CHAPTER - II

Administration
ADMINISTRATION

Administration of the Panchayat

There are 26 hamlets in the Painkulam Village\(^1\). They are Kaisoondi, Paruthivilai, Kattuvilai, Ananthamangalam, Mutathumamoodu, Koottalumoodu, Painkulam, Mukkadu, Parakkani, Oottukozhi, Vettamangalam, Amsi, Kundara vilai, Mulluvilai, Maniyaramkuntru, Amsi Street, Vazhuthoor, Mankavilai, Arasakulam, Thengapattanam, Panankalakukku, Nedunthattu, Thengapattanam Peria palli Street, Vazhavilakam, Thoppu and Mulloorthurai. The village Panchayat comes under the jurisdiction of Munchirai Panchayat Union\(^2\).

Administration of Village Panchayats

The Tamil Nadu Panchayat Act 1958 was extended to this District on 1\(^{st}\) April 1962\(^3\). On 1\(^{st}\) April 1962, nine Panchayat unions were inaugurated in Kanyakumari District. They are, Agasteeswaram, Thovalai, Rajakamangalam, Kuruthencode, Thukalay, Thiruvattar, Kelliyor, Melpuram and Munchirai Panchayat Union\(^4\).

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3. Ibid., P.6.
4. Ibid., P.7.
Before March 1962 all Panchayats had a full time Panchayat Officer. But as per the Tamil Nadu Panchayat Act 1958 Town Panchayats were governed by Executive Officers. Accordingly all Panchayats in the District were upgraded as full-fledged Town Panchayats and the Panchayat Officers were redesignated as executive Officers. Accordingly Painkulam Panchayat was a town panchayat up to 1998. In 1999 Town Panchayat was converted as village panchayat. Since then Painkulam Panchayat is functioning as village Panchayat.

**Constitution of Village Panchayat**

In Kanyakumari District there were 88 Village Panchayats. "Town Panchayats were converted into Village Panchayats in 1999 leading to 99 Village Panchayats." There are many wards in each Panchayat and ward members and presidents are directly elected by the people. The term of office of the panchayat and elected members is five years. The Panchayat President is the executive authority of the Village Panchayat. He is assisted by a village clerk. All the expenditure of the Panchayat

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5. Ibid., P.8.
8. Ibid., P.P.6-7.
are made through the bank a joint account by the President and Vice President. All Accounts related to the Panchayat are maintained by the President. The expenditures are to be approved by the Panchayat committee.

**Panchayat Election**

Prior to 1969, members of the wards were elected by the people directly and they in turn the Presidents of the Panchayat. The chair person of the Panchayat union was elected by the presidents of the Panchayats. In 1969, the President of Panchayat, chairman of the Union and Municipalities were directly elected by the people. The local bodies thus formed were dissolved in 1979. Later elections were held on 23 February 1986. The political parties were allowed to field their candidates.

In Kanyakumari District there were 88 village Panchayats, 67 Town Panchyats and 9 panchayat Unions. One Town ship and 4 Municipalities. Now there are 99 Village Panchayats, 56 Town Panchayats 9 Panchayat unions and 4

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Municipalities. The Minimum age limit to cast the vote has been reduced from 21 to 18.

**Function of the President**

Every Panchayat has a president and a Vice-President to carry out its administration. The people of the village whose names are found in the elected rolls elect the President.

According to Tamilnadu Panchayat Act of 1958, a Panchayat President's term of office is five years. The President is an ex-official member of the Panchayat. He has all the rights and privileges of an elected member of the Panchayat.

He has full access to the records of the Panchayat and he can exercise all the powers that are conferred on him by the Panchayat Act. He acts like a link between the Panchayat and the Government. All the official correspondence between the Panchayat and the Government are made through him only. He is bounded to transmit the communications that the Executive officer concerned addressed to the Government through him or

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13. Ibid., P.39.
the communications of the Government to the Executive officer through him\textsuperscript{14}.

The Vice-President is elected by the Panchayat council members from among them in accordance with such a Procedure as may be Prescribed\textsuperscript{15}.

**Executive Officer**

The Tamilnadu Panchayat Act of 1958 Provides for the appointment of a full time Executive officer (E.O) for every village Panchayat. The appointment is made by the Government\textsuperscript{16}. There is no Executive officer to Painkulam Panchayat at present as this Panchayat has been converted as village Panchayat from 1999\textsuperscript{17}.

**The Appointment Committee**

Each village Panchayat constitutes an appointment committee in order to make appointments of staff needed for running the affairs of the Panchayat. The appointment committee consists of the President of the Panchayat concerned, the Executive officer and a member elected from among the members


\textsuperscript{15} Tamilnadu Panchayat Act1958, Published by the Government of Tamilnadu Madras, 1991, P.39.

