Chapter III

AREA OF STUDY
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The district of Tiruchirappalli called by the British as 'Trichinopoly' (anglicised version, and popularly known as Tiruchi, will complete two centuries of its existence by 2000 AD as an administrative unit since the district was carved out in 1801 and controlled by the East India Company administration, after it obtained the portion of the country from the then ruling Nawabs of Arcot.

Tiruchirappalli district was named after the Tiruchirappali town, where the headquarters of the district has been located since the formation of the district.

LOCATION, BOUNDARIES AND AREA;

Tiruchirappalli is an inland district located centrally in the State of Tamil Nadu. The district lies between 10° 16' and 11° 32' Northern Latitude and 77° 45' and 79° 30' Eastern Latitude.

Tiruchirappalli is surrounded by the districts of Cuddalur, Thanjavur, Pudukkotai, Madurai and Salem in the clockwise direction. The district is bounded in the north by Salem and Cuddalur districts, in the north west by Salem district, in the north east by Cuddalur district, in the east and south east by Thanjavur and Pudukottai districts, in the south by Pudukkottai, Madurai and Dindigul districts and in the west by Periyar district.

With the formation of the Pudukkottai district it has lost coastal lines and hence has become a landlocked district. The total area of the district is 11127.82 sq.km.

Information source for this chapter - The District Gazetteer 1 & 11, Tiruchirappalli District (1998), and the District Statistics Office.
POPULATION AND LITERACY:

According to the 1991 Census, total population of the district is 41,38,048 of which 20,85,811 are males and 20,52,237 are females. The density of population is 371 per sq.km. The Census figures show that the district is the fourth biggest in the state in respect of population. The population of the district constitutes 7.41 per cent of the total population of the state.

* Out of a total literate population of 13,15,484, about 7,66,744 are males and 5,48,740 females. Educating the population, are one university, 15 Arts & Science colleges, 4 Engineering and Technical Institutes, one Agricultural college, one law college and 1749 schools.

ADMINISTRATIVE DIVISIONS AND LOCAL BODIES:

For general and revenue administration, the district has been divided into revenue divisions and taluks. There are two revenue divisions with headquarters at Tiruchirappalli and Musiri and eight taluks. The taluks in turn are divided into zones, (consisting of two or more firkas) firkas and villages. There are 507 revenue villages which constitute 85 firkas. Like the divisions for the general and revenue administration, the various departments of the state and central governments such as Rural Development, Education, Public Works Department, Police, Judicial, Agriculture, Employment and Training, Forests, Fisheries, Animal Husbandry, Social Welfare, Adidravidar and Tribal Welfare, Geology and Minings, Tamil Development, Post and Telegraph, Customs Central Excise, Income Tax, Archives Archaeology and other departments have their regional headquarters/divisions/districts (departmental) in the revenue district to suit their administrative convenience.

The district holds one corporation, 2 Municipalities, 14 Panchayat union, 18 'own Panchayats and 407 village panchayats.
NATURAL DIVISIONS AND WATER RESOURCES:

The north eastern part of the district is occupied by the Cauvery alluvium. Hills and rocks are found in the north western and south western parts of the district with their elevation ranging from 15' and 260'. The area between Timchirappalli and Ariyalur is an area of active erosion and presents a bad land topography. Musiri taluk forms a gentle undulating up-land area. The Kulithalai taluk is broken by isolated hillocks. The taluks of Udayarpalayam and Lalgudi are fairly flat. The general character of the district is an undulating plain divided east and west by the river Cauvery and dotted here and there with small hills.

The district is one of the privileged few to have the river Cauvery, one of the biggest rivers in South India and its main branch the Coleroon to traverse through its land. The other important rivers flowing in the district are the Amaravathi, the Aiyar, the Karuvattar, the Mamundiar, the Nadiyar, the Uyyakondan Channel, the Noyyal and the Vellar.

