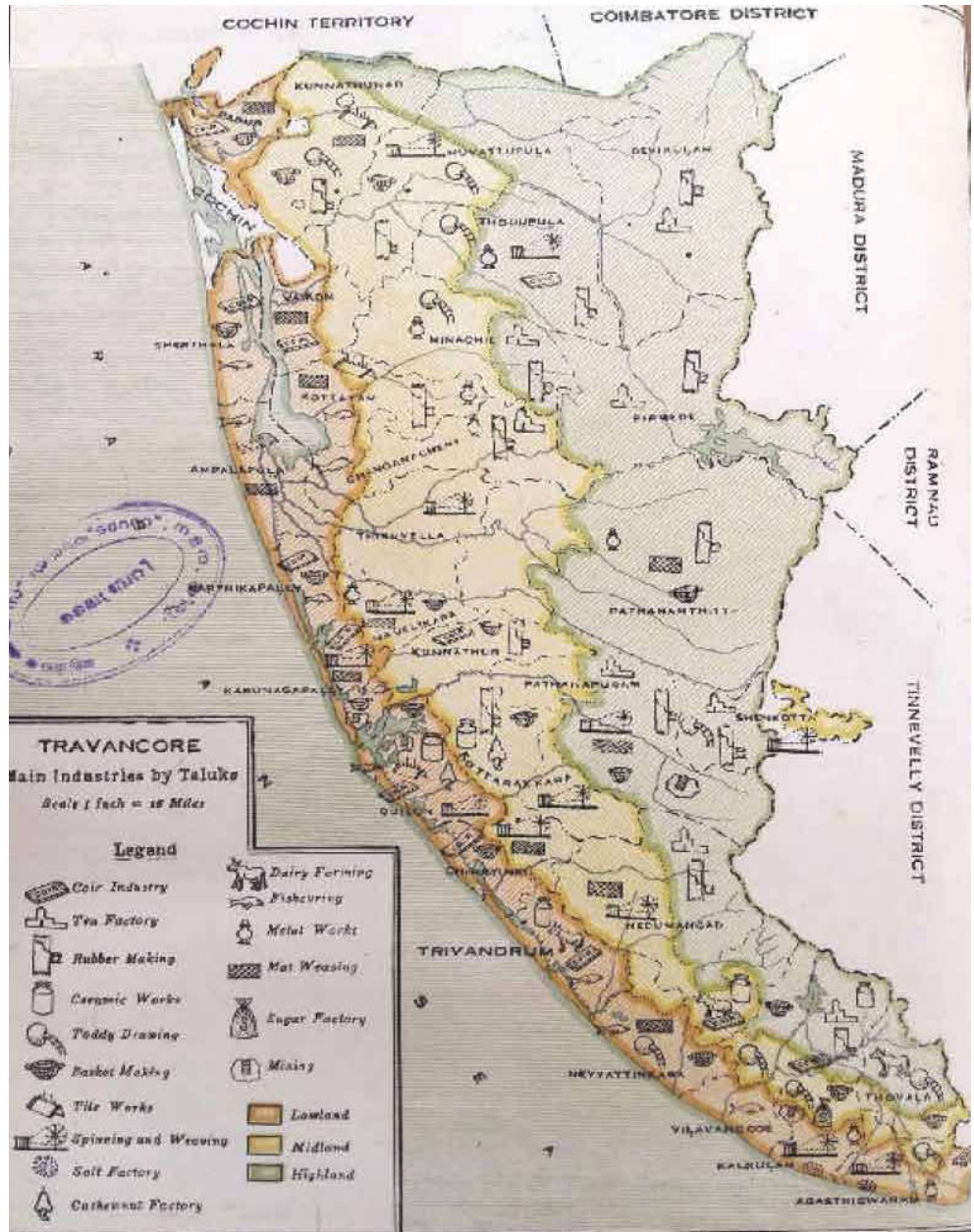
Map showing the main trunk telegraph lines of communication of the world



Map showing the main trunk telegraph lines of communication of the world, 1887
Source: Reproduced by permission of The Bodleian Libraries, The University of Oxford, Shelfmark B1 (407).

Source: Amelia Bonea, *The News of Empire: Telegraphy
Journalism and the Politics of Reporting in Colonial India C. 1830-1900*, Oxford University Press, New Delhi, 2016.

