CHAPTER – V

PEOPLE AND ROADS IN TAMIL NADU

Transportation is the means of travel or of moving goods from one place to another. It not only takes people where they need or want to go but also brings them the goods they need or want. Without transportation, there could be no trade and without trade, there could be no towns and cities. Towns and cities are traditionally the centres of civilization. Obviously, transportation is the life-blood of civilization and, it constitutes an important item of infrastructure for socio-economic and cultural growth. It projects the standard of living of a particular place at a given point of time. ¹ Therefore, the history of transportation is inextricably interlinked with history of mankind. It is a story of man's courage and ingenuity in overcoming obstacles to conquer the land, the seas and the air. For thousands of years, people knew very little of the world in which they lived. Mountains, deserts, jungles, oceans and frozen expanses of land made travel difficult. As travel was slow and uncertain, most of the people were isolated from each other. ²

². Ibid.
In early times man being a hunter or a food gatherer and was forced to move from place to place in search of food and shelter. For centuries, he travelled no farther than he could go on foot and moved only with those goods he could be carried on his back.\textsuperscript{3} When the earliest man established a permanent settlement and could cultivate the land, he realized the importance of agriculture. The development of brisk, safe and economical transportation enabled them to transform the world. By carrying the raw materials and finished goods of commerce and industry to world market, transportation makes food, clothing and other necessities of life readily available to the people who required it. By bringing distant people into contact with one another, transportation helps to spread ideas and culture and to foster international understanding and cooperation too.\textsuperscript{4} Until the development of telegraph, telephone, wireless, television and such other scientific inventions in the 19\textsuperscript{th} and 20\textsuperscript{th} centuries, transportation was the only means of conveying information over great distances.\textsuperscript{5} In ancient times civilizations flourished on river valleys and many developments took place in the river valley settings. It is natural that there was significant development in water transport, which also had

\textsuperscript{3} Academic America Encyclopedia, Vol. 19, Chicago, 1994, P. 278.
\textsuperscript{4} The New Book of Knowledge, Vol. 18, Danbury, 1994, P. 281
\textsuperscript{5} Global Encyclopedia, Vol. 19, Alexandria, 1993, P. 325
taken place early in human history. No doubt, the first watercraft, bundles of papyrus rushes made into a simple raft or canoe served well in Egypt, where there were few native woods for boats, while dug-out canoe and wicker baskets covered with hides were used on the river valleys.\(^6\)

People discovered that travelling on water was faster and easier than travelling on land and it seems that a floating log may have served as the first boat. It was later found that heavier loads could be carried on rafts made by lashing several logs together. In the Middle East, rafts were kept afloat by sheepskin and goatskin filled with air. Wherever people could find large trees, the hollowed out logs with fire or a chisel and made long, narrow boats called dugout canoes. These boats were propelled with long poles and later with paddles as oars. An important discovery was made when it was found that the wind could be harnessed and used as power to drive boats. Different materials, such as grass mats, animal hides, or cloth, served as sails in different countries.

In pre-historic times, when people wanted to go from one place to another they had to walk. When they had a heavy load to move, they carried it.\(^7\) But, some imaginative man realized that both man and animal could be made more efficient in transport if the loads were transferred

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\(^7\) Leon L. Baram, \textit{Funk and Wagnall’s New Encyclopedia}, Vol. 25, 1876, p. 281.
from the burden bearer to a carrier or drawn vehicle. No doubt, the earliest form of such a carrier was the sledge, the first of the wheel-less vehicles. Those of bark or hide were useful only for light work, but others made of boughs of trees were quite adequate for dragging light loads over grass marsh or snow. But, the true sledge appeared when an inventive individual saw the advantage of adding carefully shaped runners to slide smoothly over the ground.  

The next development in the ancient form of transportation was the litter, which may be used as the first vehicle designed to carry people. Usually, litters were made by stretching animal skins across two poles.

For many centuries even the invention of the wheel had little effect on transportation, because of the absence of roads. It is believed that the Sumerians, who lived in Western Asia about 3000 B.C, seem to have been the first people to use the wheel, as a great step forward in transport. The earliest wheels were probably made of three wide planks held together by cross pieces, with a hole in the center for the axle. In some places, a solid disk cut from a log was used. With the introduction of the wheel, a revolution in land transport occurred. Carts and Wagons (with wheels first of solid and later of spooked construction)

