CHAPTER - IV

NETWORKS OF OVERLAND AND COASTAL TRADE OF PONDICHERRY

Internal trade that consisted of transactions of several commodities between Pondicherry and other trading regions within the confines of the country flourished in the Eighteenth century. Various factors were responsible for this local trade, and transaction of commercial goods between Pondicherry town and surrounding countryside took place on the basis of interaction of principles of demand and supply in the region. It is to be explained how the internal trade took place by the exchange of economic goods within the country chiefly on the basis of interdependence. The production of goods described in the previous chapter and their consumption by the bulk of village communities that formed a small proportion of economic activity had to be necessarily linked in this present chapter. The predominance of the earlier subsistence-oriented production gave way to market-oriented one during this period. We shall see how the French settlement in Pondicherry attracted and influenced the commerce of its neighbourhood, on account of policy measures introduced and incentives given by the French.
The reason for the establishment of the settlement at Pondicherry by the French initially was on account of the potentialities of trade. Local trade came to be shifted from interior markets to the coastal port-town of Pondicherry on account of protection given by the French. The internal trade carried on by the local merchants in Pondicherry and its neighbourhood may be classified under two major heads, namely inland trade and coastal trade. At the turn of eighteenth century, the inland trade underwent major changes in this region due to the growth of the town and its population. The merchants were led to conduct their trade in the vicinity of urban Pondicherry. During the eighteenth century, it covered a wide range of markets such as daily, weekly and seasonal markets besides the periodical fairs. We may discuss in detail all of these types of markets to understand the pattern of internal trade that flourished in this period.

**DAILY MARKET AND ITS ORGANISATION**

Markets of daily nature were of two kinds, namely bazaar and mandi. In the bazaars, there were several permanent shops, where trade was conducted in retail, whereas at mandis trade was conducted on a wholesale basis. During the early eighteenth century, the Governor of
Pondicherry and the Superior Council in fact realised the importance of the market development at Pondicherry. The high officials representing the French Company in India undertook the task of creating markets so as to supply the required commodities to the growing population at Pondicherry. Consequently two bazaars were organised, one called the grand and the other petty in the so called "Black Town" by the Governor of Pondicherry with the help of local merchants. Another bazaar was established at Mirapalli and it was recognised as market.

MERCHANTS' PARTICIPATION

The mercantile community of Pondicherry and its neighbourhood took great interest in market development in the town and in regularity and prosperity of trade. It is relevant to point out that Tanappa Mudali, a Hindu merchant from Poonamalle, living in the neighbourhood of the Port of Madras, accompanied François Martin to Pondicherry and played a vital role in the construction of shops, godowns and warehouses. As part of their scheme to organise and regulate the markets for the benefit of the town people on the one hand and to promote the trade activities within the limits of the town on the other, all shops, stalls and arched buildings situated in the bazaars were rented out by the Governor of Pondicherry with the approval of the
Superior Council to the lease-holders for a definite period of time. The available evidence shows that in March 1773, the Governor with the consent of Superior Council of Pondicherry had leased out forty two shops in the Grand Bazaar to the lease-holders who were mostly local merchants of the Company.

The local merchants of the French Company were issued licences on payment of lease amount to the Governor of Pondicherry in accordance with the terms and conditions dictated. The lease-holders of the bazaars paid the lease amount to the Governor of Pondicherry in several instalments. Sometimes they refused to pay the arrears to the Governor. This was due to migration and mass exodus of the town people on account of imminent danger posed by the Marathas and the English. Nevertheless the renters were in possession of a number of shops in both the bazaars. They gave them in turn to the retail merchants. Mention may be made here of Nainiappa, a courtier of the French Company, who had seventy two shops at a time, which were rented out to the retail traders in the Grand Bazaar and two others in the Petty Bazaar. He maintained several other warehouses too for storing his own goods. Thus the large scale merchants performed this kind of extraordinary function and
involved themselves in controlling the market affairs besides their trade.

STRUCTURE OF THE MARKETS AND ITS FUNCTION

The Grand Bazaar was broad based. It contained several blocks, whereas the Petty Bazaar and Mirapalli bazaar were small and compact. Each block dealt with a particular commodity. These bazaars functioned like kalbk in the northern parts of India. By nature the markets located inside the bazaars were so attractive that even the Europeans who had settled in the white town used to come and purchase the essential goods for daily use such as rice, vegetables and other articles from these markets. It is important to note that at the centre of the Grand Bazaar a choultry was put up based on the plan drawn by Fr. Louis at a cost of 652 pagodas. It was in this choultry that justice was rendered to the Indians who were found guilty; inside this choultry there was an open hall. It was intended chiefly to render justice; the arched prisons were meant to keep the lawbreakers. This choultry was later operated as a customs house under Mir Ashad Kiledar of Valudavur who collected taxes for the goods brought by the merchants to markets during the period of Dupleix.
Usually the markets in the bazaars were opened in the early morning and were locked and barred at night as the merchants did not live inside the bazaars. The main gates of the bazaars were generally closed and the Nayakanar used to keep watch over the bazaars during the nights with the help of peons. He was fully responsible for the safety and protection of grains brought to the Grand Bazaar by the merchants.

KINDS OF MARKETS AND RETAIL TRADE IN THE BAZAARS

The notable markets in the bazaars were the grain markets, vegetable shops, fish shops, and grocers' shops, oil-mongers' shops, textile shops, fruit shops, and betel and arecanut shops. In all shops, commodities were sold daily. These markets were well supplied by the mandis or godowns. In the grain market, the essential commodities required for daily use such as paddy, rice, wheat, kambu, cholam, maize, ragi, dhall, green and black grams were sold in retail price by measures. These were regularly brought in from neighbouring villages. For instance in March 1748 about nine hundred bullock loads of paddy daily entered the bazaars from outlying villages for sale after the harvest season was over. Whenever shortage of food grains was found in this market, it was made good by the order of the
Governor by de-hoarding. There were instances of paddy being forcefully collected and confiscated from houses and merchants' godowns and brought to the bazaars for sale.

In the vegetable markets, items such as spinaches, small and big pumpkins, greenates, cabbage, white cabbage, cucumber, carrot, tomato and white califlowers were always sold in retail prices by number and weight. Similarly in the fish market, various kinds of fish such as fresh fish, dry fish and salt fish were sold by the wives of fishermen by number as well as by baskets. These were chiefly brought to the fishmarkets from Muthiyalpet, Kalapet, Veerampattinam, Ariyankuppam and Nallavad.

Fruits such as bananas, oranges, lemons, mango, guava, pineapples, pomergranates, jackfruits, grapes, pumple-moses and water melons were sold by the fruit merchants in retail price in the fruitshops. But sometimes, it was sold at wholesale rates. It was reported that the fruit merchants supplied fruits such as bananas, guava, mangoes, oranges, lemons, annasi and jackfruit at wholesale rate to the Europeans, whenever they placed orders on the occasion of feasts. Fruits of this kind arrived mainly from the neighbourhood of Pondicherry. Oils such as gingili, castor and ghee were sold in retail price a seer
in the oil-mongers' shops. Coarse cloths of various types manufactured for local consumption were sold by the cloth venders with the help of a measuring yard in retail price. The retail traders of tamarind, pepper chilly, turmeric powder, mustard, cumin and fenugreek were sold by the merchants by tukku, a weight. Besides the petty traders who had shops in the bazaars sold punugu, zavad and other perfumes including flowers in retail price. Trade was thus conducted by the merchants daily in these markets except on festival days. It should be noted, that sometimes trade in the bazaars was blocked for different reasons. One of the reasons was that in March 1760, all shops in the bazaars, where rice, vegetables and other provisions were sold, were closed owing to the exodus of the people for fear of attacks by the English. Consequently, the Europeans could not get rice and vegetables. Therefore, the Governor as protector of the town posted guards on the four main roads to prevent mass exodus. He ordered the merchants to open their shops in the bazaars.

RETAIL TRADE OUTSIDE THE BAZAARS

The petty traders had a variety of small shops such as betel and arecanut shops, tobacco shops, toddy shops, liquor shops and arrack shops outside the bazaar in the town. They sold in their shops commodities such as
betel leaves, arecanut, tobacco, toddy, brandy, wine, arrack, etc., in retail price. There were sweet-meat stalls in this town where sweet-meats were sold in retail. Shops for firewood and timber were not unknown in the town. These were brought by the petty traders from the countryside to the town and were sold in the market for heating and cooking purposes. There was another market that was held every day in the town. It was recognised as grass market. In this market bundles of grass were brought from outlying villages and were sold as feed for cattle.

