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MUSLIM ARTS COLLEGE
Thiruvithancode, Kanyakumari, Tamilnadu, India.
LEMURIA RESEARCH FORUM
SECOND INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE



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This is to certify that *Dr/Mr/Mrs/MS S. Pushparaj, Asst. Prof. of History*
Muslim Arts College, Thiruvithancode participated in the Second International Conference of Lemuria
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Activities of P.W.D. in South Travancore.....

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PROCEEDINGS OF THE LEMURIA RESEARCH FORUM, KANYAKUMARI



MUSLIM ARTS COLLEGE,
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CONFERENCE OF
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THE LEMURIA RESEARCH FORUM
KANYAKUMARI



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REVELATIONS OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL EXCAVATION

“அகழ்வாராய்ச்சியின் வெளியீடுகள்”

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KANYAKUMARI
MUSLIM ARTS COLLEGE, THIRUVITHANCODE**

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(Multi disciplinary)**



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DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES OF P.W.D. IN SOUTH TRAVANCORE

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Abstract

The progress of a State generally largely depends on the various developmental activities of the public works department. The enlightened rulers who ruled Travancore bestowed proper attention to laying roads, constructing bridges, culverts, dams, canals, and buildings and implemented various schemes like providing Electricity, Water supply and Drainage and Town Planning to meet the requirements of the various departments which benefited the public greatly. The impetus given to the development of irrigation boosted agricultural production. Before the formation of the P.W.D the Maramath section, a branch of the Land Revenue Department that was constituted in 1832, carried out the works related to palaces and temples. In consequence a separate P.W.D was formed in 1860, which considerably reduced the work of the Land Revenue Department. From its inception, the P.W.D endeavoured hard to develop its activities. The service of the P.W.D in the arena of Communication considerably reduced the difficulties in cumbersome journeys. A network of roads laid throughout the length and breadth of Kanyakumari district connected even the remote villages with nearby towns, cities and other states. The P.W.D was involved in the laborious task of constructing the A.V.M Canal to connect Trivandrum with Cape Comorin. Like Communication, the P.W.D took proper attention to the production and distribution of electric energy to Trivandrum and Nagercoil divisions. In the arena of Tele-Communication, it was wholly owned by the Post and Telegraph Department of British India. However, the P.W.D was entrusted with the maintenance of the telegraphic and telephone lines. To root out illiteracy, the State directed the P.W.D to construct suitable buildings for establishing schools, colleges and universities. In short, the P.W.D formed by the Princely State grew like a fruit-yielding tree and the people of Kanyakumari district enjoy the blessing of tasting its fruit even today.

Key Words: Progress – State - Public Works Department – Enlightened – Electricity – Water supply - Drainage - Town Planning – Requirements – Irrigation - Land Revenue Department – Communication - Telegraphic - Telephone

Introduction:

Kanyakumari District played a remarkable role in the history of South India. An enchanting land of natural beauty and panoramic view, this part of the land is known for its coconut groves, paddy fields, rich minerals and other various sources. Due to the abundant wealth, this land of charity had a history and vicissitudes of fortune

among the rulers. The progress of a State generally largely depends on the various developmental activities of the public works department. The enlightened rulers who ruled Travancore bestowed proper attention to laying roads, constructing bridges, culverts, dams, canals, and buildings and implemented various schemes like providing Electricity, Water supply and

Drainage and Town Planning to meet the requirements of the various departments which benefited the public greatly. The impetus given to the development of irrigation boosted agricultural production.

Formation of P.W.D.:

Before the formation of the P.W.D the Maramath section, a branch of the Land Revenue Department that was constituted in 1832, carried out the works related to palaces and temples. As its jurisdiction was limited, the Land Revenue Department looked after the affairs of various welfare activities. But it could not concentrate more on other activities than on its own. Hence, the rulers felt the need for a separate department to implement various developmental schemes to uplift the state. Moreover, the exodus of the population coupled with the growth of education and other economic sectors like agriculture, industry and trade and commerce necessitated the government to pay more attention to developing all departments alike.