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were used as *hearses* at royal funerals, as engine clumsy two-and four-wheeled vehicles never were popular because good roads were seldom available. One of the major exceptions was the development of the war chariot an adaptation of the spooked wheel and delicately balanced two-wheeled vehicle. So long as there were no wheeled vehicles, roads with prepared surfaces were not needed. Paths and tracks first made by wild animals and later by domesticated cattle were always available and were put to use.\(^{11}\)

Earliest man, confronted by a hostile environment and he was forced to move from place to place in a never-ending journey in search of food. Quite logically, he took with him only those parcels of his personal property that he (and most of all, his woman) could carry. However, in course of time he learned that many animals could be domesticated and used not only for food, milk and hides but also as beasts of burden and draft. Perhaps, the oldest draft animals were the asses, elephant, camel, horses, ponies, mules and bullocks. Subsequently, some of them were also used to draw carts.\(^{12}\)

Elephants were mostly used to transport heavy and bulky commodities like timber from dense forests, where no other means of

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transport was possible. Though they are expensive, they are valuable for the work they turn over as well as their ivory, skin and bones got when they die.\textsuperscript{13} Nowadays, we see elephants being used to transport huge logs of wood in hilly regions and in dense forests besides in the timber depots. Camel, the next important animal was used for transportation in the desert region. It carries the commodities from one place to another very easily. Still, camel is used mostly in North India as a vehicle for transport and is quite valuable in desert areas.\textsuperscript{14} Besides camel, donkey was another important animal mostly used for carrying goods from one place to another. It carries many types of commodities including sand, bricks, provisions and timber. Even now, donkeys are mainly used by washer men\textsuperscript{15} to carry the dirty clothes to the rivers and to bring back the washed clothes to their homes or shops. Even today, in Kerala one could see that, merchants use the donkeys to carry goods to the top of the hills especially to the place where the Ayyappa temple is situated. Still, in many places donkeys are serving as vehicle to carry goods.

\textsuperscript{14} Ramanathan R., \textit{Indian Transport Towards the New Millennium Performance, Analysis and Policy}, New Delhi, 2004, p. 20
\textsuperscript{15} It can be noted that even today donkeys are used to transport goods on hilly regions where automobiles cannot ply. Washer men in certain location used donkeys to carry loads.
The symbol of the antiquity in road transport in India is the bullock cart, which is even today the main means of transport in the villages in India. Considering the volume of goods it carries, it is as important as the railway in land transport, though the two are by no means competitive and comparable.\textsuperscript{16} The bullock cart as we know is essentially a slow, short-haul carrier of the rural areas and is a feeder and distributor to the railways. In spite of the rapid mechanization of the transport system, the bullock cart has definitely retained its place even in the modern days. Therefore, it cannot be ousted for many years to come, because the average rural roads in India would not accommodate any means of transport other than the bullock carts. The design of the bullock cart is simple and that it is made and maintained locally by using simple mechanism to suit the local environment.\textsuperscript{17} Other than bullocks, horse is yet another important animal domesticated for transport of goods. Horse carts exist mostly in town side, as they need good roads. The most revolutionary innovation, however, was the development of an efficient method of harnessing a horse to a vehicle. In the 5\textsuperscript{th} century A.D, the Chinese devised a collar that placed the stress on the horse's chest muscles rather than the neck muscles. The animal was then able to exert

\textsuperscript{16} Transport in India, Publication Division Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Delhi, 1967, p. 15
\textsuperscript{17} Role of Bullock carts and Trucks in Rural Transport – Case Studies, Planning Commission, Government of India, Delhi, 1963, p. 3.
its full strength and to pull comfortably. This collar harness was not widely adopted in the 10\textsuperscript{1} century A.D. However, about the same time, horseback riding was facilitated by the introduction of iron horseshoes and the general use of stirrups.\textsuperscript{18} Thus, the job of pulling heavy loads tells to the more solidly built oxen, which were strong but slow. With the improved horse collar, the horse could pull heavy loads without being choked. In addition, the new shoes protected the horse's hooves, enabling it to travel faster and longer distances.\textsuperscript{19} These two inventions greatly speeded up transportation on land.

In course of time, the mounting population facing the multiplicity of demands and requirements felt that the means of transport through animals is slow and its carrying capacity is limited though it is cheap, as it has no fuel or maintenance costs like the mechanized transport. Most animals eat natural vegetation and hence the owner incurs negligible expenses in buying them fodder. Moreover, they felt that transport through animals is also a flexible service. Since it is available at all hours of the day, it takes any route and needs no prepared track. However, it is regrettable facts that pack animals have been neglected in recent years in economic planning.