Map of main industries by Taluks in Travancore



Source: Census of India 1941, Volume XXV Travancore, Part I Report, Government Press, Trivandrum, 1942.

ILLUSTRATIONS

Dolie (Palenquin) transport



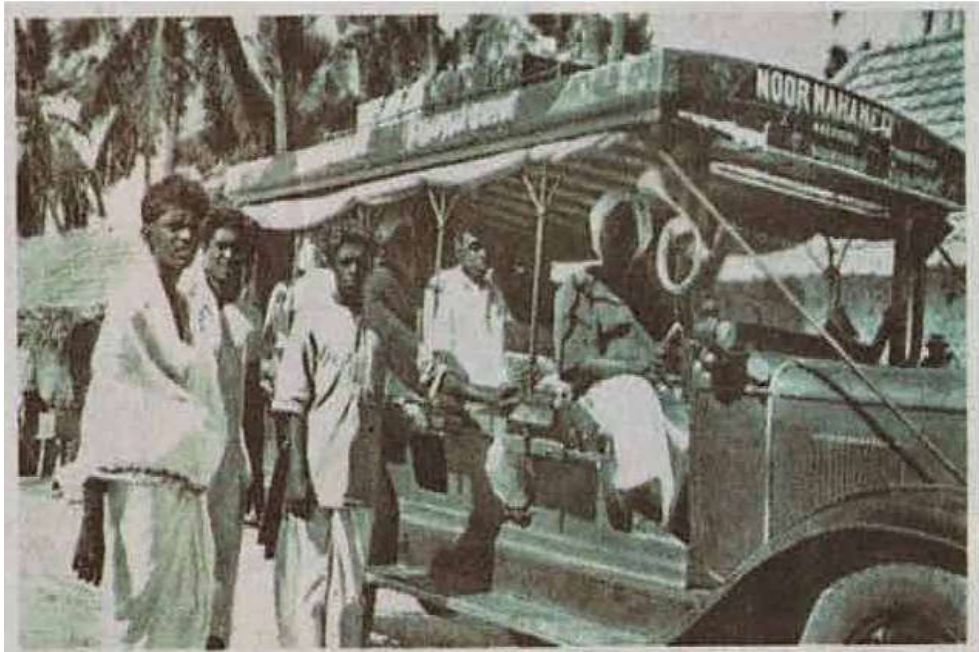
Source: Sulochana Nalappattu *The Story of Munnar*,
DC Books, Kottayam, 2004

First Lorry in the High Range, and Albion Vintage, 1910



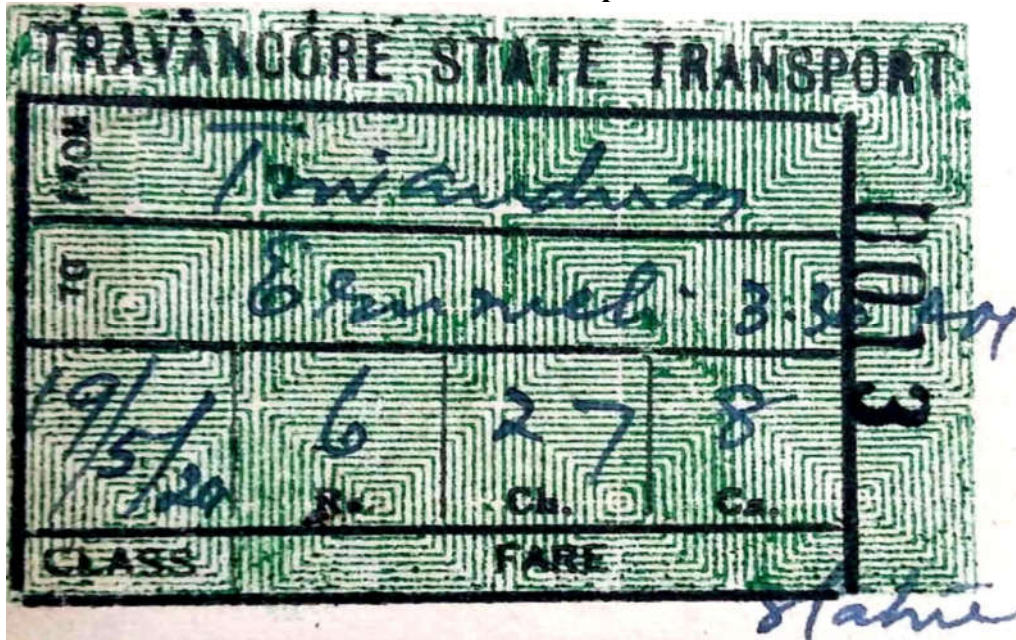
Source: S. Muthiah, *A Planting Century: The First Hundred Years of the United Planters' Association of Southern India, 1893-1993*, Affiliated East West Press, Madras, 1993.