WHOLESALE TRADE

The private merchants as well as merchants of the Company who dealt with wholesale trade of a particular commodity had variety of godowns each storing a particular commodity. There were godowns for paddy, different grains, for cotton, cloth, indigo, arecanut, tobacco, toddy, liquor and arrack in the town. These godowns functioned as Mandis. They served as centres not only for marketing the produce that came from hinterland, but also for wholesale supply of commodities to the markets situated in the bazaars as well as in the town to meet the needs of the town's people. The wholesale merchants of paddy and grain purchased samba, kuruva and kar varieties of paddy and
maize, \textit{ragi}, \textit{kambu} and millet from the hinterland and stored them in their godowns. They supplied paddy and grains to the retail traders as well as to the Company at wholesale rates, when the prices of paddy increased in the markets at the time of famine. The retail traders used to buy paddy from the godowns on wholesale rates to sell it in the bazaars at retail prices. Alaga Pillai, a retail trader of paddy, was said to have purchased 400 \textit{vallams} of paddy from the godown and sold at Mirapalli bazaar in 1748 at the rate of one and a half large measures a \textit{fanam}.

The merchants purchased cotton and indigo in large quantities through their own agents directly from the cultivators in the hinterland and brought them to their warehouses and stored them. They sold them to the Company at wholesale rates per candy. In August 1748, the Company's servant, M.Cornet bought twenty five candies of cotton from Ananda Ranga Pillai's godown at the rate of twenty six pagodas per candy, for which he gave a receipt to Ananda Ranga Pillai as per the order of the Governor.

Merchants like Ananda Ranga Pillai and Muthaya Pillai had their own arecanut and tobacco godowns in the town. They purchased these goods from the Company as well as from other centres like Cuddalore and stocked them in their godowns. The sale of these commodities was the
Company's monopoly. Therefore, these merchants obtained licence from the Company for the sale of these commodities for a definite period and sold them in their godowns at wholesale rates to the retail traders by weighing in palams. It is said that in the tobacco godowns it was sold at the rate of ten palams for a fanam to the retail traders, who sold it in retail price in the bazaars.

The cloth merchants collected textiles of various kinds such as salempores, ginghams, chintz, guineas, coarse blue cloth, bleached, unbleached and lampasses purchased by their brokers in the interior markets and stored them in their godowns. The wholesale merchants like Sunguvar Seshachala Chetti supplied cloths to the Company from their godowns at wholesale rates after having a contract with the Company. They also bought imported broadcloths from the Company and sold them to the retail merchants at wholesale rates including the textiles collected from the interior parts. Nainiyappa Mudali a retail trader, is said to have purchased about thirty bales of blue, coarse, checked cloth and unbleached long cloth from Ananda Ranga Pillai.

The liquor merchants like Tiruvengadam Pillai operated their business in toddy, arrack and liquor for which they had several godowns in the town. They obtained
toddy from palm trees through Shanars and produced arrack locally called arrack de pariah or patte by engaging coolies and stored them in their godowns. Besides, they also purchased arrack of Goa and of Colombu, Goa rum, Batavia rum and brandy from the Company's warehouse and stocked them in their godowns. They sold them at wholesale rates to the retail shopkeepers. The sale of these items was the Company's monopoly. As a result these merchants obtained licences from the Company for monopoly sale of these items every year.

Besides these godowns, there were store houses for charcoal and chunam. The traders dealing with these items sold out these goods in the markets by the weight of marc. Similarly, there was another store house where salt was collected and kept. The dealers of this commodity sold it to the retail traders at wholesale rates per garse.

DEVELOPMENT OF RETAIL MARKETS IN THE TOWN

In course of time, the markets expanded on all directions and market towns multiplied and there was a wide use of money in circulation in commercial sector all of which gave the skilled artisans a chance to give up their traditional occupation partly related to agriculture and forced them to make a living entirely by their crafts. Thus
they found better opportunity for selling their crafts in the bazaars of Pondicherry. They migrated from the villages to the towns and engaged themselves in trade transactions. We have evidence to state that some of the village artisans such as cobblers, carpenters, armourers, goldsmiths, jewellers, silversmiths, potters, barbers and washermen who had their settlements in the town had separate shops from the lease-holders on rent basis in the bazaars reserved for their business and also outside the bazaars. They sold leather goods, shoes, wooden and iron instruments, gold and silver ornaments and potteries. The weavers also brought their finished goods and sold them in the bazaar markets.

One market was conducted in the white town. All European goods especially luxurious items such as spectacles, glass wares and clocks were displayed and sold at retail price in this market. The Governor of Pondicherry established two bazaars, one at Muthiyalpet and another at Nellithopu, where essential commodities for daily use were sold at retail prices. These bazaars were rented out to the lease-holders by the Governor with the consultation of the Superior Council. As markets were held in thickly populated places, we may assume that they operated in the populated areas and weaving settlements such as Olukarai, Villianur, Saram, Kosapalayam, Pakkumudayanpet,
Laswspet, Kathirkamam, Muthirapalayam, Mudaliarpet, Ariyankuppam, Abishekappakkam and Bahur, etc., It should be remembered that the terms such as pattinae and pakkam were associated with towns on the coastline as well as in the interior parts of the region where such markets were operated and merchants had their settlements. In this connection, we can assume that daily markets were conducted at Veerampattinam, Murungapakkam, Kommapakkam, Gudappakkam, Karikalampakkam and Nettappakkam in this region.

DAILY MARKET-CONTROL AND THE GOVERNOR OF PONDICHERRY

Though the markets were rented out to the leaseholders the central control was in the hands of the Governor. He supervised the markets ever since they were established in the town. He appointed official accountants, persons to supervise measurements, subordinates and cotwal to measure the commodities and to check and supervise every aspect of market affairs. Because of his efforts, assessment of paddy, rice and grains which were brought from outside and sold in the town markets, was made every year. When there was no food grain in the market, paddy was confiscated from the houses of the people and godowns and half of it was given to the paddy merchants to be sold in the bazaar markets and half of it was taken for the Company’s use by his order. At the same time, he ordered
his *dubashy* to collect paddy from outlying villages and permitted the French individuals to bring paddy from 300 to 44,000 bags to the market free of tax.

When the merchants closed their shops on account of mass exodus of the people owing to the hostile attitude of the Jesuits towards the Hindu festivals and the fear of attacks by the Marathas and the English, the Governor prevented the same exodus by posting guards on four main roads and ordered the merchants to open their shops. When he received complaints from the paddy merchants against officials for not measuring paddy, he strictly ordered the officials that the paddy merchants should not be compelled to part with any portion of their grain either for mendicants or for charitable purposes, and whenever he found the officials guilty, he removed them from services.

In the year 1748, when there was famine, he ordered the paddy merchants to sell paddy in the retail bazaars at three small measures or one large measure for a *fanam*. In 1760, the Governor made the announcement that rice should be sold at 1 1/8 measure for a *fanam* and at eight small measures for a rupee. In fact sale of certain commodities such as betel leaves, arecanut and tobacco was
Company's monopoly. The Governor issued licences to some merchants with the consultation and approval of the Superior Council for the sale of these goods against an annual payment. In 1746, when he found that the sale of arecanut declined in the market and it was not profitable for the Company because the retail traders did not buy it in Pondicherry, he ordered the customs officials at seaport and choultry writers to forbid import of arecanut from Cuddalore and other English territories. In 1741, he ordered the warehouse keepers to sell tobacco at one *fanam* for ten *palams* and retail traders at seven pies a *palam*. He prohibited the sale of tobacco in 1747, when it was found that tobacco was being smuggled out in large quantities at Arumpatai Pillai's choultry. The sale of liquor, arrack and toddy was the Company's monopoly. The Governor leased out these items to the merchants both for manufacture and sale against an annual payment for which licences were issued to them. Besides, he controlled these items in the markets. It is said that in August 1748, he ordered the merchants not to sell toddy and liquor in the shops and godowns, when he came to know that the coolies worked one day and drank for two days. At the same time he made the announcement that if any one sold liquor illegally against his order, he would be hanged. After two months he ordered liquor dealers to issue ration from liquor godowns.
PRICES OF COMMODITIES

The contemporary sources make mention of fluctuation in price. Paddy was sold at three and a half large measures (litres) or seven small measures per fanam in 1748 at retail. Later the price of paddy slightly declined in the market, when the Governor ordered the officials to buy at four large measures or eight small measures for a fanam. In the same year, at wholesale rate raw rice of samba variety was sold from 84 3/4 to 91 pagodas per garse, boiled rice of the same variety was sold at 71 1/2 per garse, paddy of samba variety was sold at 41 pagodas and 16 fanams per garse; paddy of kar variety was sold at 35 3/4 pagodas per garse, maize was sold at 41 pagodas and 16 fanams per garse; the price of ragi was at 45 pagodas and 11 fanams per garse; and of millet was at 26 3/8 pagodas per garse.