\textsuperscript{18} \textit{The New Book of Knowledge, op. cit.}, p. 282.
\textsuperscript{19} \textit{New Standard Encyclopedia, op. cit.}, p. 364.
Towards the end of the middle ages, trade and commerce increased, bringing about the need for better roads and improved vehicles. Consequently, there was a great increase in horse-drawn transport and horseback riding. Later stronger, lighter and more efficient vehicles were produced during the 19th century. Carriages, stagecoaches, horse-cars, and covered wagons were developed. At this juncture the coach was invented in Hungary in the 1400's, which enabled groups of people to travel together. It was a closed carriage supported by leather straps among the four wheels. The strap acted as springs to make the ride more comfortable. The driver sat away from the passengers in an elevated seat at the front of the coach. The advancement of the coach was the stagecoach. It travelled in a regular route, stopping at set points or stage, to change horses and allow passengers to eat and to take rest. Usually, these were mostly used by kings, royal personnel and other rich people.

Stage coaches were used in the American colonies about A.D 1756 with the setting up of a stagecoach service between Philadelphia and New York. A good percentage of people used to travel from one place to another through the stagecoaches. In the early stage, people travelled freely, but in a very short time, the owner collected fares from the

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travellers. Subsequently, the Conestoga wagon, which was first built in Lancaster County, began to be used in Pennsylvania by about A.D 1750. It was considered the most dependable freight carrier until the road-rail began to see the light of the day. The body of the Conestoga wagon was designed with an upward slope at each end to keep the cargo from spilling out when the wagon travelled uphill or downhill. A large canvas cover over a hoop frame protected the passengers and their goods from the rain and the scorching heat of the sun. The wagon was drawn by two to six horses or mules and could hold from 2 to 4 tons of cargo. 

In spite of various developments in the field of the transport system, human porterage continued to be fairly significant in our country. Human porters carried goods wherever no alternative transport is available in the city lanes, hill tracks or at other places. In recent years, there has been an increase in the number of persons who have adopted porterage as a means of livelihood due to the large degree of unemployment and poverty in the country. Still recently, porterage and rickshaw pulling are the main means of livelihood to migrants in the city from villages affected by droughts and unemployment. They also used handcrafts for the purposes which are sometimes licensed by local bodies.

The porter age depends normally on the load, the hour of the day, the
distance and the state of competition particularly from other porters and
the paying capacity of the person requiring the service and was
determined by bargaining between him and the porter. Some porters like
railway coolies have organized themselves effectively to prevent
underpayment and unhealthy competition. Moreover, they have their
porterage rates fixed by the authorities.\textsuperscript{25}

Chariot was also one of the transport vehicles in ancient times. A
chariot was a fast, open, two-or four wheeled vehicle pulled by horses. It
was also used for warfare, hunting, processions and racing in ancient
times. It was built in Mesopotamia as early as 3000 BC. This vehicle
spread to Egypt, Greece and Rome eventually even to Britain. The
Chariot was important as an instrument of war, as also a racing one. In
ancient Tamil Nadu, one of the important organs of war was chariots. It
was mainly used as a vehicle by the kings and other members of the royal
house. Now, the chariots of a large size are available in Hindu temples
and Catholic Churches. However, nowadays, chariots are not used for the
purpose of transport.

\textsuperscript{25} Ramaswami Reddy, K.S., “Report on Road Research”, \textit{Madras Information},
Another significant development in the transport system is the use of the rickshaw and the cycle-rickshaw propelled by human labour, which are two main passenger-transports available in towns and cities even at present. The man pulled rickshaws are becoming unpopular because they are considered as inhuman. The cycle rickshaw substituted the man-pulled rickshaw, which was not a healthy occupation, though it may be less in human, as it causes in many instances hernias, varicose veins and other complications within a few years. It was also common among the youths and old men driving them due to sheer poverty. Restrictions regarding the number or age of rickshaw drivers are not immediately practicable due to the serious unemployment problem in cities. However, with the passage of time, human rickshaws were replaced by cycle-rickshaws and later on by motor-rickshaws.

With the growth of population coupled with large number of demands, the available transport system was found inadequate. Therefore, people began to stem the tide to find out new means of transport. One such facility invented was the automobiles. Auto is a Greek word meaning “self”, while "mobile" is a Latin word, meaning movable, and so automobile is a self-powered vehicle capable of being steered by an

operator and designed for use on a roadway or street. The term is used more specifically to denote such a vehicle designed to carry two to seven people. In due course, depending on the necessity, large vehicles were designed for more passengers and are called omnibuses or buses and they were designed to carry freight or trucks. The primary components of an automobile are the power plant, the power transmission, the running gear and the control system. These constitute the chassis, on which the body is mounted. The power plant includes the engine and its fuel, carburetion, ignition, lubrication and Cooling systems and the starter or electric plant.