Communication Service:

In consequence a separate P.W.D was formed in 1860, which considerably reduced the work of the Land Revenue Department. From its inception, the P.W.D endeavoured hard to develop its activities. The development of a State mainly depended on the advancement made in the sphere of Communication. Realizing this, the government paid special attention and constructed a network of roads, bridges, culverts and waterways which directed the Princely State towards the path of progress and prosperity. The service of the P.W.D in the arena of Communication considerably reduced the difficulties in cumbersome journeys. The Main Southern Road from Trivandrum to Aramboly linked Kanyakumari district with other parts of peninsular India. The suitable deviations and new alignments associated with roads along with approach roads, village roads, coastal roads and a host of others made the movements of goods and services easier. Besides, the P.W.D constructed several

bridges and culverts where ever necessary. The bridge constructed across the Thamiraparani river at Kuzhithurai remains still a living monument known for its strength and durability.

Construction of Roads:

A network of roads laid throughout the length and breadth of Kanyakumari district connected even the remote villages with nearby towns, cities and other states. In addition, the functioning of the "Road Boards" reveals the involvement of the people in general and the P.W.D in particular in road communication. While the P.W.D was lengthening and widening the roads, vested interests filed lawsuits which hampered the work of the P.W.D greatly. Despite their attempts, the P.W.D with undaunted courage completed much of its tasks. However, its attempt to lay a coastal road between Trivandrum and Cape Comorin was a failure. The scheme was abandoned due to a lack of proper planning and financial constraints. Thus like a daydream, the scheme came to an abrupt end. Moreover, the Princely State was blessed with backwaters.

A.V.M Canal:

The use of canals and backwaters in the Trivandrum division for inland navigation encouraged local trade and commerce which reduced the traffic on roads considerably. The canal-like Parvathi Puthanar and the backwater of Veli, Edva and Nadayar used for navigation still remind us of the services of the P.W.D. Water communication had a limited scope in the Nagercoil division. Even then the P.W.D was involved in the laborious task of constructing the A.V.M Canal to connect Trivandrum with Cape Comorin. Unfortunately, this scheme also failed. At present, the A.V.M Canal seems to be draining, and it is a shame and challenge to the clarion call of environmental protection. While the P.W.D implemented various schemes, to some extent, it helped to eradicate unemployment which in turn enhanced their economic position. Road formation and their periodical repairs and

maintenance consumed a sizable income for the state. At the same time, the toll gates introduced by the states appeared as a boon of compensation. The State obtained enough income from the Kuzhithurai toll gate than the other toll gates. Yet the fund allotted for road maintenance of the Vilavancode taluk was meager. However, the service of the P.W.D in the realm of communication occupies a conspicuous place in the annals of the history of Kanyakumari district.

Electricity:

Like Communication, the P.W.D took proper attention to the production and distribution of electric energy to Trivandrum and Nagercoil divisions. The power supply schemes brought revolutionary changes in the socio-economic life of the people. The Electric Supply Schemes in Trivandrum and Nagercoil marked the milestone development in the history of the P.W.D. The installation of street lights and electric connections to the public buildings and private houses enriched the state coffer. After launching the Electric Supply Schemes in the twin cities, Trivandrum and Nagercoil the people could move freely at night without any fear. No doubt, this scheme was a challenge to the anti-social elements. The industrialists availed the electric energy to operate their industries. The scheme gave an impetus to the development of commerce and trade which boosted the state exchequer. The Nagercoil Electric Supply Corporation was a private concern which lime lighted the defects of the Princely State. The licence issued to S.Kumara Swamy, for the production and distribution of electric energy occasionally tempted him to collect exorbitant rates from the consumers. As the people detested the collection of high electric charges, they appealed to the government to do away with the private monopoly. Even then the government did not take an effort to cancel his licence.

Tele-Communication:

In the arena of Tele-Communication, it was wholly owned by the Post and

Telegraph Department of British India. However, the P.W.D was entrusted with the maintenance of the telegraphic and telephone lines. It also helped the people to convey their messages to distant and different places within a short span. No doubt, it too played a vital role in the rapid progress of the state and its economy. The State devoted much attention to constructing beautiful buildings with all accommodations in Kanyakumari district.