River Cauvery rises in the Western Ghats near Mercara in Coorg, in the State of Karnataka. It is held in high esteem by the people of Tamil Nadu as nature's precious boon. The beautiful orchards that live up to its banks, the fertile lands in its basin which yield good harvest have all been versified by the bards of this land. Over centuries the people in the Cauvery Valley have been enjoying its bounty.

The ground water potential in the district is extracted by 49890 electricity energised wells, 23807 wells fitted with diesel pumpsets, 52131 wells with bullock nulling system, 121 medium and deep tube wells and 10330 shallow tube wells.

MINERAL RESOURCES:

The district is fairly rich in mineral resources. Deposits of crystalline limestone occur in Kulithalai taluk. A total reserve of 15.5 millions tonnes of cement made limestone is estimated to be available from this region. Gypsum occurs as
veins in association with clay beds. Magnesite mainly used in the manufacture of refractory bricks occurs around Velasiramani village in Musiri taluk (reserve 5,000 tonnes) and around Venneripatti near Thathayiengarpettai.

Precious and semi-precious varieties of corundum, aquamarine, cordierite, tourmaline are found sporadically in Kadavoor and in Kulithali taluk. Similarly garnet, amethyst quartz beryl and feldspar (moonstone, anazanstone) are also reported to occur in the areas around Uppidamangalam and Vellianai near Karur and are being used as semi-precious stones. The occurrences are mostly local in nature and the stones are collected occasionally from the surface.

FORESTS:

The total area of the forests in the district is 785.24 sq.km. It works out to 7.7 per cent to the total area of the district (11127.82 sq.km). Tiruchirappalli district covers only 1.83 per cent of the total Forest and the state. Three kinds of forests, on the basis of increasing altitude, are recognised:-(i) Scrub Jungles (ii) Deciduous Forests (iii) Dry Evergreen Forests. Most of the plateau, however, is largely denuded (now either under cultivation or overrun by weeds).

RAINFALL:

The average annual rainfall in the district is 844.9 mm. After February temperatures steadily increase till May, which is the hottest month with the mean daily maximum temperature at 37.1°C and the mean daily minimum at 26.4°C.

POWER:

Tiruchirappalli district depends on the Tiruchirappalli Electricity Distribution Circle (Nordi & South) supply, which is fed by the State grid. There are no thermal or hydroelectric power stations in the district.
THE PEOPLE:

Of the total population, about 90 per cent are Hindus by religion, four per cent are Muslims and five per cent are Christians and the rest are less than one per cent. More than half the Christians and nearly a third of the Muslim live in Tiruchirappalli taluk.

Table 3.1

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COMMUNITIES IN THE DISTRICT

The predominant communities in the district may be classified into (i) Agricultural Communities; (ii) Trading Communities; (iii) Weaving Communities; (iv) Servicing Communities and Village Artisan and (v) Other Communities.

(I) AGRICULTURAL COMMUNITIES:

The agricultural communities, which are the dominating communities, are found in almost all taluks of the district. The major communities in this category of people are (1) The Ambalakarars 2) The Kallars 3) The Karkatha'Vellalars 4) The Kongu Vellalars 5) The Muthiraiyars 6) The Reddiars 7) The Udaiyars 8) Uralis and 9) The Vanniars. The Thottians or Kambalathars, the Kurumbas, the Maravas, the
Vettuvans, the Cholia Vellalas and the Kamma Naidus also contribute their might to this profession though they are small in number.

(II) TRADING COMMUNITIES:

Under the Trade Communities fall the Telugu Chettiers, the Komutti Chettairs (Arya Vysias) and the Labbais.

(III) WEAVING COMMUNITIES:

The Sengunthers, the Saliyars and the Sowrashtras are predominant weaving communities that exist in the district. The Sengunthers are also known as Kaikolars. The suffix the title Mudialiar to their name. These people are the indigenous weavers of Tamil Nadu. They weave dhotis and sarees. It is said that they are not skilled in weaving finer cloth like the Devangas or the Sowrashtras.