At the end of the same year the prices of paddy increased in the markets, whereas it was sold at six measures per fanam at Valudavur market. In 1749, its price was very cheap in the bazaars. Manakattai, a kind of paddy which was sold at five measures (litres), was sold at 6 1/2 or 6 3/4 measures per fanam; even then there were no
purchasers at that time. In 1759, the prices increased in the market owing to the shortage of food grains.

In July 1760, provisions were sold in the markets at following rates; rice was at 1 1/4 or 1 3/8 measures per fanam; dhall was at 1 1/8 measures per fanam; pulse was at 1 3/4 measures per fanam; green gram was at 1 1/8 measure per fanam; ragi was at 1 1/3 measures per fanam; gingili oil was at three fanams a seer, castor oil was at 2 3/4 fanams a seer, ghee was at two ruppes and five fanams a tukku i.e. 6 1/4 seers; tamarind was at two fanams a tukku; pepper was at one rupee and two half fanams a tukku; chilly was at three fanams a tukku; turmeric powder was at 1 1/4 fanams a tukku, mustard was at two and a half fanams a tukku, cumin was at one rupee and six fanams a tukku and fenugreek was at two and a half fanams a tukku.

Tobacco was sold in the warehouse at the rate of one fanam per ten palams in the wholesale and at seven pies a palam in retail as ordered by the Governor in 1741. In 1747 and 1748, because of the Governor's order betel leaves in a bundle of nine were sold per kasu. In 1748, cotton was sold at 26 pagodas per candy in the wholesale rate. The price of salt was three pagodas per garse. In 1750, charcoal and chunnam were sold at the rate of four rupees per bag weighing 110 marcs.
It should be noted that the prices of paddy always rose in the markets every year from the month of July to August. When the supply started to arrive from the neighbouring villages, prices declined and the fall continued from the month of September to October as soon as the kambu had been sown and began to grow in the fields. The reason for the fall in price in the market during the period of said months was that other food grains started to come to the markets. Some times the market was dull and the prices of commodities fluctuated due to famines and also the threats posed by the Marathas and the English. We find that the prices of commodities in the markets constantly fluctuated in accordance with the variations in demand and supply.

SEASONAL MARKET

Similar to those conducted by the English at Madras, the Governor of Pondicherry organised the seasonal market with the approval of the Council Superior. It was held at the Company's warehouses and godowns in the Fort known as Magasin de la marine in the white town near the seashore. Brisk trade was conducted in every season after the arrival of ships and unloading of cargoes there. This market was under the direct control of the Governor and the
Superior Council. The chief articles of merchandise in this market were the imported goods such as broadcloth, coral, liquor, silver, lead, mercury, silk, porcelainware, sugar candy, amber, tutenag, camphor, red wood, pepper, incense, opium, drugs, warnish, brandy, rum, arrack of Goa and of Colombo, tea, copper, rattan, rose water, seras wine, rubber coat, teak wood, resin, piasters, silver pincone, horses of Persia, Arab, Achin and Manila and a few items of luxurious goods, besides cotton textiles of various kinds, indigo and saltpetre.

Trade was actively operated by the Superior Council in this market. The merchandise were generally sold at auction in front of the Fort at wholesale rates to the merchants. For instance, in 1748, M. Cornet, the Company's store-keeper sold 17 corge of pieces of longcloth and coarse cloth to Vira Chetti at wholesale rates. The merchandise were sold to the merchants against direct payment and some times on the basis of credit and also in lieu of supplying textiles by the local merchants to the Company. Besides, goods were in fact sold to the merchants against the amount owed by the Company. We have evidence to note that in June 1741, the Superior Council sold London made bed sheets worth about Rs.3,039 fanams 10 and kasus 31 to the agents of Imam Sahib against part of the total amount
due from the Superior Council to him. It should be noted that much of the inferior quality of merchandise collected from Southeast and West Asian Countries and not fit for European markets were also usually sold by the Superior Council at wholesale rates to the merchants. In 1748, the English broad cloths such as women's upper garments and some of the thin cloth belonging to the French private merchants were sold to the merchants at four months' credit when Ananda Ranga Pillai also purchased some cloths.

It should be remembered that trade in some articles was very dull in this market due to the bad quality of goods. It is evident that in 1735, no merchants came forward to purchase wine at 30 pagodas per bottle since it was not superior in quality. As a result it was distributed to the officials and staff at the rate of 20 pagodas per bottle and at the same time wine of bad quality was to be sold at 2 1/2 fanams per bottle. Some merchants who were local rulers and amaldar of certain areas, purchased goods at Company's warehouses. For instance in 1760, when goods belonging to Marquis de Conflans, a private merchant, were sold at auction at the warehouse, Ali Naqui and son of Chanda Sahib purchased part of the goods while some private French merchants bought some. The French private merchants also tried to dispose of their goods soon
after unloading the stored goods in the warehouses. In 1748, the Governor approached Ananda Ranga Pillai to make the Company's merchants buy his sugarcandy. Trade in this market attracted the attention of some of the merchants even from outside the town to come and purchase the goods both on credit basis and on direct payment. Balli Chetti, a merchant from Arcot asked the Superior Council to purchase the piasters for 30,000 pagodas at the rate of 7 pagodas 4 fanam per seer payable within a period of two months, for which the Superior Council agreed and decided to supply piasters worth 40,000 pagodas for the said rate for a period of four months. Similarly, a merchant by name Savarimuthu from Salem came with an order to buy the broad cloth from the Superior Council for 1800 pagodas.

The store keeper sold the commodities to the merchants according to the prices fixed by the Superior Council. Though the prices for the goods were always fixed by the Superior Council, some times it was determined by negotiation of both the Superior Council and the merchants of the Company. It is important to note that all the merchants of the Company were not generally allowed to buy the goods in this market. Only particular merchants of the Company who were wholesale merchants and had obtained licence from the Governor were usually allowed to enter into
this market and to purchase and supply the merchandise at wholesale rates. The retail traders were prevented from buying goods directly from the Company.

WEEKLY MARKETS

Rural market in the village level was organised and controlled by the local authorities of a particular village so as to ensure the village people to satisfy their needs, because the surrounding villages were not entirely self sufficient in such commodities as salt, ghee, oil, cloth and other sundry goods. This rural market used to be held one or two days a week on a site on the open road or at cross-roads outside every big village. This rural market was known as weekly market. In local terminology it was called varasandai. The word sandai is derived from the word sandi, which means a meeting point or junction where two roads are crossing each other. Sandai served the needs of the locality. According to Francis Buchanan weekly markets were held elsewhere in good parts of the country about two or three miles from each other and depending on the size of the population in the area. The Memoires of François Martin tell us that Olukarai commune had a big weekly market, which was usually held at Muthirapalayam on every Tuesday. It is said that this market attracted
an average of ten thousand local people from both towns and 87
neighbouring villages.

In the same commune, at Dharmapuri another weekly
market was conducted on every Friday. Cattle fair was also
held in this market. Similarly in Mannadipattu commune,
Madagadipattu had a great weekly market on every Tuesday.
This market was very famous for cattle fair in this region.
In Bahur commune, the name, Irulanchandai, gives a clear
indication that the weekly market was held in that place on
a particular day of the week and it was organised by
Irul(lapp)an. Hence, it was named after him.

