CHAPTER V

PROFILE OF THE STUDY AREA

5.1 Introduction

India covers an area of 32,87,263 sq.km. extending from the snow covered Himalayan heights to tropical rain forest of the south. As the seventh largest country in the world, India got independence on the 15th of August 1947 and the Indian States were reorganized on linguistic basis in 1956. The new Madras State with Tamil as the language of the majority people was born on 1st November 1956 and the state was renamed TAMIL NADU on 14th January 1969, with Madras city (renamed as Chennai) continuing as its capital.

Tamil Nadu is situated at the South-Eastern part of the Indian peninsula (Map 2). It lies between 8°5’, and 13°35’ of Northern Latitude and 76°15’ and 80°20’ of Eastern Longitude. It is bounded in the East and South by the long sea coast of Bay of Bengal and the Indian Ocean, in the West by the States of Kerala and Karnataka and in the North by the States of Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka.

The total area of Tamil Nadu is 1,30,058 sq.km. forming 4.08 per cent of India’s geographical area. It is spatially the eleventh largest State in India. It has vast plains along the eastern Coastline. The central platean runs parallel to the plain along the eastern coastline and rises gradually towards the mountainous region in the west.


In Tamil Nadu there are 29 districts. Tirunelveli district is situated at the southern part of the State. Out of the total geographical area of the State, 1894 sq.km. or 1.5 per cent of the area comes under corporations, municipalities and township committees which works out to 17.2 per cent, 77.6 per cent and 5.2 per cent respectively.  

There are six Municipal Corporations in Tamil Nadu. They are Chennai (Madras), Tiruchirapalli, Coimbatore, Salem, Madurai and Tirunelveli.

5.2 Tirunelveli District

The erstwhile Tirunelveli District which covered an area of 11,433 sq.km. was bifurcated into Tirunelveli District and Tuticorin District on 20th October 1986. After bifurcation, Tirunelveli District has an area of 6,838 sq.km. and is bounded by Virudhunagar District on the North, Tuticorin District on the East, Kanyakumari District on the South and the Western Ghats on the West.

The Tirunelveli District is located in the extreme south eastern part of the country (Map 2). It lies between 8°05' and 9°30' of the Northern Latitude and 7°30' and 78°25' Eastern Longitude.

3 *Quarterly Statistical Abstract of Tamil Nadu*: Quarter Ended September 1994, Department of Statistics, Tamil Nadu, p. 11.

4 District Industries Centre, Tirunelveli Kattabomman District, Active Plan for Five Years from 1992-1997, Published by General Manager, Tirunelveli, p. 5.

5 *The Hindu*, “Legendary Nellai”, Monday, the 14th July 1997, p. A.

5.2.1 Topography

In terms of the topography, this district can be divided into three regions. The Northern part which consists of black soil mostly depending on seasonal rain for agriculture. The central part of the district is irrigated by the river Tambiraparani which flows from the Western Ghats and the southern part is of Red Loamy dry area.

5.2.2 Population

The population of this district was 25,01,832 as per 1991 Census, that is, 4.48 per cent of the total population in Tamil Nadu is living in this district. Of these 12,29,902 were males and the remaining 12,71,930 (50.84 per cent) were females. Out of the total population 17,08,656 (68.3 per cent) people are living in rural areas and the remaining 7,93,176 (31.7 per cent) persons are living in urban areas.
TABLE 5.1
POPULATION IN TAMIL NADU AND TIRUNELVELI DISTRICT
(As per 1991 Census)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State / District</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Density Per Km²</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tamil Nadu Population</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(100)</td>
<td>5,58,58,946</td>
<td>2,82,98,975</td>
<td>2,75,59,971</td>
<td>429</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>3,67,81,354</td>
<td>1,85,67,717</td>
<td>1,82,13,637</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>1,90,77,592</td>
<td>97,31,258</td>
<td>93,46,334</td>
<td>2946</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tirunelveli District</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Population (4.48)</td>
<td>25,01,832</td>
<td>12,29,902</td>
<td>12,71,930</td>
<td>367</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>17,08,656</td>
<td>8,36,796</td>
<td>8,71,858</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>7,93,176</td>
<td>3,93,104</td>
<td>4,00,072</td>
<td>2220</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Directorate of Census Operations, Tamil Nadu, Chennai - 18 (1994)
cited in the Quarterly Statistical Abstract of Tamil Nadu, Quarterly ended

Note: Figures in parentheses indicate percentage.