A Bus from south Travancore during 1930



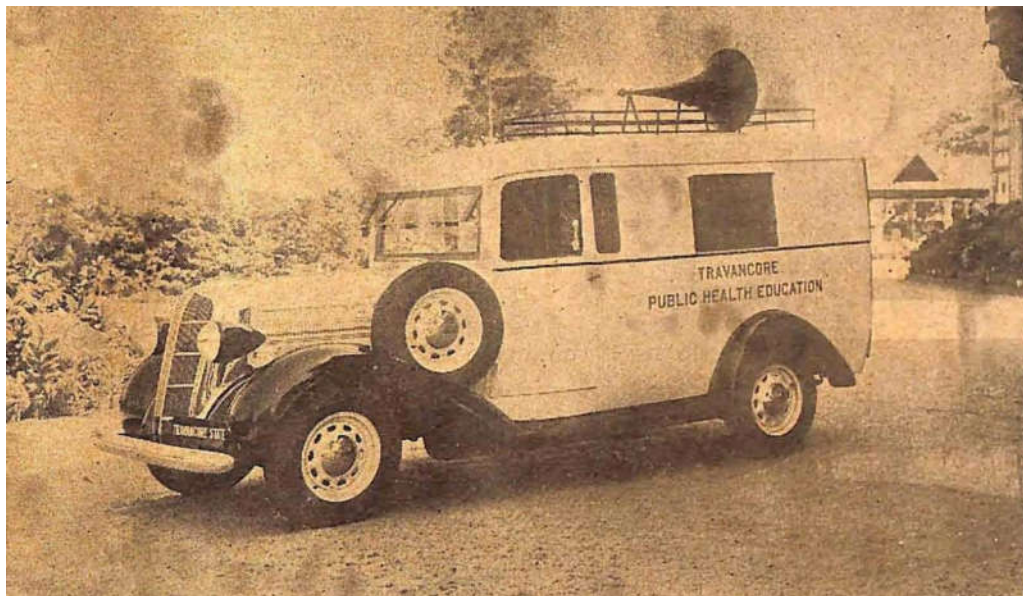
Source: The Hindu, 27th September 2014

Travancore State Transport Ticket



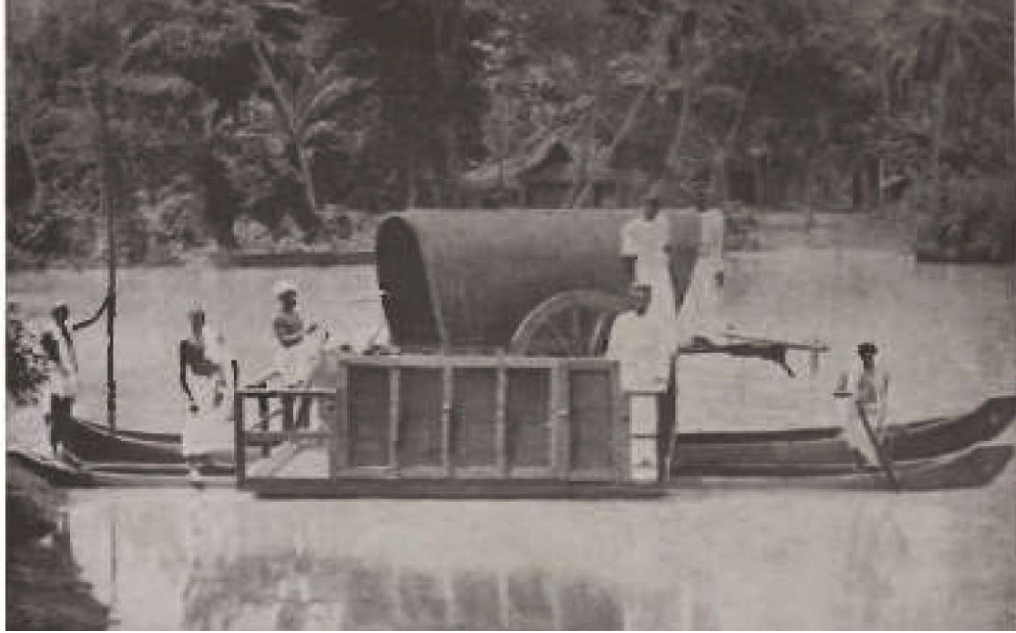
Source: PWD File No. 176, Bundle No. 759, 1949 Kerala State Archives, Thiruvananthapuram