COMMODITIES OF TRADE

The principal commodities in the weekly market
were various kinds of food grains, vegetables, fruits, 88
butter, oil, salt, pepper, spices and sugarcandy.
Besides, the products of small scale commodity producers
such as cotton, thread, coarse fabrics, iron and steel
articles like ploughshares, sickles, horseshoes, nails,
locks, chisels, imitation pearls, leather goods, pottery and
89
mats were sold in this market. Parched grains and sweet-
90
meats were also sold. These commodities were sold in
retail price. The surrounding villages supplied these goods
to the weekly market. Bullocks, sheep, cows, buffaloes,
goats, horses, and fowls were brought from Madras and other places and sold by the cattle merchants in the cattle fair. Peasants of surrounding villages were found in the cattle fair held at Muthirapalayam, Madagadipattu and Dharmapuri and used to buy the bullocks for drawing water for irrigation. Besides, it is said that bullocks brought to these markets were purchased by the order of the Governor for transporting the Company's goods as well as for the purpose of food for the army. Generally speaking the prices of commodities were fixed by the merchants and it varied in the market from time to time depending on the monopoly of goods and on its demand and supply factors. Obviously, the prices for certain goods were fixed by bargaining done by both consumers and traders. The commodities were sold by the merchants against direct payment and sometimes even on credit. Trade in all sorts of goods in the weekly market was transacted in retail not in wholesale deals.

PERIODICAL FAIRS

Fairs implied dealing with wholesale goods that came from far away areas and in great quantities to serve the needs of wholesale as well as retail traders. From time immemorial, a large number of fairs in India were associated with important deities and religious festivals.
Fernand Braudel clearly points out that fairs were closely linked with pilgrimages, and they were generally wholesale markets where dealer met dealer. And as such, we can quite emphatically say that a large number of fairs, big and small, were held in and around Pondicherry throughout the year in particular months and days of the week. Let us enumerate such fairs held in different places of this region. In Pondicherry town itself four big fairs and several other small ones were conducted. In the month of April or May a big fair was conducted around Kamachiamman temple where kinnither festival was celebrated for six days by goldsmiths known as kammalars in honour of their goddess kali. Similarly in December or January, another big fair was held around Varadarajaperumal temple. Here the Vaisnava sects celebrated the car festival for ten days. In the month of January a great fair was also usually held for ten days in the vicinity of Vedapureeswarar temple during the time of car festival celebrated by Siva sects. In the month of February or March, a big fair was held near the new mantapam built by Vinayaka Pillai for about ten days from the days when the moon was in the constellation magham at the time of Masimagham festival.

A small fair took place near the church built by the Capuchin fathers, where the native christians had their
festival on the Eve of the nativity of St. John Baptist in the month of June. In addition to these large size fairs, some minor fairs were also seen on the streets for one or two days during the time of the Hindu festivals such as Pongal, Deepavali, Chittirai pournami, Kaman festival, Navarathri and Krishna jayanthi or Uriyadi festivals and also Raja festival. Outside the town there were a number of fairs worth mentioning. To the north of the town, Muthiyalpet had a big fair for eighteen days when fire walking festival (nerupputh thirunal) was conducted during which period people of all walks of life and from different parts of the region came together. At a distance of 14 k.m. north of Pondicherry on the way to Kunimedu, a great fair took place for ten days in the month of March near the Dharmaraja temple at Tiruvengadapuram (present Pillaichavadi), where the people of that place celebrated fire walking festival. To the west of Pondicherry on the route to Muthirapalayam at a distance of about two k.m. away from the town a big fair drew the attention of many. It took place in the month of January for nine days on the occasion of Mariamman festival.

Ariyankuppam in the South had its own traditional gaity for ten days. The fair was organised in September around St. Paul's church built by the Jesuit missionaries,
when the festival of Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary was celebrated by the Christians. On the east of the same suburb, a great fair was conducted in the month of July or August for fifteen days in the vicinity of Sengeniamman temple at Veerampattinam. The occasion was the well known car festival. This fair was very famous and attracted a large number of people from distant villages.

At Olukarai about four k.m. West of Pondicherry on the way to Villupuram two large fairs were held for ten days, one around Siva temple and another near the church built by Kanakaraya Mudali, chief dubashy of the French Company during the time of Hindu and Christian festivals.

At a distance of four k.m. further West of Olukarai, two great fairs were operated in the environs of Siva temple built by the Cholas and the christian church at Villianur in the month of May and June on the occasion of car festivals. These fairs were so attractive that people from near and far away places flocked there. Nearer to Villianur and South of that place, there was a big fair at Kanuvapet or Pudupettai which was held during the time of festival of local goddess.

About 21 k.m. West of Pondicherry a large fair was very conspicuous for ten days at the Shrine of Siva known as
Pantchanadisvarar at Tiruvandarkoil. Two k.m. further West of Tiruvandarkoil, another great fair was held for ten days around Varadarajaperumal koil at Tirubhuvanai on the occasion of the car festival. At a distance of about one k.m. North of Tirubhuvanai, Sanyasikuppam had a fair for ten days surrounding the temple of kali at the time of the festival season every year. Besides, about one k.m. South of Tirubhuvanai a large fair was held for ten days around Siva temple at Madagadipattu at the time of car festival. Further, about seven k.m. South of Madagadipattu, Pandacholanallur had a big fair that was conducted for ten days every year during the car festival time in the vicinity of Mallikarchunesvarar temple. At a distance of 12.5 k.m. South of Pondicherry another great fair was held in the month of June and July around Siva temple at Bahur every year on the occasion of the car festival. Nearer to this region, north-west of Pondicherry, two large fairs were conducted, one at the Shrine to Chandramaulisvarar at Tiruvakkarai and another around the temple of Subrahmanya at Mailam in the month of March and April, when nine days therottam was celebrated. These fairs were acting as distributing centres of various commodities, such as coconuts, plantains, flowers, scents, sandal, fruits, red powder, betel leaves, sweet-meats, parched grains, artificial pearls, corals, beads, matches, bunkels, toys,
small metal boxes, needles, combs, threads, lamps, iron, copper and brass vessels, small carpets, ready made cloth, saris, dhotis, sundry goods, vegetables, food grains, cooked food, sugarcane, sugarcandy and pottery.

CONTROL OF FAIRS AND THE MAHANATTARS

Almost all fairs attached to the festivals were usually arranged by the local chieftains of the respective places called mahanattars. They provided necessary facilities such as site for booth, water supply and laying and repairing roads to the fair for the merchants because the fairs brought considerable income to them. As the fair was big in size, they had special fair police to control it and if any one was found guilty they administered justice in one of the temple premises and punished him. Apart from this, there was another type of fair which was organised in connection with camps by the Governor to provide the necessary facilities to the army, as the English had done at Madras. Indeed fairs of this sort were held near the camps at Ariyankuppam, Tiruvakkarai, Gingee, Mysore and so on. These fairs were arranged by the Governor through his intermediaries. It is said that Nayanar made his efforts to make the bazaar merchants set up fair in the camp for the army at Ariyankuppam as he was ordered by the Governor. He
provided necessary facilities and also advanced money to the shop-keepers and merchants to conduct fairs at camps, because these fairs supplied not only required commodities to the troops, but also a good source of revenue to the company. We have evidence to state that in 1760, a loan of 1,000 rupees was given to the merchants to manage their shops in the camp through Ananda Ranga Pillai. These fairs were controlled by the Governor through the Company's agents. It should be noted that cattle fair also was held at the camps.

As far as the commodities were concerned it is very clear that biscuits, rice, kambu, paddy, ragi, dhall, ghee, milk, curd, buttermilk, oil, vegetables, fruits, cloth, imported cloth, copper vessels and even fire woods were sold. Besides punuku, zavad, and other perfumes were also sold in these fairs. The cattle merchants sold imported horses, elephants and country bullocks. In 1750, straw brought to the cattle fair held at the camp of Nasir Jang was sold for one and a half or two rupees a man's load. In October 1750, in the camp fair four pakka seers of rice were sold at one rupee, and horse gram, cholam and ragi were sold at the rate of one rupee for five pakka seers. In both types of fairs goods were sold in retail price. The prices of commodities were fixed by the
merchants who had the monopoly of goods in the fair. The fairs held at the camps differed from those at pilgrim centres. The camps where such fairs were held, were not permanent venues, whereas the pilgrim centres were permanent. The construction of new churches and temples and subsequent arrangements for fairs at camps gave room for proliferation of fairs in this region for sale of sundry goods, cattle, food grains and other articles of commerce.