The total population in Tamil Nadu as per 1991 Census was 5,58,58,946. Of
these 3,67,81,354 (65.85 per cent) were living in rural areas and 1,90,77,592 (34.15
per cent) were living in urban areas. The total population covered under corporations,
municipalities and committees was 139.17 lakhs (as per 1991 Census) which was
about 25 per cent of the State's total population.
With regard to density of population per square kilometre, on the whole the density for Tamil Nadu was 429 and the density pertaining to Urban Tamil Nadu was 2,946. The density in Tirunelveli District during 1991 was 367 persons per square kilometre. In urban Tirunelveli area it was 2,220 persons and for municipal areas it was only 2,693 persons per km² as per 1991 Census.

5.2.3 Revenue Divisions

The present Tirunelveli District consists of three revenue divisions, nine revenue taluks, one corporation (Tirunelveli Corporation) and six municipalities namely, Tenkasi, Sankarankoil, Shencottai, Kadayanallur, Pulliangudi and Courtallam and 38 town panchayats (including two panchayat townships) and 19 panchayat unions 631 revenue villages and 56 firkas.

5.2.4 Mining

As per the estimate made by the Geology and Mining Department, there is a limestone deposit of 35 million tons and marine origin limestone of 22 million tons, besides granite stones, graphite deposit, garnet sand and red clay suitable for tiles and bricks found in most of the taluks in Tirunelveli District.

5.2.5 Resource

As far as forest resources are concerned, about 600 species of timber trees are grown in this district. The important of them are teak wood, rose wood, wild jack, 

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7\ The Hindu, “Legendary Nellai”, Monday, the 14th July 1997, p. A
Tambiraparani River and its tributaries in Tirunelveli District of Tamil Nadu.
manjakadamba, ven teak, vengai, pillai maruthu and karumaruthu. Cane and bamboo are also grown in plenty. A number of industries utilising the above said woods have developed in and around Shencottah and Tenkasi taluks. There are millions of palm trees in this district.

5.2.6 River

The perennial river Tambiraparani, an important river in South Tamil Nadu, originates at Pothigai hills (8°42' N and 77°24' E) and meanders through a distance of 120 km. (24 km. in hilly area and 96 km. in plains) in Tirunelveli and Tuticorin districts and drains into the Bay of Bengal at Punnaikayal village.8

The chief tributaries of the river Tambiraparani are Kodaiyar, Varahanadi, Rama Nadhi, Gatana Nadhi, Pachaiyar and Chittar (Chitra Nadhi). There are two major irrigational dams (namely, Manimuthar and Papanasam dams) and one small dam, (that is, Servalar dam).

5.2.7 Monsoon

The South-West monsoon, generally commences at the end of May and continues till September in this district. This is called ‘saral’ or ‘kar’ season. There are good showers in the hills which bring moderate water in rivers. Dry crops are also raised from June-August with the aid of the rain if the showers are good and timely and with the help of wells.

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8Public Works Department (PWD), Unpublished Records, Tirunelveli District.
The North-East monsoon commences in October and continues till December. This is called 'Pishanam' the plentiful season. It is during this season that rain fed-tanks would receive a good supply. Paddy is cultivated in the river-fed areas from October and in the rain-fed areas during November and December and harvested between January and April. Dry crops are raised in almost all the arable dry lands as soon as the monsoon sets in.

5.2.8 Health Resort

The famous and excellent health resort Courtallam is situated in this district. Thousands of people from far and near visit Courtallam for a refreshing bath in the cascades during the season.