Health Education Van with Loud Speaker Equipment



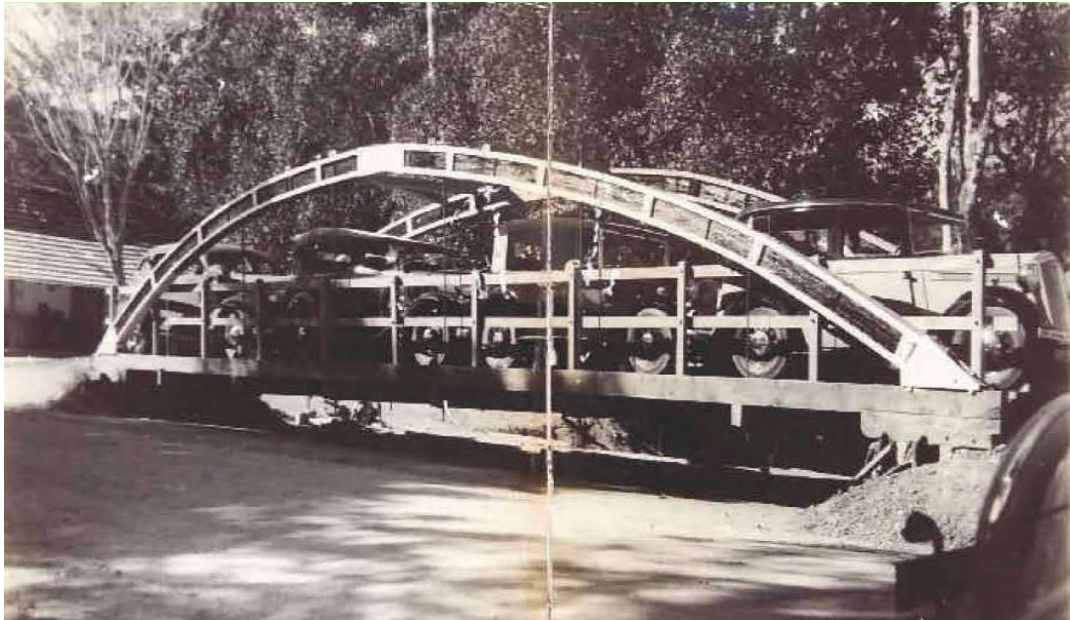
Source: Report on the Administration of the Public Health Department for the Year 1937

A Junghar Ferry



Source: Emily Gilchriest Hatch, *Travancore: A Guide Book for the Visitor*, Oxford University Press, Madras, 1933.

Thottappally wooden Bridge



Source: PWD File No. 1264, Bundle No. 570, 1940 Kerala State Archives, Thiruvananthapuram