AGRICULTURE AND IRRIGATION:

Tiruchirappalli districts is one of the prime rice producing districts in the state. Cauvery belt area and other areas have wet, garden and rained cultivation noted for its traditional agriculture. It has a wide coverage of agricultural and horticultural crops.

In its, 40843 hectares of irrigated lands, it produces about 8.23 tonnes of grains and oil seeds every year.

POSTAL AND TELECOMMUNICATION SYSTEMS:

The Tiruchirappalli Postal Division is one of the oldest divisions in the entire Tamil Nadu circle. At present, the entire Tiruchirappalli district is served by the post offices under the administrative jurisdiction of Srirangam and Tiruchirapalli Postal Divisions. There are in total six head offices, 226 sub-offices and 867 branch offices
to cater to the needs of the people of the district. The district has 33,568 working telephone connections of which 29,523 avail ISD / STD facility.

The district is served by a central Telegraph office, Tiruchirapalli and four District Telegraph Offices. A hot line circuit between CTO Tiruchirapalli and USA offers collect call facilities to the public.

TRANSPORT:

The district is well served by the main line of the Southern Railways a branch of which runs from Tiruchirapalli to Erode. While the former is a metre gauge line, the latter is a broad gauge line, running to a length of 105 kms and 219 kms respectively. There are totally 36 Railway stations in the district. 

The district is well connected by 104 kms of National Highway, 740 Ions of state highways, 307 kms of Corporation and Municipality roads, 12,820 kms of Panchayat and Panchayat union roads.

Tiruchirapalli has got a airport handling both passengers and cargos. It is equipped with a runway, taxiway and apron, and required navigational and communication facilities to handle aircraft up to the type of Boeing 737. At present, this airport is connected by air with Chennai, Madurai and Colombo. Weekly six flights are operated on route Colombo-Tiruchirapalli - Colombo.

INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT IN THE DISTRICT:

The only major industrial unit set up in the district during the British period was the Southern Railway Workshop at Golden Rock, which is more than six decades old. This Mechanical Railway Workshop adjudged as the best railway workshop of the Indian Railways by the World Bank, with whose aid the work has been totally modernised, is catering to the periodical overhauling of the diesel
locomotives. Tiruchirappalli once the headquarters of the South Railways is now the headquarters of the divisional railway.

But a major thrust to industrialisation was inaugurated with the establishment of the giant Bharat Heavy Electricals Limited popularly known as BHEL in the year 1965, which has today emerged as a model public sector undertaking in the country. Tiruchirappalli can be proud of the achievements of BHEL and its significance could be appreciated from the fact that this factory, which was established with an achievement of about Rs.25 crores, is today having an annual turnover crossing Rs. 1400 crores. The setting up of this factory has also led to the growth of scores of ancillaries in and around Tiruchirappalli. Today, BHEL and its ancillaries provide employment to over 22,000 persons in the district.

AGRO BASED INDUSTRIES:

Sugar mills at Petaivaitlialai, Pugalur, Kattur and Perambalur, the roller flour mill at Tiruchirappalli, two rice bran oil extraction units and one Vanaspathi manufacturing units are some of the notable agro based industries in the large scale sector. A number of modern rice mill private sector in and around Manachanallur area of Lalgudi taluk and a modern rice mill in Tiruchirappalli owned by Tamil Nadu Civil Supplies Corporation (TNCSC) are also worth mentioning. A sizeable quantum of paddy procured in Thanjavur, in both the seasons and also paddy procured in this district, are hulled only in these rice mills and the rice so hulled, distributed to general public, under public distribution system.
PAPER INDUSTRY:

The Tamil Nadu News Print and Papers Ltd. at Pugalur is a pioneer industry in India with a capital outlay of Rs.206 crores engaged in the manufacture of news prints and writing paper using bagassee, a by-product of sugar mills.

TEXTILE BASED INDUSTRIES:

Thiageswar Alai at Manapparai, Sri Uma Parameswari Spinning Mills, Ramjeenagar, Sri Sabari Mills at K.Sathanur are the important textile mills in the district.