The first new mode of transportation that challenged the railroad was the motor vehicle, which was made possible by the invention in the 1860's and 70's of the Internal-Combustion Engine. The automobile found its greatest popularity in the United States, where the first "horseless carriages" appeared in the 1890's. The application of this invention to transportation in the early 1800's led to the development of

the railway, which gradually replaced the stage coach, carriages, wagons and many other overland systems of travel. Early self-propelled road vehicles were powered by steam or electricity. Opening the way for the modern automobile was the invention of the internal combustion engine, fueled by gasoline in AD 1876. Etienne Lenoir of France developed a gasoline-powered internal-combustion engine in AD 1860. In 1876 the German Nikolans Otto built an improved gasoline engine.31 Within a few decades, automobiles and other motor vehicles such as cars, trucks and buses were in widespread use. Highways were laid and then improved to accommodate the ever-increasing number of vehicles. Gasoline stations and other auxiliary services were established. Land transportation in the years since the invention of the internal combustion engine had been marked by the improved vehicle design and new applications of power. The development of the diesel engine, a type of internal combustion one that uses oil for fuel, provided a powerful but economic source of energy for locomotives, large motor vehicles and increasingly, automobiles.32

The turbine engine continued to be held back by high manufacturing costs and other problems, technical hurdles remained for

the revived sterling engine, the steam engine, which was the object of experimentation in passenger cars during the 1960's and 70's. 33

Diesel V-8 engines appeared in the late 1970's in General Motors Corporation cars and 4-cylinder diesels were used increasingly. 34 During the early 1980's because of the engine's superior fuel economy, which was up to 25 percent better than that of a comparable gasoline engine was more commonly used? It is estimated that diesel use in new cars could reach 25 percent or more by 1985, but the concern that diesel exhaust may contain carcinogen continued to retard diesel development. There were many early attempts to produce a horseless vehicle. As a result, Cugnot, a Frenchman, was, however, entitled to the credit of constructing a vehicle in 1970 which contained the features of the modern car. Also the ever increasing costs of running a car, especially the rising costs of petrol, led to the introduction of more economy cars on to the market from both home and overseas manufacturers. 35 The modern development in the motorcar was centered on production of new batteries for powering electric cars, diesel engine and petrol engine carburetion to improve fuel consumption.

33. Ibid., pp. 30-33.
35. Academic American Encyclopedia, op. cit., p. 278
The buses used today are a large motor vehicle, equipped with seats for passengers that are usually operated on a regular schedule along a fixed route. Because it is relatively inexpensive to purchase and to operate, it can be used on existing roads and highways. The motorbus is the most common form of public transportation worldwide. The motorbus is a descendant of the horse-drawn omnibus. The mathematician Blaise Pascal helped to introduce the first known omnibus service in Paris in AD 1662. At first, the service was free and so very popular. As soon as a fare was charged, however, patronage declined, and the service too was soon withdrawn. But, in 1819, the omnibus service was revived in Paris and New York, which could carry up to 16 passengers. Soon, most of the major cities had an omnibus service, and the Latin word omnibus ("for everyone") was shortened to the well-known term bus.

During the first two decades of the 20th century, large and long-framed automobiles that seated 12 to 20 persons and bus like bodies were set on truck chassis. But this design was neither durable nor comfortable for the passengers. In Oakland, Calif, Frank and William Fageol built a more suitably designed bus in AD 1920. The floor was lowered to allow easy boarding and the seats were made comfortable, with improved

brakes and engine. However, the motor transport development in India had many handicaps. Motor vehicles, spare parts, petrol and diesel had to be imported. But, with the establishment of refineries in India, and the reorganization of the automobile industry, this ceased to be a serious limitation. Motorbus is a big sized motor vehicle used mainly for the purpose of carrying passengers. It can accommodate 40 to 80 passengers. The double deckers are capable of carrying even more passengers. They are generally controlled or common carriers and are rarely owned by individuals for private use. Though the capital costs as well as operating charges were high, it proved to be the cheapest means of transport. It serves on long routes ranging from 100 to 800 kilometers. The contract buses may undertake journeys even for long distances. It is a very popular means of transport and is a great competitor and supplementary to rail transport. The motor buses are increasing in all the countries for shifting passenger traffic at short distance.

The growth of the use of motor vehicle has greatly increased during the pre and post-war periods accompanied by the expansion of road laying all over the country. The present highway system can therefore be described as a concurrent development with motor vehicles.

