CHAPTER – III
PROFILE OF THE STUDY AREA

Ariyalur is a municipality and headquarters of Ariyalur District in the State of Tamil Nadu. It is rich in limestone resources. Big industrial houses like Birlas (Grasim Industries), India Cements, Dalmia Cements and Madras Cements have their cement units here. Tamil Nadu government's TANCEM (Tamil Nadu Cements) factory is in Ariyalur and is the first factory to establish the cement production in Ariyalur and later nearly as far as six more factories have emerged in and around Ariyalur providing employment opportunity to the people. The Ariyalur Town Panchayat was functioning as Second Grade Town Panchayat from 21.12.1943, then First Grade Town Panchayat from 01.01.1955 and the Selection grade Town Panchayat form 01.04.1966. The extent of Town Panchayat is 7.62 sq kilometer and strength of population according to the census of 2001 year is 27822. In this Town Panchayat there are 18 wards by division, and for which one President and 18 members have been elected by the public. Amongst the members, there are 7 women members. As per the Government Order No. 150, dated: 01.10.2004, this Town Panchayat was announced as Special Grade Town Panchayat and then by G.O.No.372, dated 16.12.2009 the Municipal
Administration and Department of Supply of Drinking water, this Town Panchayat was functioning as third grade Municipality from 20.12.2004 and as second grade Municipality from 08.08.2010.

According to the epics this place was called "Hari Nindra Oor’’. Because of that, the ancestors said, since the Hari (God) stayed here and then proceeded, this place was so called. The nine avatars of God Hari carved out of a single stone found in the Alanthurayar Kothandaramasamy Temple at Ariyalur is the special feature of this place. Ariyalur District came into existence by bifurcating Perambalur as per G.O.Ms.No.683 Revenue RA1(1) Department dated 19.11.07. It is bounded on the north by Cuddalore, south by Thanjavur, east by Cuddalore and Thanjavur and west by Perambalur and Tiruchirappalli Districts. The new Ariyalur District is functioning from 23.11.2007. Ariyalur District consists of 2 Divisions viz., Ariyalur and Udayarpalayam, three Taluks viz., Ariyalur, Udayarpalayam and Sendurai and six Blocks.

History In 1741 the Marathas invaded Tiruchirappalli and took Chanda Saheb as captive. Chanda Saheb succeeded in securing freedom in 1748 and soon got involved in a famous war for the Nawabs place in the Carnatic against Anwardeen, the Nawab of Arcot and his son Mohammed
Ali. Mohammed Ali annexed the two palayams of Ariyalur and Udayarpalayam located with troops were in the Ariyalur district on the grounds of default in payment of Tributes and failure to assist him in quelling the rebellion of Yusuf Khan. In November 1764, Mohammed Ali represented the issue to Madras Council and obtained military assistance on 3 January 1765. The forces led by Umdat-Ul-Umara and Donald Campbell entered Ariyalur and captured it. The young Poligar together with his followers there upon fled to Udayarpalayam. On the 19th January the army marched upon Udayarpalayam. The Poligar’s troops were defeated and the playams were occupied. The two poligars fled their town and took refuge in Tharangampadi, then a Danish settlement. The annexation of the palayam gave the Navab un-interrupted possession of all his territories extending Arcot to Tiruchirapalli.

There was a power struggle between Hyder Ali and later Tipu Sultan with the British. After the death of Tipu Sultan the English took the civil and military administration of the Carnatic in 1801. Thus Tiruchirappalli came into the hands of the English and the District was formed in 1801. In 1995 Tiruchirappalli was trifurcated and the Perambalur and Karur districts were formed. Perambalur district was divided into Perambalur and Ariyalur Districts in the year 2001 and merged with Perambalur in the year 2002.
Now the district is bifurcated from Perambalur and now functioning from 23.11.2007.

Sugar cane is grown as a major commercial crop. One private sugar factory near Keelapalur is functioning in the district with a capacity of crushing 3000 tonnes per day. One of the main crops in Ariyalur district is cashew. The pre-dominate soil in the district is red sanding with scattered packers of black soil. This town consists mainly of glade soil. The soil in the district is best suited for raising dry crops. Rice also is grown in some places. As of the 2001 Indian census, males constitute 51% of the population and females 49%. The place Thoothur is situated on the bank of Kollidam River which is a branch of Cauvery River. Thoothur and other villages Thirumanur, Elakurchi, Kuruvadi, are filled with paddy and sugar cane fields. The rivers Kollidam and Maruthaiaru flowing through the above villages finally end down in the Bay of Bengal. The beauty of river Kollidam is that it accepts the great amount of water during rainy days and saves the people from the massive floods'. Ariyalur Assembly Constituency is part of Chidambaram. Some of the important highways passing through are Roads NH226 -Perambalur-Ariyalur-Thanjavur-Menamadurai NH227 - Trichy-Kelapalur (12 km from Ariyalur)-Jayankondam-chidambaram SH143
Ariyalur-Thungapuram-Thittakudi. Ariyalur is well connected by rail to major towns like Chennai, Tiruchirappalli, Madurai etc.

DISTRICT PROFILE

Ariyalur district came into existence by bifurcating Perambalur as per G.O.Ms.No.683 Revenue RA1(1) Department dated 19.11.07. It is bounded on the North by Cuddalore, South by Thanjavur, East by Cuddalore and Thanjavur and West by Perambalur and Tiruchirapalli districts. The new Ariyalur district is functioning from 23.11.2007
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PHYSICAL FEATURES

As per 2001 census, the population of Ariyalur is 695524, with male 346763 and female 348761. Ariyalur District is centrally located in Tamil Nadu and is 265 k.m. away in southern direction from Chennai. The district has an area of 1949 sq.km.

It is an inland district without coastal line. The district has Vellar River in the north and Kollidam River in the south and it has no well marked natural divisions.

MINERALS AND MINING

The district is fairly rich in mineral deposits. celeste, lime stone, shale, sand stone, canker and phosphate nodules occur at various places in the district.

INDUSTRY

Five major cement factories in the district reveal the abundant deposit of limestone. The availability of lignite at Jayankondam and near by places
is a gift by Mother Nature. The fossil is said to have been a national asset according to geologists.

PILGRIM CENTRES

Vaithiyanatha Swamy Temple at Thirumazhapadi, Kaliyuga Varadaraja Perumal Kovil at Kallankurichi and Siva Temple at Gangaikonda Cholapuram are the important holy places for the Hindus. Elakurichi 32k.m away from Ariyalur is famous for the Church built by the famous Catholic Missionary Constantino Joseph Besky popularly known as Veerama Munivar. The Gangaikonda Cholapuram Siva Tempole built by Rajendra Chola son of Raja Raja Chola is almost a miniature of Thanjavur Pragadeeswar Temple.

TOURIST INTEREST

The great monument at Gangaikondacholapuram, the second Pragadeeswar Temple rears its head nobiy and bespeaks the imperial dignity of the capital that Rajendra Chola (1012-1044) the son of Raja Raja Chola established after his victorious march to North East India up to the River Ganga.

The Vettakudi Karaivetti tank situated at 22 km, east of Ariyalur in Thirumanur Block is a water refuge for meny migratory birds and over
species visit this tank every year between December to March in large congregation.

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