\textsuperscript{16} Ibid., P.58.

of the council. In the case of village Panchayats, the committee consists of the Panchayat President and two members elected from among the Panchayat members.

Besides this committee, each Village Panchayat has an Education Committee and General Purpose Committee. In tune with these procedures, Painkulam Village Panchayat has also constituted its own committees.

**Bill Collectors**

Assigning numbers to residential houses and all other buildings within the area of the respective Panchayat and collecting the house tax are the main works of bill collectors.

The aspiring candidate should have passed the eighth standard from a recognized school. Painkulam village Panchayat has one post of Bill Collector is and the same has been vacant at present. The work of the Bill Collector is carried by the water supply waters.

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19. Ibid., P.169.
Water Supply Attenders

Water Supply Attender’s duty is to take care of the water supply system of the Panchayat. They get the over head tanks in the Panchayat area filled with water and then release the same for local consumption. It is also their duty to see to it that the fountains in different localities are in good condition. When a snag develop in a fountain or at any spot in the supply system they have to inform the Executive officer and get the works done as per the latter’s instructions. There are 10 workers in Painkulam Panchayat to take care of water supply work.

Peon

Peon as in all offices under the Government, is the last grade servant in a Panchayat. He assists the other members of the staff in the Panchayat Office concerned in their official work. In Tamilnadu, this category of staff is called Office Assistant. There is one Office Assistant in Painkulam village Panchayat.

22. Personal Interview with A.Krishnadhas, Executive Officer, aged 55, residing at Painkulam, dated 03.04.2006.
24. Ibid.
Painkulam Panchayat President 1958-2006

1. Mr. S. Thankiah Nadar - 1958-1990
3. Mr. C. Gunaseelan - 1996-2001
4. Mr. T. Chandra Kumar - 2002-till date

Name of the present Panchayat Member, year 2002-2006

Panchayat President : Thiru. T. Chandra Kumar
Vice President : P-Kesavan

Members

1. Thiru C. Santhos Kumar Ward I
2. Thirumathy P. Vijaya Kumari Ward I
3. Thiru M. Mohan das Ward I
4. Thiru T.R. Senthil Kumar Ward II

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26. Ibid.
5. Tirumathy G. Mary Ward II
6. Thiru D. Justin Ward II
7. Thiru N. Vijaya Raj Ward III
8. Thirumathy, N. Gomathy Ward III
9. Thiru. P. Kesavan Ward III (Vice President)
10. Thiru. R. Dharma Raj Ward IV
11. Tirumathy T. Kala Ward IV
12. Tirumathy V. Suganthy Ward IV
13. Thiru P.S. Asik Ward V
14. Thiru S.N. Santhakumar Ward V
15. Thiru P. Seehak Sathick Ward V

**Powers and function of Panchayat**

Tamilnadu Panchayats Act of 1958 Vests the Panchayats in the state with sufficient power to develop the areas which come under their purview. The major developmental works

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27. Ibid.
that the Panchayats are expected to carry out are construction, repair and maintenance of all village roads. The roads that come under the care of Panchayat include all the public roads in the special village concerned and also the stretches of state Highways Department controlled roads that pass through the limit of the Panchayats. The bridges, Culverts, tanks and dams that come with in the area of the Panchayat are also left to the care of the Panchayat concerned\textsuperscript{28}.

Another important work of the Panchayat is the Maintenance of streetlight. The construction of drains and disposal of drainage water, the cleaning of streets and removal of rubbish are the other major works of Panchayats\textsuperscript{29}. Panchayats are also expected to construct public conveniences at the major public places like bus station and markets where people in large numbers congregate. They have to keep such public conveniences neat and tidy. Panchayats are expected to take. Care of water bodies like tanks, rivers in their areas and they have to safeguard them from encroachers and natural decay\textsuperscript{30}. They are

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{28} Tamilnadu Panchayat Act of 1958, Madras, 1991, P.72.
\item \textsuperscript{29} Ibid.
\end{itemize}
expected to desilt the tanks and ponds every year so that they can store water in them to their full capacity and utilize the water for irrigation. When water is stored in the tanks the water seeps deep beneath the earth and replenish the acquirers.

As most of the councilors of the Painkulum village Panchayats are educated people and are aware of the importance of the water bodies in the well being of the people they see to it that Executive officer executes the schemes that they formulate. Besides, they evince great interest in setting Painkulum Village Panchayats quota of all the Government schemes.

However, it is a commonplace knowledge all over the country that developmental activities are not carried out in a transparent and corruption-free way. Allegations of this nature have arisen quite often in Painkulum village Panchayat too regarding the way in which several development schemes were carried out.