Courtallam is at an elevation of about 167m on the Western Ghats. The season at Courtallam prevails due to South-West monsoon for four months from June to September. Courtallam has nine water falls - the main falls, the five falls, the Shenbagadevi falls, Old Courtallam, the Thenaruvi (honey falls), the Tiger falls, the Orchard falls, the Sitraruvi and the Puduaruvi (new falls).

Besides being an ideal tourist spot Courtallam is an excellent health resort. The water of Courtallam possesses medicinal properties as its passes through the forests of herbs and medicinal plants in the hills before it descends. The water of the various Courtallam falls have a miraculous healing effect on the health of all. In 1811 A.D., the East India Company deputed a special medical team to study the significance of Courtallam and the medicinal properties of the water here. The Committee submitted a report stating the water possessed a rare quality which helped rejuvenate and reinvigorate those who bathed in it. According to a research scholar,
there were 2,000 varieties of flowering plants and another 2,000 varieties of rare herbal plants in this Courtallam hills.9

5.2.9 Rainfall

Tamil Nadu has normal rainfall of about 945 mm per annum. However, the actual rainfall varies widely. As much as 80 per cent of the total rainfall accrues mainly from the North-East monsoon. The normal annual rainfall of this district is 814.8 mm against the state rainfall normal of 945 mm.

5.3 Channels of the River Tambiraparani

The flow of Tambiraparani River increases during North-East monsoon but it is greatly reduced in the summer season (that is, April and May). There are eleven channels which distribute water for agricultural use on various points of Tambiraparani River. They are (i) North Kodamalagian Channel, (ii) South Kodamalagian Channel, (iii) Nadhuynni Channel, (iv) Kannadian Channel, (v) Kodagan Channel, (vi) Palayan Channel, (vii) Tirunelveli Channel, (viii) Marudur Melakkal Channel, (ix) Marudur Keelakkal Channel, (x) South Main Channel and (xi) North Main Channel.

TABLE 5.2

DETAILS REGARDING TAMBIrabarani RIVER CHANNELS WHICH PASS THROUGH VARIOUS ZONES OF TIRUNELVELI CORPORATION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of the Channel</th>
<th>Total Length in Km.</th>
<th>Total Length running through Tirunelveli Corporation area alone (in Km.)</th>
<th>Total Ayacut in Acres within Corporation limit</th>
<th>Name of the Pollutant which pollute the Channel</th>
<th>Zonal area where the Channel/s is/are passing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Primary data collected in the PWD Office of Tirunelveli, Palayamkottai.
Among the three irrigational channels, only Palayam Channel has the maximum ayacut within Tirunelveli Corporation. All the three channels are receiving pollution through drainage (sewage) water, human excreta, cloth washing, animal washing and vehicle cleaning. Palayam irrigational channel alone passes through some 15 km in Palayamkottai and Melapalayam zonal areas. Other two channels, that is, Tirunelveli and Kodagan Channels are passing through Tirunelveli and Tachanallur zones.

5.3.1 Palayam Irrigational Channel and Epidemics: Past and Present

In 1951, S. Rajagopalan, the then Sanitary Engineer to Government of Madras, observed that, "Decades rolled by, and epidemics took their regular toll .... Palayankottai municipality has been no exception to this rule .... Apart from the difficulties due to scarcity of drinking water, the town had to face additional hazards to public health. The Palayam irrigation channel which traverses the town carries highly polluted waters, with Melapalayam town situated in higher up. The temptation to resort to the Palayam channel waters by the people resulted in the inevitable outbreak of epidemics in the municipality almost as a regular feature".¹⁰ (It is to be noted that Palayamkottai Municipality was an independent municipality at that time).

As per the Hindu Survey of the Environment 1995, "all the beedi wastes are thrown in the drains from Melapalayam which open into the Palayam irrigation channel, thereby polluting the water. Poor people lather in the contaminated water right through the course of the canal. In 1992 there was a outbreak of cholera in Melapalayam town when the district was hit by floods. About a dozen people lost

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their lives, according to government records (much more, according to the local people).”