MEASURES, WEIGHTS AND MARKET TAXES

A standard unit of measurement was introduced for every article to avoid frauds by the merchants in the sale of commodities. Litre, padi, pakka seer, marakal, palla, garse, kalam, parrah and vallam were more commonly used for measuring food grains in the markets. Seer was a standard unit in the oil monger's shop for measuring oil such as gingili oil, castor oil and also ghee. Besides, it was used for weighing silver bars. Maund, tukku, veesai, palam and candy were other sorts of units for weighing sugar candy, chilly, cotton, etc.

Similarly marc, ounce, gros and deni were other standard units for weighing grains. Yard, inch and feet were used for measuring cloths in the markets. Avanam was a measurement in the sale of arecanut. Corge was
another measurement of pieces of cotton goods. Manjadi, carat, magani, aremagani, kalmagani, thola, varaganodai and kundumani were the standard units of measurements for weighing diamond, gold and silver. Pounds, deniers and sols were other standard units for the valuation of coins.

CURRENCY

Coins of indigenous type like Arcot pagodas, Pondicherry crescent pagodas, silver rupee coins, Pondicherry silver fanam, rupee of Mohammad Shah, Ahmed Shah Bahadur and Alamgir II were widely in circulation in the commercial sector in this region. Besides, French type of coins such as silver fanam, double fanam, half fanam, copper kasu, touttu of four kasus, and of half kasu were in general use for ordinary commercial transactions. Even cowries were also introduced and widely used in purchasing and selling the commodities in the markets. In the markets situated in and outside the Pondicherry town, the lease-holder or his nominee levied a tax known as allu kasu and collected one kasu per day for every shop, stall and from every individual selling various kinds of fish such as fresh fish, dry fish and salt fish on the streets. They also collected podikasu at the rate of 1/32 fanam for every load of 120 measures of cereals brought to the Grand Bazaar.
by its owner or merchants for the purpose of custody. A duty called adhikasu was imposed and one kasu per day was collected by the lessees from shops and stalls in the Pondicherry town as well as in its neighbouring villages.

Customs houses were put up at the entrance to each of the five gates leading to the town, and entry duty was imposed on the goods and collected from the merchants whenever they brought the commodities to Pondicherry and exit tax when they took them out of Pondicherry. Before the period of Dupleix, entry duty of three per cent was imposed on the goods coming to Pondicherry and one per cent for the goods going out. But in 1789, it was enhanced to four and half per cent on the goods which were measured and four percent on those which were weighed, one per cent on cotton and cotton thread and three and half per cent on all other goods except indigo. In addition to this one per cent was also levied as mahame duty on all goods brought by the merchants who were local Muslims. But the essential commodities such as indigo, betel, tobacco, pattai arrack, kallu, lime, bricks, fire wood, as well as products coming from Abishekapakkam, Ariyankuppam, Olukarai, Saram, Puthupalayam, Olandai, Murungapakkam, Alankuppam and Kalapet were exempted from the payment of duty.
Each weekly market had its toll-gates or **chavadis** on four sides. At the entrance to each **chavadi** the lease-holders of the market used to impose a small duty known as **sungam** on the goods coming to the market and they collected it from all persons frequenting the market barring a certain proportion of goods for sale. This **sungam** varied depending on the quality and quantity of the goods. Besides, the lease-holders and **Mahanattars** collected sales tax from the merchants and imposed one **kasu** for a shop, stall and booth per day and collected booth tax known as **adikasu** from all shops and stalls. These markets yielded a good source of revenue to the lease-holders who usually provided necessary facilities such as warehouses, booths and water supply for the merchants.

**TRADE ROUTES**

On the south-west of Pondicherry a route connected Pondicherry to Valikondapuram via Villianur through which Francois Martin travelled. This route turning towards the east from Valikondapuram connected Porto Novo through Tirumatan and Bhuvanagiri. A diversion from this route at Bhuvanagiri went to Karaikal through Chidambaram, Shirkazhi and Tranquebar. A little beyond Chidambaram, the travellers had to cross over the river Coleroon by using boats. Between Chidambaram and
Shirkhazhi there were a number of toll-gates where the travellers were forced to pay tolls, while travelling with their luggage. The route to Devanampattinam was to be taken through west of Ariyankuppam, Karikalampakkam, Cheluncheri, Tukkanampakkam Tiruppanampakkam Bahur, Kurivanatham, Puvarasankuppam, Padirkuppam chavadi, Tiruvendipuram and Cuddalore. This route was followed by the six buffaloes that carried rice from Cuddalore to the camp of Muhammad Alikhan and these buffaloes with provisions were stopped at Bahur in September 1750 by D. Autevil. On the way, the travellers used to cross the rivers Pennaiar and Kedilam by boats. Another route without going to Cuddalore linked Pondicherry to Karaikal through Villianur, Sornavur, Naduvirapattu, Venkatammalpettai, Bhuvanagiri and Chidambaram. At Bhuvanagiri this route led further to Porto Novo through which bullock carts carried commercial goods to Pondicherry.

Through north-west of Pondicherry, another route linked Pondicherry with Gingee fort through Valudavur. François Matin took this route to meet the chieftains of Gingee. One more important route linked Villianur with Kunimedu through Valudavur. This was once used by the Mughal troops to get rice from Kunimedu for their camp at Villianur. Obviously, conditions on some roads were not
congenial for the movement of heavy vehicles to bring the goods to Pondicherry. As a result these roads were to be maintained often by the French. For instance, the road from Pondicherry to Amarampet through Valudavur, Aalattur, Shunnampet, Pulampakkam, Maduranthagam, Karunguzhi and Chengelpet was repaired by them properly through which sufficient quantity of paddy was often brought from Chengelpet to Pondicherry by bullock carts. In the section of the road between Lalapettai and Pondicherry through Artcot, bullock carts took twelve or thirteen days for carrying paddy from Lalapettai if they moved fast, and fifteen days if they moved slowly. Pondicherry was connected with Bangalore through Villianur, Villupuram, Gingee, Tiruvannamalai, Vellore, Krishnagiri, Dharmapuri and Hosur.

On the northern side there was a route linking Pondicherry to Madras. It had to pass through Kunimedu, Alambarai, Cheyyur, Mukaiyur, Vaclour, Velacherry and St.Thome. Obviously there were two rivers, one at Kunimedu and another at Cheyyur town. The travellers used to cross these rivers by boats. This route connected Madras with Chicracely through Tiruvallur, Pulicat and Chinchypatnam. While another route linked Madras to Cuddapah on both sides of which there were hill blocks on
account of which the route was very narrow. One more important route was the one connecting Bangalore through Poonamalle, Sriperumbudur, Kaveripakkam, Arcot, Vellore, Pedanaikkampet, Venkatagiri, Bavdamangalam, Vellures and Catcolli through which Francis Buchanan travelled. In this route from Madras to Poonamalle, there were 164 chaitiram for travellers to spend the night and this route upto Kaveripakkam was tolerably good and between that place and Arcot, wheel carriages could not easily ply. In this route beyond Arcot upto Bangalore, some parts were good and some parts were very bad as they were covered by granite stones.

MEANS OF TRANSPORT

The means of transport were traditional carts drawn by bullocks, camels, packoxen, horses, buffaloes, elephants, donkies, besides dholies and palanquins which were widely in use to carry travellers from place to place. Head load was not unknown. Occasionally merchants and travellers hired coolies (porters) to carry their merchandise as head load. The hire amount paid to them was calculated on the basis of the weights of the goods and the distance to be covered by them. Heavy valuable commercial goods were always moved by bullock carts. Small boats called dhonies or baskets of a circular kind
were commonly seen on the rivers like Kaveri for transportation of both passengers and goods from one bank to another. Unlike in the northern India, rivers in the South were not navigable.

Lumbadies and chetties who were professional traders in South India, used to maintain a fleet of vehicles with animals in herds for the movement of goods from one place to another. They used also to hire out the carts. The rate of hired bullock carts was always fixed on the average load of eight maunds depending on distance. According to Francis Buchanan the carriage of a bullock load of pepper, betelnut and other articles cost fifteen fanams from Bangalore to Wallajapet a distance of about 145 British miles. Bullocks were hired for transportation of goods. The hire amount per bullock was 3/8 fanam per day.