Educational Developments:

To root out illiteracy, the State directed the P.W.D to construct suitable buildings for establishing schools, colleges and universities. As a result, education flourished in Kanyakumari district which became one of the highly educated centers of our country. Thus the State imparted education to the poor irrespective of creed and colour. Schools like Sethu Lakshmi Bai at Nagercoil and Government High School, Marthandam stood at the forefront of imparting education even today. Apart from it, the P.W.D constructed many buildings for hospitals and dispensaries. The buildings erected for General Hospital at Trivandrum and Tuberculosis Hospital at Nagercoil were the legacy left behind by the P.W.D. Further, the stupendous buildings erected for the use of government offices and barracks served the interests of all sections of the government servants.

Military Cantonment:

The expansion of the military cantonment at Pangode provided additional accommodation which appeared as a witness to the precious service of the P.W.D. Similarly, the construction of museums and Public Gardens attracted the attention of tourists from all over India. It not only replenished the treasury of the state but preserved the prestige of Travancore rulers. Today the Museum and public Garden are standing as witnesses to the skill of the P.W.D. In addition, the Council Chamber provided accommodation to the high officials of the state. Visitors from all over the world thronged the city for various purposes and needed

Moreover, foreign envoys and high dignitaries of the state required accommodation whenever they visited the city. Knowing this, the P.W.D on the advice of the government constructed Residential Bungalows, Guest Houses, Travellers' Bungalows with amenities to suit their convenience. It also enabled the state to earn additional income and the goodwill of all. The maintenance of the cremation grounds irrespective of religion shows the secular policy of the state.

Irrigation Works:

In an agrarian state, irrigation played a key role. Though Kanyakumari district was blessed with adequate rain, it was insufficient to undertake cultivation in all seasons. Therefore, the P.W.D paid adequate attention and improved traditional irrigation by adopting various irrigation schemes such as dams, channels, tanks and wells which minimized the effect of drought and encouraged cultivation. The channels such as Padmanabhapuram Puthenar, Anandanar and Thovalai extended irrigation in the Nagercoil division. Similarly, Kottukal and Cochar inlet channels of the Trivandrum division distributed water to many places. The P.W.D helped the ryots to obtain water to the distant and tail end lands. Many sluices fitted in appropriate places enabled the people to draw water to various areas. Further, the P.W.D dug new canals and extended the old ones. As a result, many areas were brought under plough. In some areas, irrigation was carried out through tanks. However, after a prolonged period, the government realized the hardships of the ryots of Vilavancode and Neyyatinkara taluks, as the P.W.D abandoned the right bank wing channel of Kodayar. To wipe out their miseries, the P.W.D was instructed to work out the Neyyar Irrigation Scheme. Yet, the state was lethargic to work out the right-wing channel to the advantage of the ryots of Vilavancode and Neyyatinkara taluks. It created discontent among them which in turn led to a popular agitation for the merger of the Nagercoil division with the Madras

state. However, this defect was rectified by the government by creating Minor Irrigation Committees. These Committees ventilated their grievances and improved the existing irrigational facilities. As the poor ryots of Vilavancode and Neyyatinkara taluks obtained water to irrigate their lands, they also rose to prominence from their obscure position. It opened new vistas in the lifestyle of unprivileged classes and promoted the material prosperity of the country.

Water Supply and Drainage Scheme:

The Water Supply and Drainage Scheme implemented in Kanyakumari district promoted public health and hygiene. The P.W.D not only supplied adequate pure drinking water but laid a proper drainage system. Based on necessity, many wells were dug in different places. The government also sunk wells for the welfare of the depressed class free of cost. During summer, certain places in Kanyakumari district witnessed acute scarcity of drinking water. During such seasons, the P.W.D supplied portable water by carts or water carriers. The Willington Water Supply Scheme at Trivandrum and the Marthanda Varma Water Supply Scheme at Nagercoil further highlighted the scheme of the P.W.D. It also provided a stipulated quantity of water freely for domestic purposes. But, the P.W.D framed suitable legislation to punish those who wasted water. To promote public health and hygiene, the P.W.D maintained a comprehensive drainage system in Trivandrum town, which extirpated pestilences. Subsequently, a series of measures were adopted to put an end to the water logging menace in the Nagercoil division. However, the P.W.D failed to chalk out a master plan for the drainage system in Nagercoil town. It reveals the step-motherly treatment of the P.W.D towards the Nagercoil town in launching a drainage scheme. The growth of population, the opening of schools and colleges, the erection of public buildings and the advent of railways and industries resulted in congestion, pollution and insanitation in Trivandrum city. Therefore,

the state-appointed town planning experts to prepare the layout of roads, buildings, palaces and parks on civic lines.