The Directorate of Public Health and Preventive Medicine, Department of Water and Sewage Examination, King Institute Campus, Chennai (Madras) in its letter dated 24.7.1995 No. 2963/0/95 (255) states “At the request of the Commissioner, Municipal Corporation... water supply to Pudupet area of Palayamkottai zone of Tirunelveli Corporation to assess its hygienic safety of connection with the outbreak of jaundice cases ..... During the visit it was gathered that 115 cases were reported in the last one month in Pudupet area. It was also learnt that most of the cases took Indian Medicine in Karaiyar and rest of the cases in private clinics ......

“All the samples of water collected from the public taps in the distribution system in Pudupet area on 13.7.1995 are of satisfactory hygienic quality. They are colourless and clear in physical appearance, are of satisfactory chemical quality for drinking.

“There is an irrigational channel flowing very near the affected area. As there is no underground drainage system it was observed that faecal matter with sullage water was let into the channel from the near by houses. The public were seen bathing and washing their utensils in this channel. Presumably the reason for the outbreak of jaundice might have been due to the local inhabitants resorting to the unprotected polluted irrigation water for their daily use”.

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12 Vide letter from the Chief Water Analyst i/c, Department of Water and Sewage Examination, King Institute Campus, Guindy, Madras (Chennai), dated 24.7.1995, No.2963/0/225, p. 1.
Therefore it can be concluded that the Palayam channel which meanders 43 km from Tambiraparani is polluted by the Corporation’s sewage and sullage water. As it also runs through this corporation it spreads various kinds of bacteria and viruses among the corporation people and causes many epidemics. As per the records of the Public Works Department, Tirunelveli, there are no industries situated along the banks of this irrigation channel. This channel is running through Melapalayam and Palayamkottai zonal areas of Tirunelveli Corporation.

5.3.2 Tirunelveli Irrigation Channel

The 27.5 km. - long Tirunelveli irrigation channel is completely polluted due to the merging of many drains en route. It also takes deviation from the river Tambiraparani. Nainarkulam in Tirunelveli town poses a grave health hazard to the people residing nearby because it gets water from Tirunelveli irrigation channel. This Tirunelveli channel passes through Tirunelveli and Tachanallur zonal areas of Tirunelveli Corporation 4 km. as per P.W.D. record and it irrigates 646.40 acres of land within Tirunelveli Corporation area.

5.3.3. Kodagan Irrigation Channel

The Kodagan Irrigation Channel which traverses Pettai is another channel which carries only contaminated water due to the mixing of drain water in the town limits. It deviates from Tambiraparani and irrigates the land near Pettai, Tachanallur in Tirunelveli town area. The total length of this channel is 27 km and it takes 3 km. en route within the Tirunelveli and Tachanallur zonal areas of Tirunelveli Corporation and irrigates 530.5 acres of land within Tirunelveli Corporation area.
5.3.4 Pollution in Tambiraparani River

Pollution of water resources due to man's activities is more hazardous than pollution of air and soil. The Tambiraparani river passes through the Tirunelveli, Palayamkottai and Melapalayam zones of Tirunelveli Corporation. It is polluted by industrial, domestic and agricultural wastes which are directly or indirectly discharged into river. The river is polluted in several places within the Corporation limit and it is high time serious and sincere pollution control measures were introduced. Household sewages from Sripuram, C.N. Village, Kailasapuram areas of Tirunelveli zone are directly entering the Tambiraparani river and household sewage and sullagage water from Kokkirakulam and Vannarpettai areas of Palayamkottai zone enters directly the Tambiraparani river. The effluents of the service station of [erstwhile Kattabomman Transport Corporation (KTC)] Tamil Nadu State Transport Corporation (TNSTC) at Tirunelveli also join the contaminated water near the Circuit House. The pollution control equipment of Tamil Nadu State Transport Corporation (Tirunelveli Division) does not treat the (oil mingled water) effluents properly. The effluents discharged by the TNSTC poses a severe threat to the public as well as the aquatic life of the Tambiraparani river. It is estimated that nearly 500 litres oil wastage is daily discharged into the Tambiraparani river. It can be seen by everybody that the oily water flows out from the TNSTC let outs in Vannarpettai area near Perachi Amman Temple.