37. Rajana Pendharkar, op. cit., p. 28.
38. K.S. Ramaswami, op. cit., p. 163.
Thus, the motor vehicle emerged as an important means of transport during the inter-war period and has gained rapid popularity in the post-independence period.\textsuperscript{39} Beginning in a small way, after the First World War, by AD 1938-39, commercial motor transport system comprised a total fleet of 23,645 buses and 12,397 trucks were in operation in 'British India.\textsuperscript{40} At the end of the Second World War in 1946-47, the number of buses had increased to 40,107. At the commencement of the First Five Year Plan, there were 34,411 buses, in 1960-61 the number increased to 57,049. Thus, over the decade, buses increased by about 66 percentage. Realizing the indispensability of the transport system as a major factor for the development of national and international economy, various steps were taken by the government to co-ordinate and regulate the development of road transport.

The regulation of passenger transport seems to be simple, thanks to the policy of nationalization worked out by the states. The only protection that the public needs is to provide freedom to the Road Transport Authorities to functions independently to prompted enough number of

\textsuperscript{39} S.K. Srivastava, “Economics of Transport with Special Reference to Transport Development in India, New Delhi, 1971, p. 10.

\textsuperscript{40} Committee on Transport Policy and Coordination-Final Report, Government of India, Planning Commission, New Delhi, January 1966, p. 76.
vehicles and services on every route. Each state has one State Transport Authority and as many Regional Transport Authorities as the number of regions into which the state is divided for the administration. The authorities are appointed by the State Government. The administrative set-up of the Transport Department in the state was reorganized with the effect from 1st January 1950 when the amendment issued in the Motor Vehicle Act 1945 came into force.

Motor transport was first regulated under the Indian Motor Vehicles Act, 1914. This legislation did not distinguish between different kinds of motor vehicles and imposed no restriction on their movement. As motor transport began to grow, the need for greater control over motor transport was felt, from the point of view of the safety and convenience of the public, as well as the development of a coordination system of transport. This led to the passing of the Motor Vehicles Act, 1939. The Act created regional and Provincial Transport Authorities. They were authorized to grant permits for stage carriages, public and private carriers, and to provide rules concerning routes, timings, specifications of vehicle, standards of maintenance and other conditions under which holders of

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41. V.V. Ramanadham, Economics of Road-Rail Policy, Madras, 1957, p. 257.
permits were expected to operate. The Transport Department was under the administrative control of the Transport Commissioner who was the first member of the Board of Revenue. The Transport Commissioner is the State Transport Authority. He is assisted by a Joint Transport Commissioner who is the Secretary to the Transport Commissioners and two Deputy Transport Commissioners, one functioning as Secretary of the State Transport Authority. Thus, there are four zonal Deputy Transport Commissioners and eighteen Regional Transport Officers in the State. The Regional Transport Officer in the districts acted as Secretaries to the Regional Transport Authority who is District Collectors. The Department administered the provisions of the Motor Vehicle Act 1939, "Tamil Nadu Motor Vehicle Taxation Act 1974 and the rule made there under.

With a view to advice the Regional Transport Authorities under the new set up, the Government has constituted District Transport Advisory Committees in each district with the District Collector as the Secretary. Moreover, the District Superintendent of Police, the President of the District Board and the Chairman of the Municipality in the headquarters of the district are also appointed as members of the Advisory

Committee. The Regional Transport Officer has the right to issue the license. In the beginning, the Regional Transport Officer managed the Transport Department. Bus transport management consists of many segments such as traffic operations, marketing of seats provided in the buses and their maintenance. Material Management, Personnel Management and Financial Management. All these segments need to be integrated into a system of proper management. The present day transport management has become system-oriented and sophisticated in management techniques.

On 28th December 1944 the General Committee of Post-war reconstruction resolved that the post-war period Public Passenger Transport Service in the Presidency should be owned and managed by the State itself. Therefore, it recommended to the Government to take immediate steps to work out in detail a plan for (i) taking over existing bus services, (ii) drawing plans of opening new service routes not served by the existing transport companies, and (iii) working out service conditions on a uniform standard. In pursuance of this, the Government of Madras decided to nationalize the bus transport service in the State and

47. Ibid., p. 4.
appointed a sub-committee to work out the details in December 1946. Based on the findings of the committee, the Government decided to nationalize the bus services in stages spread over a definite period. Thus nationalization was started with the first batch of six Government buses put on the road on 24th March 1947. This was progressively increased and replaced the private operators one by one.