Construction of Public Buildings:

The P.W.D strictly adhered to their plans and constructed broad roads, attractive buildings, beautiful parks, magnificent palaces, convenient residential bungalows and comfortable guest houses. The Avenue Road, the Council Chamber, Kanakakunnu Palace, Rose House and Clipp House in Trivandrum bear witness to the glorious achievements of the P.W.D. The P.W.D, while beautifying the city on the modern line, never deserted the evicted persons from their lands. Whenever their lands were acquired for town planning. the State directed the P.W.D to provide houses for the evicted persons in the beach area. This humanitarian attitude of the government impressed the public. By adhering to the Town Planning Scheme, the P.W.D banned the unlawful encroachment of government lands. The implementation of the Town Planning Scheme changed the outlook of the city and made it more attractive. To visualize the various schemes of the P.W.D, an organized system of administration was necessary. At the outset, the P.W.D of Travancore was organized on the model of Madras P.W.D. The Chief Engineer was its defacto authority and he possessed many vital powers. He was given an attractive salary. He was assisted by Deputy Chief

Engineer, Executive Engineers, Assistant Engineers and Divisional Engineers. Besides many subordinates like Divisional Officers, Overseers, Draftsmen and a host of office assistants were appointed for the smooth functioning of the Department. The adoption of the Audit System and the P.W.D code strengthened the staff and minimized corruption. The government punished the careless P.W.D officers whenever they neglected their duties. On the other hand, it also appreciated the loyal servants and rendered timely help when they faced any calamities.

Conclusion:

The P.W.D rendered meritorious services and carried out the works on the advice of the government. The successful completion of the different works proved the administrative efficiency of the P.W.D in particular and the State in general. Thus the government purged the P.W.D officers from their involvement in corruption. The above study makes it clear that though the P.W.D and the State aimed to implement various social welfare schemes emphatically, they could not achieve their target due to financial constraints. However, the state ventured hard for the upliftment of society. In short, the P.W.D formed by the Princely State grew like a fruit-yielding tree and the people of Kanyakumari district enjoy the blessing of tasting its fruit even today.

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LEMURIA RESEARCH FORUM KANYAKUMARI

VISION AND MISSION

Over a past few decades, explorers have found traces of the lost continents submerged deep in waters that once witness to legendary epics and religious books. But, recently they found evidence of a huge landmass submerged towards the South of today's Indian Peninsula, the region extended from Kanyakumari in the North, to the Far West Madagascar and nearing the East coast of Australia. Scientists have agreed on backing claims, on how humans evolved from Africa and migrated to the rest of the world, based on the evidence gathered.

It is believed that around the last leg of ice age, earth's temperature was on rise, causing the large glaciers to melt, and thus the sea level rose. According to Oceanographic Researchers, sea levels around the Indian peninsula have been a stark rise over 100 meters, in past 14,500 years and Dravidian peninsula was engulfed into waters. A huge mass around sunken into sea, splitting Lemuria into 49 territories, and a few years the entire Lemuria or Kumari Kadam got submerged in the Indian Ocean.

Lemuria Research Forum is basically committed to promoting quality research towards the submerged continent and Archaeological excavation accompany with Archaeological department among the scholars, faculties and fresher's in higher education institutions. Also, LRF will relentlessly take forward the research of sunken continents and reveal the facts about them to the coming generations.

Archaeological excavation has been in existence since times immemorial. It has assumed greater significant in modern times as an instrument for development and modernization. This forum promotes research among researcher and freshers towards Archaeological excavation accompany with Archaeological department. It is hoped that this LRF would be of great use to scholars and researchers of all fields. Also it is believed that it will build understanding the dynamics of new excavations and create the true and quality society

Dr.C. Amose

General secretary- LRF

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