Before Tambiraparani River enters Tirunelveli Corporation limits it is polluted by the effluents of the Madura Fabrics - an industry situated at Vickramasingapuram
on the banks of river Tambiraparani. This industry discharges about 7,700 kiloliters of effluents and 1,380 kiloliters sewage daily into the river.\textsuperscript{13}

5.4 Reservoirs

There are seven reservoirs in this district. They are Papanasam (maximum water level 143 feet), Manimuthar (118 feet), Servalar (156 feet), Ramanadhi (84 feet), Ghatanadam (85 feet), Karuppanadhi dam (73 feet) and Kandar dam (36.10 feet).

5.5 Tanks

There are 2,203 tanks in this Tirunelveli district, of which 757 tanks are reservoir system and the remaining 1,446 are rain fed.

5.6 Land Utilisation

The total area of this district is 6,82,308 hectares of which the forest area covers 1,22,055 hectares. The area used for agricultural purpose is 1,68,670 hectares. The total area cultivated for double crop is 52,061 hectares. The land utilisation of this district is divided in Table 5.3.

### TABLE 5.3

#### LAND UTILISATION IN TIRUNELVELI DISTRICT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sl.No</th>
<th>Classification</th>
<th>Area in Hectares</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Geographical area</td>
<td>6,82,308</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Forest area</td>
<td>1,22,055</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Barren and uncultivable land</td>
<td>27,191</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Land put to non-agricultural use</td>
<td>97,921</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Culturable land</td>
<td>71,131</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Permanent pastures and other grazing land</td>
<td>9,807</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Miscellaneous trees crops not included in the net area sown</td>
<td>8,400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>Current fallows</td>
<td>18,526</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>Other fallow lands</td>
<td>1,58,607</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>Net area sown</td>
<td>1,68,670</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.</td>
<td>Area sown more than once (double cropping)</td>
<td>52,061</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.</td>
<td>Cross cropped area</td>
<td>2,20,731</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


### 5.7 Industries

There are twenty three large and medium industrial units and 4,455 small industries in Tirunelveli district. Out of these, eighteen big and medium units are under private sector and two units under co-operative sector, one unit under corporate sector and the remaining two units are public limited companies. The fixed investments in the above industries over Rs.250 crores and they provide employment...
opportunities for about 19,000 persons. A special subsidy of 20 per cent of the total investment or Rs.15 lakhs whichever is less given to the entrepreneurs for setting up solar energy equipment and other non-conventional energy devices and pollution control equipment.

Leather units set up anywhere in the district are eligible for a special subsidy of 20 per cent on fixed investments subject to a maximum Rs.20 lakhs. Moreover, a special subsidy of 10 per cent of the value of assets is created towards setting up of effluent treatment with the monetary ceiling of Rs.5 lakhs. This subsidy will be available to the existing industries irrespective of their location. Conventional resource based industries and power intensive units are not eligible for the above subsidy. Power subsidy is available at the rate of 40 per cent, 30 per cent and 20 per cent on the rate of power consumption amount to the newly started units for the first, second and third years respectively.

5.8 Livestock Census

As per the records available with the Commissioner of Statistics, Chennai, there are 2,80,068 cattle, 1,48,229 buffaloes, 3,75,374 sheep, 2,26,638 goats and 65,996 other animals in the State and Tirunelveli district accounts for 10,96,205 livestock in 1989.

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14 Tirunelveli Action Plan for Five Years from 1992-93 to 1996-97, Published by the General Manager, District Industries Centre, Tirunelveli, p. 5.

15 Ibid.

16 Ibid.

5.9 Educational Institutions

Tirunelveli District is known for its celebrated educational institutions. There are 1,964 Primary schools, 733 Middle schools, 180 High and Higher Secondary schools, 12 Arts and Science Colleges, 6 Professional Colleges and 7 Technical institutions and one University which is just a decade old.