Prior to the introduction of nationalization of bus operation in Tamil Nadu, private managements enjoyed the right to own and operate buses for the conveyance of the people. But, in due course, they dominated the scene and introduced various restrictions according to their whims and fancies. The commuters normally have to depend on the bus management. The major transport operators before national station of bus routes were T.V.S of Madurai, Annamalai Bus Transport of Coimbatore and Raman and Raman of Kumbakonam The present Kanyakumari district was not a part of the State of Madras till 1956.49 The State Re-Organisation Committee carved out the present district by composing the Tamil speaking areas of erstwhile Travancore-Cochin State. The Kanyakumari district, before its formation, had the benefit of enjoying nationalized transport system. The erstwhile native state of Travancore nationalized the road transport system by plying state owned buses in

long routes like Trivandrum to Nagercoil and Kanyakumari. As such, the district at its dawn itself had its own nationalized transport buses. For some time, the district headquarters was connected with Tirunelveli, Kovilpatti and Madurai buses owned by private operators. Most of the routes connecting Nagercoil were dominated by Pioneer Transport, Sri Ganapathy Motors and P.T.M, all of them were private bus operators. These private operators were controlled by the Regional Transport Officers. This private transport system was mostly abolished and all routes were nationalised. Not only in the Kanyakumari district, but in other areas as well where private buses were operated when the Dravida Munata Kazhalagam Party came to power in the State in 1967.  

According to the Government records, the intention of the Government is to nationalize the public motor transport in the Madras province. It has to be noted that the General Committee of the Post-War Reconstruction Committee as early as December 1944 resolved to recommend to the Government that public transport should be state-owned and state-managed. The scheme of nationalization of bus transport was first implemented in this State in October 1947 and by June 1948 the entire bus services in the Madras city were nationalized. By the

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end of 1947, the Government Bus Service had put on the roads 100 buses which rose to 202 in 1948. At the end of 1948 all private operators had been eliminated from the routes in the city and the Government fleet strength rose to 320. The strength further increased to 322 at the end of June 1951. Accordingly, the traffic needs have to be increased to cope up with the increasing strength from year to year and the fleet strength by the end of 1960 was 550. Consequent to nationalisation, buses of various makes and types were taken over. Therefore, to maintain the various types of vehicles and to get spare parts for them there was a force to follow standardization of the vehicles.

The road transport system that developed through centuries had left behind an indelible imprint in the minds of the people. It provided various facilities to development their mental and physical ability by means of sending them to the work-spot, educational institutions, trading centres not only to boost their economic profile but to enrich their social behavior and political attitude.

Road transport plays a significant role in the overall development of a nation. As it centered on the economic activities of production,
distribution and consumption it is of much importance not only to bring the raw materials and the labourers to the industrial centres and work spot but to distribute the finished products to different markets where people can buy and sell their goods and services.\textsuperscript{54} As a result of an increase in the efficiency and sufficiency of transport facilities, it facilitates the flow of goods from one place to another quickly. Moreover, from the growth of different industries in different parts of the world, it is realized that the growth of transport enables exchange and promotes competition. At every state in this complex situation of production process, the value of materials has been either enhanced or reduced or even balanced by means of quick transportation.

However, breakdowns or interruptions in transportation due to natural calamities or political evolution or otherwise affect production schedules and closure of industries too. Sometimes, the existence of efficient means of transportation activated speedy movements of labourers in the production centres on time.\textsuperscript{55} Prior to the industrial revolution, producers of goods especially small scale as well as cottage industries were restricted in their endeavour and profit earning was governed by the efficiency of transportation. That was the transportation

\textsuperscript{54} J.K. Jain, \textit{Transport Economics}, Allahabad, 1990, p.11
of perishable commodities at suitable markets during festival seasons might fetch profit. However, if such articles were not brought to the market within the stipulated time there might incur loss too. Therefore, traders preferred speedy as well as safe means of transportation. From this it was inferred that each producer was general craftsman rather than a specialist.  

Hence, once products have been manufactures they must be conveyed to wholesale distribution points by boat, railways or truck. Here, they were sold and transported to retailers and eventually to consumers. It was realized that at each stage, the producer, the wholesaler and the retailer seek the most efficient means of transport because their profits greatly depended on the kinds of market they could reach. At the same time, the consumer also looked to transportation facilities to bring to him both the necessities and luxuries of life. In day to day trade activities, even if goods were brought to the market within the specific time, the traders could divert the articles to other market, whenever the prices varied from one market to another. Usually, a trader preferred to send the articles to other markets expecting higher profit if prices were

low in a market where the goods were already sent. To attain these objectives of speedy transport facility was a must.