Robbery and murder were not unknown on land routes. As such the users of bullock carts were not held answerable for any accident that might happen to the goods or money when the route was infested by robbers or in the event the local chieftains engaged themselves in harassing the carriers passing through their territories. Anticipating these contingencies some armed escorts were always sent to safeguard their goods.
To bring the goods from the country side easily to Pondicherry, the Governor, being the lord of the region, laid the roads at important centres. To cite an example, early in 1736, roads were laid in Abishekapakkam after clearing the bushes which served as hiding places for bandits and thieves. As a precaution to guard the goods from plunder and attacks by the petty rulers and highway robbers, the Governor posted peons and sepoys. Commissioners were also appointed on land routes. On the model of caravan serais in Central Asia, there were a number of Chattirams or Chavadis(choultries) built by wealthy and pious merchants as Dharamsalas for the accommodation of travellers and porters who would find there enough protection against the onslaught of miscreants and natural calamities. Such chavadis built by various merchants were numerous in and around Pondicherry such as Kottakuppam chavadi, Chinnamudali chavadi, Periyamudali chavadi, (Anandaranga) Pillai chavadi, Idaiyanchavadi, Mortandi chavadi, Perumalnayyakan chavadi, Lakshmanayykan chavadi, Tavalakuppam chavadi, Arasappan chavadi, Kumarappareddi chavadi, Kolckaran chavadi, Reddichavadi, and Unnamalai chetti chavadi. The merchants or rich people who employed their funds to construct chavadis considered it a pious act to perpetuate their memories. When a merchant
built a chavadi, it was identified by his name as a mark of honour, such as Perumalnayakkan chavadi, (Anandaranga) pillai chavadi.

Describing the choultry, (chavadi) a French traveller by name M. Sonnerat who travelled extensively on the Coromandel coast says that these choultries were of gothic style and in most of the buildings, there was no wooden gate. They consisted ordinarily of a big appartment, sometimes divided into two. No doors or windows fully opened on southern side. All around there was an arched gallery. By the side of the building, there were big gardens and thopu for shades, paved stones for sitting; there was a pond and a small temple dedicated to pullaiar so as to enable the penitents to take bath and pray. The Brahmins and pandarams were engaged in cooking in these choultries. Hospitality was extended by giving canjee or good food for refreshing the passengers. It should be noted that the Governor and the Superior Council encouraged the merchants and rich people to build chavadis for travellers by giving them sites. The merchants and rich people who built such chavadis provided also a few acres of cultivable lands for the chavadi as maniam and the income of which was fully utilised to pay the salary of Brahmins and pandarams and for the hospitality to the travellers.
Besides these chattirams, two legged stone platform known as sumaithankis were erected about four feet high on which the head loads could be deposited to relieve their heads. The porters could again take up their loads on themselves easily without any body's assistance, after taking sufficient rest. Such sumaithankis were put up on the roadside at every one kilometer.

TRADE WITH HINTERLAND

Although Pondicherry had its commercial relations with trade centres in the hinterland, at the beginning of the eighteenth century it was continuously expanding on account of overseas trade carried on by the French Company. The French were keen to collect the commodities from trading centres in the hinterland for export. Part of the requirements of food stuffs, a large part of textiles and raw materials had to be met by the flow of commodities from outside of Pondicherry where such products were produced abundantly. Merchants from Pondicherry were sent elsewhere to purchase cotton textiles. Pondicherry drew considerable quantity of cloth such as kallis or sailasses from Muthiyalpet for export to Malacca and Singapore. The neighbouring villages of Kottakuppam, Karuvadikuppam, Lawspet and Pakkumudayanpet supplied textiles of various
kinds to Pondicherry. From Thilasupet, Kathirkamam, Muthirapalayam and Olukarai, cotton fabrics such as longcloth, coarse cloth and cotton stiff were brought for export.

Mudaliarpet and Orlanpet, where such looms were operated, supplied substantial quantity of textiles regularly to Pondicherry. Villianur, Kanuvapet, Bahur, Abishekapakkam, Tukkanampakkam and Marikrishnapuram where cotton fabrics were produced for the Company, sent bleached cloths for export. Paddy was brought from Olukarai, Murungapakkam, Ariyankuppam, Abishekapakkam, Villianur and Bahur. To avoid the shortage of food stuff in the local market and to supply it to the people without any break during the time of famine, rice, kambu and maize were brought from outlying villages. It is reported that in March 1748 between seven and nine hundred bullock loads of paddy from outlying villages, after the harvest season, were daily brought to Pondicherry bazaar for sale. But in the month of July, the flow stopped because of the Maratha raids. Raw cotton was also brought to Pondicherry from outlying villages. In 1748, raw cotton brought to Pondicherry was placed on the roof of the church to protect it from the attacks by the English.
Chunnam, which was required for constructing houses and fortification at Villianur, was fetched from Alankuppam. In 1748, the people who went to Alankuppam to buy chunnam brought only seven parrahs. Merchants went to Villupuram and brought paddy from there to Pondicherry. It is said that Ananda Ranga Pillai brought paddy worth 200 pagodas from Muhammad Hasan Abdul Talil Sahib's amaldar at Villupuram. It was bought mainly for the Company's purpose at the rate of four and half kalams per pagoda. Twenty bullock loads of paddy were regularly arriving from Valudavur, in August 1748, to the bazaar of Pondicherry.

Cotton fabrics of various kinds such as bleached, unbleached, coarse cloth and rough cloth were brought from the entire Carnatic region. Some rough cloths were carried from the villages after twenty days of cart travels to Pondicherry. Rice, patathikarai of fine quality, coarse blue cloth, chintz and lampasses were brought from Fort St. David, Cuddalore and adjoining villages to Pondicherry by bullock carts. Jaggery which was required for distillation of arrack at Pondicherry was obtained from Cuddalore and its neighbouring villages. Arecanuts were also brought from Cuddalore, but was prohibited in 1746, because the merchants did not buy the arecanuts available in Pondicherry as it was cheaper in Cuddalore than in
Pondicherry. Cotton cloths from Pondicherry were despatched to Fort St. David for dyeing. From Porto Novo, where the French had their trading houses and cloths were produced for Company's purposes, cotton cloth, blue piece goods, handkerchiefs, brown cloth, longcloth and Dutch sorts were carried by the merchants for shipment to Mocha, Manila and French islands through Pondicherry. But cloths coming from this place were blocked for some time when in 1741 Porto Novo was pillaged by the Marathas.

Tirumalarayanpattinam and Karaikal, where the French had a trading counter, supplied cotton fabrics, table cloths, towels, silkcloths and handkerchiefs to Pondicherry for export to overseas markets. Besides Karaikal sent paddy for local consumption, but it was prevented for some time. In 1746, paddy belonging to Ananda Ranga Pillai of this centre was seized at Fort St. David by the English, while it was being transported to Pondicherry by the land route. Imported teak wood and textiles were brought from Nagapattinam to Pondicherry. Tranquebar supplied pachakkadai, a kind of muslin cloth, and handkerchiefs. In February 1759, the merchants of Pondicherry sent their goods to Nagapattinam and Tranquebar for sale. Bhuvanagiri, Chidambaram and Shirkazhi in the South-West of Pondicherry provided cotton cloth, bleached cloth and coarse
sugar to Pondicherry for local consumption as well as for export.