5.10 Climate Condition

Tirunelveli District enjoys favourable moderate climate condition. The hot weather which prevails during March-May shows the highest mercury point 42°C and lowest 26°C which means the balanced and favourable seasons. The percentage of humidity in summer ranges between 60 and 53 and in winter 76 and 62. The mean annual rainfall is 940.7 mm in this district.\(^1\)

5.11 Tirunelveli Municipal Corporation

Tirunelveli is situated 612 kms. south of Madras city. The National Highway No. 7 which connects Varanasi and Kanyakumari passes through Tirunelveli, Palayamkottai, Melapalayam and Tachanallur zones of Tirunelveli Corporations. Before Tirunelveli became a Corporation, Tirunelveli, Palayamkottai and Melapalayam were separate municipalities and Tachanallur was a town panchayat. Tirunelveli and Palayamkottai are the important towns of the Tirunelveli District. Tirunelveli is situated in 8°44'(N) latitude and 77°44'E longitude on the western

bank of the Tambiraparani. Palayamkottai is situated at 8°44'(N) and 77°E longitude and east of Tambiraparani river. The district administrative head quarters is located at Palayamkottai. Besides, there are more than 180 State Government offices and 20 Central Government Offices and structured settlements at Palayamkottai. Tirunelveli and Palayamkottai were upgraded to municipalities on the 1st November 1866.

Melapalayam is located beside. It has been a third grade Municipality since 1st October 1948. This town has to depend on these two towns for its day to day functional activities. As such, these three towns along with a town panchayat called Tachanallur, though geographically separated by the river Tambiraparani are functioning as one unit. These towns are interdependent on one another for their economic, social and cultural activities. Therefore, the Government of Tamil Nadu have ordered the formation of unified Tirunelveli Municipal Corporation with effect from 1.4.1994 (that is, by merging Tirunelveli, Palayamkottai and Melapalayam Municipalities along with Tachanallur town panchayat and other 11 village panchayats). Tirunelveli Municipal Corporation was formed with effect from on and from 1.4.1994 as per G.O. Ms. No.110 Municipal and Administration and Water Supply Department dated 31.3.1994.

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19 [Ibid.]


5.11.1 Tirunelveli Zone

This zone is surrounded on all sides by paddy fields. As such the town is called 'Nel-veli’ which mean ‘Paddy Belt’. ‘Tiru’ being added to mark the holiness of the town since the town has a famous ‘Siva’ temple. Tirunelveli was once the capital of ‘Pandiya’ (A Tamil) Kingdom. Tirunelveli city is surrounded by three important pilgrim/tourist centres - Kanyakumari, Tiruchendur and Courtallam.

5.11.2 Palayamkottai Zone

In the eighteenth century there was a strong fort in Palayamkottai which historians describe as the strongest fort to the south of Madurai.22 The earliest name of Palayamkottai as found in some old documents was ‘Vilangkulam’ Palaiyam but a poetical name for Palayamkottai was ‘Mangai Nagaram’, the city of the maiden. ‘Palayan’ is the name of the person and ‘kottai’ means fort. Though several stories are prevailing regarding the name Palayamkottai. H.R. Pate observes “Bishop Caldwell appears to accept the theory that the fortress owes its origin to a man called Palaiyan”. As Palayan constructed this fort on the Mangai-Nagaram, it became ‘Palaiyan-Kottai’ after his name.23

In the Tirunelveli Municipal Corporation, Palayamkottai zone plays an important role because all government offices including the collectorate, courts, police head quarters, PWD head offices et al are located in this zone. The old town area on


the northern part of Palayamkottai, has high density of population. The extended areas on the southern and eastern sides are covered by detailed development plans. It is more or less a residential town with a lot of educational institutions including one Government Allopathy and one Government Siddha Medical Colleges, one Government Engineering College, five private Arts and Science Colleges (namely, St. John’s College, Sarah Tucker College for Women, St. Xavier’s College, Sri Saradha College of Arts and Science for Women and Sadak Athulla Appa College of Arts and Science) and two private colleges for education, namely St. Xavier’s College of Education and St. Ignatius College of Education for Girls.