The Government of Madras also paid special attention to promote the conveyance of passengers as well as facilitate trade by means of arranging suitable transport facilities by all means. This could be evidenced from the fact that special facility was provided to the fish vendors to bring fish to the markets through racked buses. Though it was not liked by the co-passengers on board, it was a boost to the fishing community which enables them to bring fish to the nearby markets quickly and to eke out a living. Even today, such facility is available mostly in the coastal villages. It helped the people residing in the urban areas to buy fresh fish like their counterparts residing in coastal areas.

The members of the fishermen community fought with the government to provide them with the special type of buses with racks to transport their vessels containing fishes from the coastal areas to nearby towns and cities. They transport department also provided such buses in areas having sizable fisher folk population. Though in the initial stages, the fisher folk were enthusiastic in using such buses, now they have lost the importance as special buses with racks. At present, these buses were giving unnecessary disturbances to the commuters, because of the
reduction in the number to bring flowers and vegetables from Bangalore to Madras similar to fish from Kerala and Tuticorin to Madras easily depending on the availability and demand. Moreover, efficient transport helped the labourers and government servants to reach their destination and return to their residence easily. It was a noteworthy fact to state that, employees traveled more than 200 kilometers easily. As a result they could return to their homes daily and stayed with their family members in their native place which helped them to avoid not only unnecessary expenditure but helping to protect their health.

Human beings had demands, both personal and collective, that could satisfied only by transportation services. First, there were the problems of ‘getting to work’. In an agrarian society (that is preindustrial), the farmer lived at his place of work was only concern with transportation occurred when he had a surplus to sell at a nearby market. In like manner, the shopkeeper as well as the craftsman usually lived at his place of business and hence were not confronted with the problem of finding transportation to work. Even in many early industrial towns where the number of workers was not large, enough houses were
built within walking distance of the mill or mines or that one was too spent more than a few minutes’ walk from his place of employment.\textsuperscript{58}

However, in certain locations in the 19\textsuperscript{th} century and almost everywhere in the 20\textsuperscript{th} century, this situation was greatly changed. The developed countries have mainly concerned themselves with urban transport and have been able to look at it not as business proposition but as a means to wean away people from personalized modes. Farmers numerically decreased, and they looked increasingly to roads and railways to bring them seed, tools and fertilizers and to carry away their produce. But, the problem of getting to work became complicated with the growth of giant industrial, commercial and financial centers.\textsuperscript{59} As soon as the numerous advantages of the factory system were realized, it become obvious that the hundreds and thousands of employees needed could not physically live in the building in which they worked or even within walking distance. The result was the appearance of suburban, metropolitan centers and finally metropolitan areas, in which the demand for private and public transportation was constantly present and continuously more difficult to satisfy.


With the introduction of farmer’s market (locally) known as *Ulavar Chanthai* in most of the towns and cities of the farmers were benefitted to a great extent. They were relieved of middlemen who earn a profit by their mediation between the farmer’s and vendors who sell the farm products. The opening of the farmers markets was a boon to the farmers who could sell their products direly to the consumers. Transport was a utility service that created time and place utilities. It made commodities available for consumption at the time when they were most needed.  

A commodity, which had no use or only a little utility at the place where it had been produced services, the productivity to the place where it had demand. Because of transport services, the productivity of agricultural lands that has been exhausted on account of long and unwise uses had increased through the application of improved manures and fertilizers.

Industries depended upon transport and transport created new industries. Industrial development would not have taken place if there had been no transport. Transport industries have been set up in all the

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countries of the world to move huge quantities of goods as well as millions of passengers.

Transport played its dominant role not only in the economic sphere but also in the social sphere where it had considerably influenced the life of the people. It helped in securing raw materials and finished products in large quantities and varieties. It had also raised the standard of living of the world. As a result, they find an easy solution to their mundane and monotonous life, ease their tension and made their life happy. It enlarged their relationship which helped to arrange matrimonial alliances. It was envisaged that passenger transportation was an important part of sociological problems of society. 62

Mobility of the lack of it affected social groups, the character and structures of neighborhoods and regions. It was understood from one’s long travel experience that the modern man was more prone to mobility in the pursuit of places, pleasures, pilgrims and profession. The improvement in transport has profound social consequences. The workers seeking homes some distance away from the noise and dirt of mills, cement factories, fertilizers and chemical factories and other factories

frequently settled in outlaying areas. The process of outward movement and settlement was still in continuous process which enabled them to settle down in a healthy environment. The road transport was the only means of transport used by people of the low income group to admit their diseased people to the hospital situated in the nearby and distant areas. Consequently, transports help the people to save their lives.