Some imported articles from Europe were sent to Tanjore, where the French tried to sell them to the king of that place competing with the English. Beautiful cotton textiles from Neyveli, Vedaranyam(Thirumaraikkadu), Thirunageswaram, Thiruvaroor, Mailaduthurai(Mayuram), Kumbakonam, Kavoor and Thiruvidaimaruthoor were transported by bullock carts to Pondicherry for sale. Tanjore sent considerable quantities of rice and cloth. Cloths even from Madurai were brought to Pondicherry for sale and export. Merchants of Pondicherry went as far as Ulundurpet, Rachapalayam, Eravasanallur and Vallikondapuram and transported the textiles to Pondicherry by bullock carts. Udaiyarpalayam, Chinnappannayakanpalayam, Chinna Salem and Salem, which were major centres of supply of textiles, sent large quantities of longcloth such as salem guinéa, salempores and chintzs. In 1741, the Company merchants who went to Chinnappannayakanpalayam, purchased cotton textiles and sent them to Pondicherry even though they were rejected by the English. In May 1753, cloths from Salem and Udaiyarpalayam had not been received because after the departure of Muhammad Alikhan from Tiruveti, the Marathas prevented the merchants from dealing in these items.
Tiruvannamalai, Kanchipuram and Arani supplied substantial quantities of cloths such as percale, chintz, silk cloth and long cloth to Pondicherry. Paddy, rice and provisions from Maduranthagam, Chengelpet, Utramellur and Salavakkam were brought by bullock carts. At Alapettai and Arcot, trading houses were set up by Ananda Ranga Pillai. From these centres a major part of textiles, paddy and wheat from Mughal territory was carried by bullock carts and imported merchandise such as broad cloth, copper and liquors from France were sent to these centres for sale. Kakkalupettai and Pennathur supplied paddy. Merchants of Pondicherry fetched chintz, bleached and dyed calico, handkerchiefs including wheat from St.Thome and Madras. They also received textiles, silk cloth and carpets from Sandamangalam, Mysore, Srirangapatanam and Bangalore. Excellent cotton textiles of various kinds such as chintz, white cloth, lungis, unbleached cloth, coarse cloth and handkerchiefs were purchased by the merchants and were taken by bullock carts from Masulipatnam, Yanam and Narsapur for bleaching as well as for export. Handkerchiefs called mouchoirs de paliacate from Pulicat and scarves from Sarvapalli were brought to Pondicherry for export. The imported goods were sent to various centres for local sale as well as for the French
camps. For instance, in February 1756, guns, ammunition and other provisions imported by the Company were sent to the French camp at Tiruvakkarai.

COASTAL TRADE

During the period of this study, the coastal trade of Pondicherry under the active patronage of the French developed considerably as they continuously collected the commercial goods from other port-towns of India. The means of transport were ships of small tonnage, vessels, boats, catamarans, dhonies and frigates, which were engaged for carrying commercial goods in bulk from one port to another. Large ships used to anchor in the sea some kilometers away from the harbour, as they could not come to anchor nearer to seashore because the harbour had shallow water. So the cargoes brought by them to this port were unloaded from them into smaller vessels, boats, dhonies, and catamarans and were brought to the harbour and vice-versa. Thus the coastal vessels took four to five months to sail between the two coasts of Coromandel and Malabar with cargoes and stopped at seven or eight places at least on the way.

However, a large part of this trade was actively carried on by the French trading company, while the native
merchants who owned vessels participated in this trade. The Company's ships plied between Pondicherry and Chandranagore in Bengal touching the ports of Kunimedu, Alambarai, Marakkanam, Kovalam, St.Thome, Madras, Pulicat, Masulipatnam and Yanam on one hand and between this port and Surat through Cuddalore, Porto Novo, Tranquebar, Karaikal, Nagapattinam, Tondi round the cape comrin Mahe and Goa on the other. Chandranagore in Bengal was one of the most important ports frequented by the Company's ships from Pondicherry. It was surrounded by six lodges of Balasore, Patna, Kasimbazaar, Dacca, Jougdia and Chittagong, which were important centres of production of various goods. The Company had its trading counters here. Rice, candles, cowries and cloth called sanas from Balasore; beautiful muslin terrindam of super fine quality, doreas, stinkerques, korchiefs, malmolles from Decca; silk, food grains, wood from Kasimbazaar, saltpetre, opium and cloth from Patna; taffetas, hamans, casses, threads, cloth, towels, common wasins from Jougdia; taffetas, candles, wooden oil, ivory, rice and wood from Chittagong were brought to Chandernagore and shipped from there to Pondicherry. Besides, a large quantity of textiles, saltpetre, wheat, rice, pieces of candles, cowries, silk thread, palmsugar and other Bengal merchandise were shipped to Pondicherry. Imported silver, money and coins and other merchandise of Europe were
sent to Chandranagore. For instance in July 1750, the ship Maurepas was despatched to Chandranagore with four lakhs of rupees to buy cloth to be sent to France. For nearly four or five years this counter was not secure on account of the Maratha invasion of Bengal. Trade was, however, not completely interrupted. There was involvement in this trade Mughal ships, Armenian ships, Portuguese and Dutch ships but operation was often very regular and was of little importance.

On the Andhra coast, Yanam was an important port-town, which depended on Masulipatnam. At Yanam and its vicinity, cotton fabrics of various kinds, fine handkerchiefs, and muslins were produced for trade, for which a lodge was set up in 1723. These textiles were collected from its neighbourhood and brought to Pondicherry through ships for washing. It is said that in normal times, the lodge could supply usually three to four hundred bales of goods; but in 1727, this trade was sea defective. Although Yanam itself was less important than Masulipatnam, trade was more prosperous there. In fact, the volume of trade was three fold in 1744, and the Company ordered Chosy, the chief of this factory, to collect 800 bales of goods and sent 15,000 rupees in addition to 7900 pagodas which the merchants had to pay the Company. Some times trade was
often hindered because of war with the British and also with the ruling local chieftains, who extracted very often certain amount in the form of donation. It is said that in 1747, because of the frequent quarrels between the Nawabs of Chicacole and Rajamundry, trade was stopped for some time. After that, trade was carried on regularly.

Masulipatanam was another important port with which the French had trade. It was a famous centre for handkerchiefs, muslins and cotton textiles. Here the Company had its trading lodge. Merchandise of Europe, silver and gold coins were sent to this place to buy textiles. In 1727, the Superior Council sent 9000 pagodas to Masulipatanam for investment in textile trade and gave order to the chief of that factory to buy 90 bales of guinea cloth and one bale of kerchiefs. The Company's ships plied between this port and Pondicherry. In 1729, though the whole coastal area was disturbed by political quarrels from Pulicat(Paliacate) the ship St.Joseph touched Masulipatanam and brought 60 bales of goods and various provisions to Pondicherry. Trade was in fact often hindered for some time by the Governor of the region. In 1744, when the Superior Council asked Boeyelleau, the Chief of the factory, to send goods worth 1,50,000 pagodas, he hardly found half of it on account of hindrance created by
the local chieftains and he had not shown much interest to increase trade there. The Company's ship, Le Dauplin, while coming from Mergui took 500 bales of goods of Narsapur and Masulipatanam to Pondicherry in January 1752. In 1758, Denis, chief of the factory, sent the ship, Favori from Masulipatanam to Pondicherry with a large quantity of wheat and other provisions, while the other ship L'Experne was loaded with all kinds of provisions for Pondicherry for local consumption. Excellent cotton fabrics of various kinds such as chintzs, white cloth, lungis, unbleached cloths, coarse cloth and handkerchiefs were shipped annually to Pondicherry for bleaching as well as for export.

Though Pulicat was not a big port, it attracted the French merchants and Company's ships. While the Company's ships coming from Bengal loaded at Pulicat handkerchiefs called mouchirs de paliacate locally available and scarfs collected from Survapalli and sent them to Pondicherry. Madras was one of the important port-towns as well as trading centres from where the French collected some of their requirements. At Madras and its neighbourhood, chintz, handkerchiefs and cotton fabrics were manufactured and so the French made several attacks on Madras and captured it on 21st of September 1746. It remained under the French domination upto 1st of September.
1749. About 500 bales of imported broad cloth for local consumption and cotton textiles produced in that area for export were loaded from Madras in October 1740 on the Company's ships sailing towards Pondicherry.

St. Thome was another important port-town on the east coast. This port attracted the French too. Excellent cotton textiles, plain cloth, calico bleached, dyed, chintz and striped cotton cloth were produced there. Because of its demand in Malacca, Siamese, Cambodian and Burmese markets, the Company's ships carried these textiles in large quantities to Pondicherry. The Company's merchants who had been trading at St. Thome transported cotton fabrics of various sorts to St. Thome from Pondicherry and stored them for export to overseas markets. Marakkanam was a small port frequented by the native merchants. In order to supply to the lime industry, sea shells, which were available in the beach near Marakkanam and salt produced in that place for local consumption were brought by boats to Pondicherry, while the native merchants were engaging their coastal vessels to carry salt between Marakkanam and Porto Novo and touching Pondicherry enroute.