As Tirunelveli is just on the other side of the Tambiraparani, an over bridge was built in 1843 across the river with the funds donated by Sulochana Mudaliyar, a Nawab Sirishthar of the Collector’s Office, connecting Tirunelveli with Palayamkottai. Tirunelveli Railway Junction is easily accessible through this bridge. Many small towns and villages around Palayamkottai depend on this city for education, employment, shopping and recreation.

Tirunelveli Corporation is maintaining one Central Library at Palayamkottai and one Branch Library at Vannarpettai. There are five cinema theatres and 3 District Clubs in this zone for public recreation.

5.11.3 Melapalayam Zone

According to Bishop R. Caldwell “Melapalayam is just to the west ward of Palayamkottai. Prior to 1916, Melapalayam village was included within the

jurisdiction of Payalammottai municipality (Pate 1916). But this Melapalayam village was taken out of the jurisdiction of the Palayamkottai municipality in 1936 and was upgraded a town panchayat. Again Melapalayam was upgraded as a third grade municipality on 1st October 1948 as per G.O. No.1510. Then, it was upgraded as a second grade municipality on 27.11.1993 as per Municipal Administration and Water Supply Department G.O.No.269.

It is a residential area. Beedi manufacturing and trading are the flourishing economic activities of this town. Since the majority of the population are Muslims, it provides opportunity for cottage industries.

Since nearly 20 per cent of Melapalayam town belongs to Muslim's Trust the infrastructural facilities are not well developed. Further in these areas people have built up their houses by paying tax to Muslim Trust. They permit the sales of super structure on land but the land always belongs to Muslim Trust.

There are 15 elementary schools, one high school, one deaf and dumb school, three higher secondary schools and one Arabic school in this town.

5.11.4 Tachanallur Zone

Tachanallur was a town panchayat before it was annexed with Tirunelveli Municipality by G.O. Ms. No.110 dated 31.3.1994. Tachanallur is abuzz with industrial activities. There is a public limited spinning mill (Sri Ganapathi Mills


26 Ibid.
Company Limited) and a number of private spinning cotton mills. Some chemical and casting small scale industries are also located in this area.

5.12 Infrastructural Facilities in Tirunelveli Corporation

The following statistics provided in Table 5.4 give a clear cut picture about the infrastructural facilities available within Tirunelveli Corporation Limit.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sl.No.</th>
<th>Facilities Available</th>
<th>In km. or Number or the case may be</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Total area in sq.km.</td>
<td>108.66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Length of roads in km.</td>
<td>264.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>No. of street lights</td>
<td>11,552</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>No. of Small Scale Industries</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>No. of Large Scale Industries</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>No. of Overhead Tanks</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>No. of Schools</td>
<td>123</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>No. of Colleges</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>No. of Hospitals</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Maternity Centres</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Dispensaries</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Radio Rooms</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Reading Rooms</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Parks</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Community Hall &amp; Auditoriums</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Kalyana (Marriage Hall) Mandapam</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>Daily Markets</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>Bus Stand</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>Shopping Complex</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>Pay and Use Toilets</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>Cinema Theatres</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>Police Stations</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
5.13 Reservoirs in Tirunelveli Corporation

There are five lakes in Palayamkottai zone, namely Mullikulam, Alliyarkulam, Illandakulam, Pannayankulam and Sivanadiarkulam. Cultivation is carried out in the outer non-residential areas of this town. Nainarkulam, Kandiaperi Tank, Vagaikulam and Karuvelankulam are there in the Tirunelveli zone. Thirupanikarisalkulam and Nochikulam are the reservoirs in Melapalayam zone. In Tachanallur there are two lakes, namely Chatrampudukulam and Pireyankulam. All these lakes receive water from irrigation channels of Tambiraparani.

In the Palayamkottai zone, the erstwhile Nadukkamudaiyarkulam, has been converted into Shanthi Nagar a residential area, and Inam Ponmithankulam converted into Anna Nagar and Indira Nagar. Shenbagam Nagar was once paddy field fed by Inam Ponmithankulam which is very close to National Highway 7A.