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA UNDERTAKINGS:-

This district is proud of having M/s Bharat Heavy Electricals Ltd., and Seamless Steel Tube Plant at Tируverambur, Ordinance Factory, Small Arms Project, Suriyur, Southern Railway Central Workshop at Golden rock, all fully owned Government of India concerns. These should take credit for the development of a large number of ancillary units in and around Tируchirappalli.

Besides these public sector units, there are a good number of engineering units in the private sector such as Kaveri Engineering Industries Limited, Senthannerpuram, Jothi Malleables, Thuvakudi, Simco Meters Limited, Tируchirappalli, Tируchy Steel Tolling Mills and A.K.M. Cylinders (P) Ltd., Musiri. The other important large-scale industries are M/s. Tируchi Distilleries and Chemicals Ltd., Tируchirappalli and Tamil Nadu Asbestos Pipes Ltd., Mayanur. In all, 32 large and medium scale Industries are functioning in Tируchirappalli district with an invested capital of 53,505 lakhs, providing employment to 38,302 persons.

SUGAR INDUSTRY:

Irrigation facilities through tributaries of Cauvery, L.B.P. canal and Amaravathi river are conducive factors for sugar cane cultivation in Tируchirappalli
district. A good network of road and rail transportation is helpful for movement of raw materials to the factory and the finished products to various destinations.

Sugarcane being grown as a major commercial crop, sugar industry occupies an important place in the rural economy of the district. There are two sugar mills in the district. Viz., Cauvery Sugar Mills at Pettaivaythalai, and Kothari Sugar Mills at Kattur.

In order to promote the development of SSI, The Tamil Nadu Small Industries Development Corporation has constructed 5 sheds at Thuvakudi and 4 sheds at Ariyamangalam during 1990-91, allotted to entrepreneurs. Besides, the following tiny sector industrial complexes are available in the rural areas of this district as on today: Thuvakudi-29 sheds, Musiri-10 sheds, Thathiengarpet -15 sheds, Padalur-10 sheds

An industrial estate exclusively for the development of Electrical and Electronics Industries was started at Thuvakudi in the year 1976. There is also one electronic testing and development centre functioning in the estate which provides common facility for quality testing of electronic products manufactured by the units in the estate as well as from outside.

SUBSIDIES:

In order to accelerate rapid industrial development in the industrially most backward and backward areas in the State, the Government of Tamil Nadu have announced packages of concessions and incentives. The Government has declared certain taluks in the districts as industrially most backward and backward and the new small-scale industrial units started in these area are given State Capital Investment Subsidy.
Under this scheme, new small scale industrial units are eligible for state capital investment subsidy of 15 per cent on total capital investment made on land, building, and machinery, subject to a maximum of Rs.15 lakh.

Small-scale industrial units, which have secured financial assistance from Tamil Nadu Industrial Investment Corporation limited, can avail of the subsidy assistance from Tamil Nadu Industrial Investment Corporation. The small-scale industrial units which have obtained financial assistance from other financial institutions / banks or which have started industries with their own investment, can avail subsidy assistance from the District Industries Centre.

Special Capital Subsidy is sanctioned and disbursed by the District Industries Centre.

New Small Scale Industrial units utilising low tension power in Tariff-IV are eligible for power tariff subsidy, for the first three years - 30 per cent, 20 per cent and 10 per cent of electricity charges paid during the first, second and third year respectively. New Small Scale Industrial units started after 20th January 1992, are eligible for subsidy at the rate of 40 per cent, 30 per cent and 20 per cent of electricity charges paid in the first, second and third year respectively.

Small Scale Industrial units consuming LT/HT power are eligible for generator subsidy of 15 per cent of the value of generator purchased subject to a maximum of Rs.5 lakhs.

Government of Tamil Nadu has granted certain concessions of sales tax deferral / waiver to new small-scale industrial units, started in industrially most backward taluks.