Mono Rail in 1906



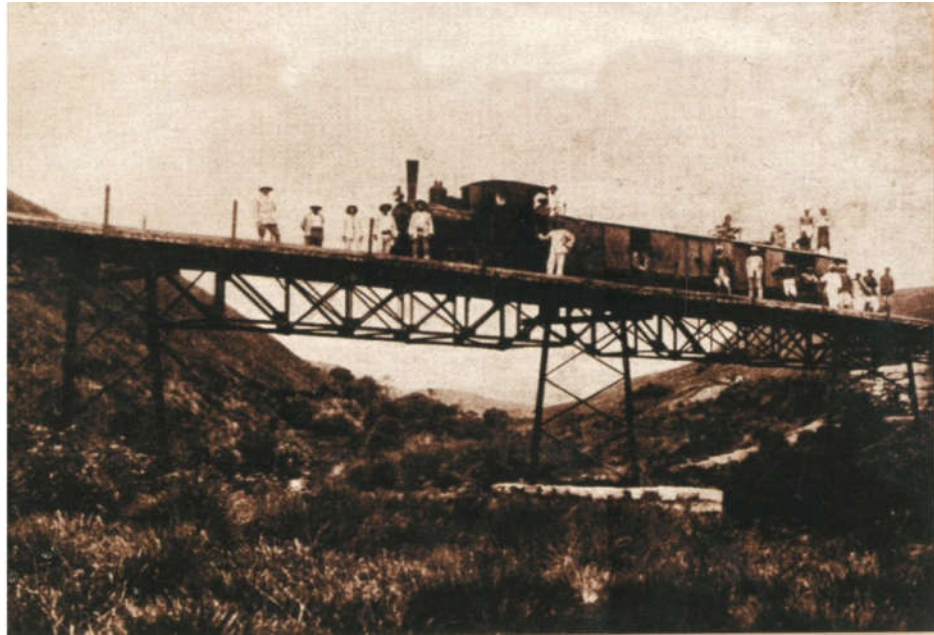
Source: Sulochana Nalappattu, *The Story of Munnar*, DC Books, Kottayam, 2004

Rope way



Source: Sulochana Nalappattu, *The Story of Munnar*, DC Books, Kottayam, 2004

Kundale Valley Railway in Bridge



Source: Sulochana Nalappattu *The Story of Munnar*,
DC Books, Kottayam, 2004

The Railway Bridge after the 1924 flood



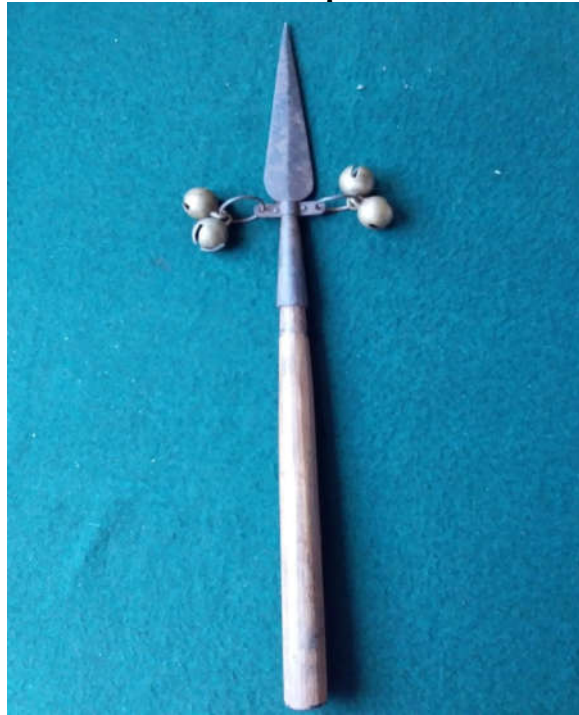
Source: Sulochana Nalappattu *The Story of Munnar*,
DC Books, Kottayam, 2004

Travancore Anchal Post Box



Source: Photos are taken from office of the Post Master General,
Thiruvananthapuram

Anchal Runners Spear with Bell



Source: Photos are taken from office of the Post Master General,
Thiruvananthapuram

Anchal Runners Light during the Night Service



Source: Photos are taken from office of the Post Master General,
Thiruvananthapuram

Anchal Post Cover



Source: Photos taken from the exhibition held at YMCA hall, Thiruvananthapuram on 26-28 May, 2017 conducted by Ananthapuri Philatelic Association, Thiruvananthapuram



Source: Photos taken from the exhibition held at YMCA hall, Thiruvananthapuram on 26-28 May, 2017 conducted by Ananthapuri Philatelic Association, Thiruvananthapuram

A Telegraph informing about Plague

POSTS TELEGRAPHS 3945/29 64

NOTICE
This form must accompany any local telegrams sent by this Telegram.

Charges to pay: Rs. 1/11/2

Office Stamp: 10/27

Addressed to at (Office of Origin)	Date	Hour	Minute	Service	Words
Devicoolam	11	16	50	1/2	29

TO Secretary Trivandrum

17-49

Last cases plague 30th september
 ratfalls fifth october sathurangap
~~all~~ already reported no fresh attac
 have not visited infected areas
 as am not fit move about
 Commissioner

N. B.—The name of the Sender, if telegraphed, is written after the text.
 Kottar Lax Litter—Printers—Cal.—688—11-7-29—72,000 Bks.