In public transport system, there was ample room for social intercourse among people of different states. Communal hatred and differences among the commuters based on caste, religion and economic status did not find a place. Thus public transport provided a change to establish an egalitarian society. Moreover, in modern times even uneducated people to not ask the person sitting besides him (in the bus), his caste or religion. In the past, people particularly the so called caste Hindus never hesitated to ask about the caste, community and religion of others. To a great extent, public transport system had attempted to minimize such evil practices. People belonging to the lower strata had got opportunities to mingle freely with the men of higher strata. India in

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general and Madras in particular have a large number of social and religious ceremonies.

Similarly, during festival occasions like Deepavali, Pongal, Christmas, New Year and Ramzan, families may join for getting together. The public transport system helps the people to go to their native places to enjoy the festivals and entertainments connected with all their family members. Not only transport buses but railways, airlines cater to the needy people to join their families at remote places. In fact, the globe has shrunk, thanks to the public transport system. Special buses were put on road during annual festival in certain temples, churches and mosques.

Similarly, during festival occasion undertaking pilgrimage to religious centres commonly practiced by people of all religious sets especially the Hindus, the Christians and Muslims. The growth of bus transport greatly motivated the pilgrims to reach the destination within the stipulated time to offer worship. Moreover, quick road transport facility minimized the expenditure of the economically depressed communities who were not offered to go by airways. It also encouraged the tourist to visit many of the tourist spots and hill stations situated in far

places and spend their leisure time happily which helped them to forget the difficulties and detractions in life. The quick transport facility encourages the students to peruse the studies in reputed educational institutions situated at a distance. It helped to equip their skill and knowledge.

During natural calamities especially flood, earthquake, drought, epidemic the services of road transport the utilized to shift quickly the affected people to a safe place which enable them to save their life and property. The transport system helped all the people to sit together without caring for their caste, creed and economic status which in one sense expanded the horizon of unity in the midst of diversity.

In the political sphere, and freedom fighter, the road transport did meritorious service. For instance, the political leaders from the lower cadre to the higher-ups easily moved from the place to another for political propaganda. Most of the leaders utilized the available transport facility to take their party members to a particular destination where public political meetings attended by eminent political leaders were held. Consequently, people from all walks of life got opportunity to listen to the speeches of eminent political leaders enabled them to update their political knowledge, to understand the day to day political activities.
The transport department has a large number of employees both white collar official staff and the workers including drivers, conductors and mechanical staff. In their capacity as workers they have their own association. Though there might be many trade unions affiliated to different political ideals, only a couple of associations or unions were recognized on the basis of their strength.

Moreover, transport facilitates ease political propaganda. Freedom fighters were able to distribute the pamphlets, bit notices and other booklets. Simple road transport served as the cheapest medium of communication and propaganda. In actual life, one could know that some of the ideologies and achievements of freedom fighters pasted in the body of the buses in the form of wall notice. One could were notice such activities in the day to day life. The road transport plays a vital role in transporting the people to attend to the grand political conferences held at different parts of the state. It motivated the listeners and delegates to study the political philosophy of the parties in general and update their knowledge in language, culture and various other spheres of life in particular.

The need for adequate and efficient transport system for promoting economic development was well known. While considering
the creation of new transport facility in backward regions however, it
must be borne in mind that transport was only one of the essential
elements for development of the region and it was not necessary that
capital intensive transport projects moved by them bring about economic
development. There had also been persistent demand for subsidizing
transport operations in backward and remote areas on the plea that the
traffic and the low level of income would not generate the kind of
demand which could bear the cost of providing transport services. While
the responsibility of ensuring efficient operation of transport services in
the regions it does not necessarily mean that the state should be direct
provider of these services. Whether it related to providing transport
services in the backward area or in isolated and hilly region, the state
could involve private operators and awarded routes on the basis of least
subsidy, so that benefits were targeted and costs became apparent.

An efficient transport system was a pre-requisite for sustained
economic development. It was not only the key infrastructural input for
the growth process but also plays a significant role in promoting national
integration, was particularly important in a large country like India. The
road transport system also plays an important role in promoting the
development of the backward regions and integrating them with the mainstream economy by opening them to trade and investment.

Thus the people played an important role in the sphere of road and transportation and communication. Due to the growth of industry and commerce, the development of road also increased in a large scale. Nowadays for each and every action by roads assumed greater importance. The volume of roads developed each and every day because of the growth of population and the development of towns and cities.