Alambarai was another small port. Sea shells and salt available here were transported through the vessels to
Pondicherry for local consumption only. In January 1746, the Company's ship by name *Marie Gertrude* under a false name of Khizr Mir Ahmad flying a Muhammadan flag carried salt from Alambarai to Pondicherry. Though Kunimedu was not a great port, it often attracted the Company's vessels. From here cotton fabrics of various sorts produced for the Company and rice collected from interior places were frequently carried by the Company's vessels to Pondicherry.

South of Pondicherry, Cuddalore was a port-town famous for its textiles and indigo. The cotton fabrics such as calicoes, ordinary basins, coarse blue cloth produced in and around Cuddalore attracted the French to trade with that port, where the English had their factory. Masula boats often carried arecanut, coarse blue cloth, basins, indigo, rice, arrack of Goa and European liquor from this port to Pondicherry. Private merchants were engaged chiefly in carrying goods from this port to Pondicherry for their private trade. In June 1750, the dubashy of M. Croke shipped coarse blue cloth, chintz and lampasses which were collected from Fort St. David for Pondicherry for sale. The other port with which trade was carried on was Porto Novo where the Company had its trading lodge and engaged the weavers to produce textiles for export under the supervision

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of Ananda Ranga Pillai. From this port, cotton textiles such as stuff cotton and blue piece goods in large quantities and arrack of Goa brought to this port were taken by the Company's ships to Pondicherry the former for export and latter for local consumption.

The Superior Council requested M. Lenoir and Pattelin, the Company's merchants at Porto Novo in September 1739 to send 300 cattys of imported camphor of two different arieties to be sent to China. Commodities were shipped at Pondicherry to Porto Novo. In August 1739, the ship Duc d'Orlians was loaded with twenty five boxes of opium at Pondicherry and left for Porto Novo from where she sailed to Achin. In the same month of that year, thirty two boxes of opium were loaded on the ship Cantorvery and sent to Porto Novo from where it was to be transhipped on board the ship Duc d'Orlians.

Kaveripumpattinam was a small port-town with which the French had trade relations. In July 1688, François Martin obtained this port from the Nayak of Tanjore, becuase a lot of rice was produced in its vicinity. From this port rice was shipped to Pondicherry for local consumption.

Tranquebar was another port-town frequented by the French. It was famous for its silk and gold thread, red cotton yarn and handkerchiefs. These items and rice including wheat

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were sent by the French merchants from Tranquebar to Pondicherry through boats and dhonies. Karaikal was a great port-town brought under the French. Rice and textile produced at Karaikal and its neighbouring villages, Tirumalarayanpattinam Kelaiyur, Melaiyur, Kovilpattu and Pududurai made the French ships frequent this port. It was bought from the king of Tanjore in 1738 and a counter was set up here to draw grains during the famines in the French colony. Textiles produced for the Company and rice were loaded on the vessels sailing towards Pondicherry. Trade in this port was affected from 1744 to 1748 on account of war with the king of Tanjore who wanted a large sum from the French. In 1747, when he received 2,000 pagodas from the French, the ban was lifted. Textiles such as salempores, tarnatanes, guinéa, guingham, table cloth, towels and scarfs (handkerchiefs) supplied by the local merchants at this counter were shipped to Pondicherry for export. At the time of disturbance and famine in Pondicherry in April 1750, six grase of paddy was transported to Pondicherry through the vessels for local consumption.

Nagapattinam was another great port town where cotton textiles of excellent quality in different colours were manufactured. The French advanced money to their merchants to buy cloths from this port for overseas
markets. Imported teak wood from Pegu, rice from the fertile area of Tanjore and wheat including textiles were sent by the French merchants to Pondicherry from this port through boats and dhonies. Tondi or Sundarapandiyanpanatanam was a small port further in the south. Textiles produced in Madurai and Tirunelveli were made available in this port. So the French established their trading counter here. Cotton textiles of various sorts collected from Madurai and Tirunelveli were loaded on the Company's ships, while coming towards Pondicherry.

On the Malabar coast Mahe was an important port under the French. In order to purchase pepper from Malabar, the French founded their factory in 1721 on the request made by the local ruler, Bayanor. The Superior Council at Pondicherry was never very keen on Mahe. The Council had estimated that the cost of establishment and administration of Mahe could never be covered by the profit from the sale of pepper in Europe. However, trade in this port was hindered in 1724, when Bayanor drove the French away from this port at the instigation of the English. When in 1725, it was captured by the French, trade began to prosper. In 1727, the Superior Council had to buy pepper worth 3,11,000 pounds at the rate of 24 pagodas and a 1/2 per pound for which the Superior Council had taken 8,000 pagodas as loan
from the individual merchants. At the time of war against the British, trade was not stopped because the two chiefs of Mahe and Tellichery neutralised it in 1744. It is said that the country yielded annually 1,500 to 1,600 candies of pepper but only 500 to 600 candies could be realised. From Pondicherry cotton textiles were shipped to Mahe for sale.

Goa was also visited by the French. The Company's ships while coming from France and Surat carried arrack and rum from Goa to Pondicherry. Surat was a famous port-town on the western coast of Gujarat, which attracted all European nations to trade with that port. The French at first founded a factory there in 1688. The Company's ships while coming from France brought some sundry goods of Gujarat from Surat to Pondicherry. For a long time the French Company had been keeping one or two employees to protect the commerce of the individuals there.

For the development of coastal trade, the French utilised hired ships as well. Without hesitation, they took ships for transporting the commodities from other coastal ports to this port. In November 1746, the Company's ship Neptune loaded 1500 bales of cloth at Madras besides having about 2500 bales of cloth on board. While this ship was
sailing towards Pondicherry, 1500 bales of cloth were damaged because of heavy rains and violent storm blown from the sea. For instance in March 1747, the French engaged a Portuguese ship to bring the commodities from Chandranagore which brought Company's goods such as rice, silk thread and other Bengal merchandise to Pondicherry. It may be noted that this trade was hindered for some time and goods were damaged while bringing by ships on account of natural calamity and inconvenience occurred in the sea. At the time of enemies' attacks on the coast line, this trade was hindered for some time. It is reported that in 1752, the vessels engaged in coastal trade, while bringing provisions to Pondicherry were prevented by Nizam-ul-Doula Bahadur Nazir Jang who was the enemy of the French. A similar incident occurred in 1761 when the English attacked and captured Pondicherry. Hence, the vessels were well equipped to make counter attacks against the enemies. In spite of having such obstacles, the French developed the coastal trade in Pondicherry and subsequently dominated the coastline.

They were so powerful that even the native merchants had to obtain the passes from the Governor to fit out their vessels and to safeguard them from the enemies' attacks. These passes were issued by the Governor with his
similar to those issued by the Portuguese known as cartaz which could be renewed by the merchants. It is said that in August 1748, two Pathan merchants by name Mamrezkhan and Azmatkhan took passes for one year. On the expiry of those passes they requested Ananda Ranga Pillai to get passes from the Governor who ordered Bayelleu to renew the old passes.

It may be concluded that internal trade of Pondicherry was enhanced on account of the French to a large extent. The daily and weekly markets, fairs and camp fairs catered to the increasing demand generated in the French colony of Pondicherry. Commodities brought from France as well as other parts of India were included in the local trade of Pondicherry. A number of centres of production especially textile producing areas of the hinterland were closely connected with Pondicherry through land routes. Areas like Bangalore, Salem, Dharmapuri and Karaikal were the centres from where Pondicherry received some of the commodities for export. Similarly, the coastal trade centred on Pondicherry was also remarkable. The important ports on the western coast such as Surat, Goa and Mahe besides some ports in the eastern coasts of India like Calcutta, Narasapore, Masulipatanam, Pulicat, Madras, Marakkanam, Kunimedu, Porto Novo and Nagapattinam were inter
linked with Pondicherry. Thus it may be said that the French presence at Pondicherry brought a number of centres of internal trade and ports directly in contact with Pondicherry contributing towards the development of local merchants. The overflow of overland on coastal trade could have definitely had impact also on the long distance trade at Pondicherry. We shall discuss the operation of international trade during the eighteenth century in the next chapter.
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