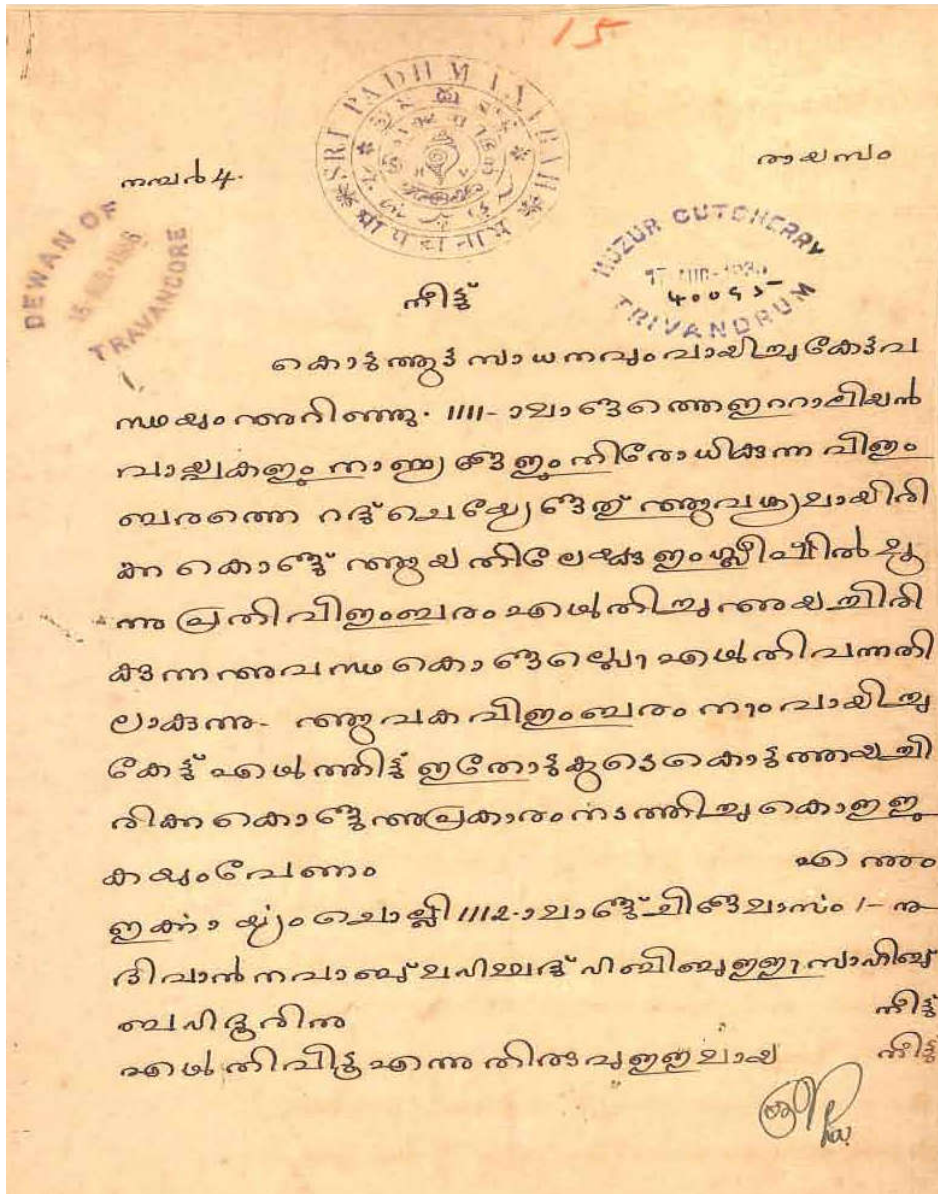
Source: PWD File No. 1264, Bundle No. 570, 1940 Kerala State Archives,
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Post and Telegraph Post man's Badge



Source: Photos are taken from office of the Post Master General,
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A neettu (Proclamation)



Source: Development File No. 1952, Bundle No. 1680, 1936 Kerala State Archives, Thiruvananthapuram

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