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PROFILE OF THE STUDY AREA

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2.1 INTRODUCTION

This section presents the profile of Kanyakumari District, the study area. Kanyakumari is a District of Tamil Nadu, India and is the southern most land area of mainland India. The District is the second most urbanized district in Tamil Nadu, next only to Chennai and Coimbatore\(^1\).

Kanyakumari District derived its name from the name of Goddess Kumari Bhagavathi for whom a temple of historic fame was built at the southernmost tip of the Indian Peninsula, now called Kanyakumari Township\(^2\).

Kanyakumari District is the second smallest of the 32 Districts of Tamil Nadu State. The administrative capital of the District is Nagercoil, which is 20 km from Kanyakumari Town. The District is also known as “The District of Ponds” or “The Lands End”\(^3\).

2.2 FORMATION OF KANYAKUMARI DISTRICT

Kanyakumari is an ancient centre of Tamil culture, trade and literary excellence familiar to the early traders and travelers. The Town of Kanyakumari is geographically a cape, and it was called Cape Comorin by the British. Since ancient times, Kanyakumari District consisted of two geographical areas, known locally as Nanjilnadu and Idainadu. Nanjilnadu, which was formed by the present Agasteeswaram and Thovalai Taluks of the District, was alternatively under the rule of the Pandyas and the Cheras until the beginning of the Thirteenth Century.

\(^1\) “2011 Census of India” Indian Government, 16 April 2011.
\(^3\) http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kanyakumari_District.
Idainadu, including Kalkulam and Vilavancode Taluks, was under the rule of the Cheras⁴.

The present Kanyakumari District was, formerly, the southernmost part of the erstwhile princely State of Travancore. Nature’s bountiful gifts of majestic hills, dales, and peaks, as well as the extensive and colorful coastline, undulating valleys and plains between the mountains and the sea coast, so closely interwoven with temples and churches and other edifices of the area impressed Goddess Kumari Bhagavathi so much that she called this region ‘a fairy land’⁵.

The Southern Division of the State of Travancore consisted of four Taluks, namely, Thovalai, Agasteeswaram, Kalkulam and Vilavancode. The people of these taluks are mostly Tamil speaking. After India’s independence, there began a people’s movement demanding the merger of the Tamil speaking Taluks with the Madras State (the present Tamilnadu). Intensified agitation resulted in the constitution of the State Reorganisation Commission in 1956. Based on the recommendations of the commission, the Indian Parliament passed the State Reorganization Act in March, 1956. According to which, the four taluks, Thovalai, Agasteeswaram, Kalkulam and Vilavancode were constituted into a new District of Tamil Nadu called Kanyakumari District on 1st November 1956 with Nagercoil as its Head Quarters.⁶

⁴ Ibid.
2.3 LOCATION

Kanyakumari District is situated near the Equator between 77°15’ and 77°36’ east longitude and 8°03’ and 8°35’ north latitude. It is bound on the north-east by Tirunelveli District, Trivandrum District of the Kerala State on the north-west, the Arabin Sea on the west and Indian Ocean and the Gulf of Mannar on the South and the south-east respectively.  

2.4 GEOGRAPHICAL FEATURES

The Western Ghats on the eastern side of the District run almost parallel to the Coast with an altitude ranging from 300’ to 6000’ above sea level and an unequal breadth, diminishing from the north and converging to a point at its southern extremity. Mahendragiri and Muthukuzhivayal are the highest peaks with a height of 5700’ and 4400’ respectively. The Ashamboo Hills, the Maruthuva Malai, the Thadakai Malai and the Velimalai are the other important peaks of the southern section of the Western Ghats. The Western Ghats are a natural barrier on the east between the Tirunelveli District and the Kanyakumari District, the only corridor across it being the Aramboly pass.

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2.5 POPULATION CHARACTERISTICS

The earliest inhabitants of this region were Dravidians.\textsuperscript{10} Aryans were believed to have immigrated into the region around the 10\textsuperscript{th} Century A.D\textsuperscript{11}. With the advent of the Aryans, the population of the area split up into several castes, following different customs, which provide to the ethnologists an interesting sphere for study\textsuperscript{12}.

As of 2011 census, the district had a population of 1,863,174 and 82.47 percent of the District is urbanized. It has the second highest population density in Tamil Nadu, 1106 persons per km\textsuperscript{2}, only behind Chennai. It is the highest literate region in Tamil Nadu, with a total literacy rate of 90.25. The District also has a high female sex ratio of 1010 females for 1000 males\textsuperscript{13}.

2.6 SOIL TYPES

Laterite soil is found in Thiruvattar, Killiyoor, Munchirai, Rajakkamangalam, Thuckalay blocks. Red and alluvial soil is found in Agasteeswaam and Thovalai blocks. 48.9 percent of land in the District is under cultivation and 30.5 percent is covered by forests\textsuperscript{14}.

2.7 CLIMATE

Based on a 50 year study, it is found that during the North-East monsoon, between October and December, a precipitation of 549 mm is received in 24 rainy

\textsuperscript{10} Imperial Gazeteer of India, vol. 1, p. 447.
\textsuperscript{11} Kusuman K., Slavery in Travancore, p. 25.
\textsuperscript{12} Suel Mateer, op. cit., pp. 1-2.
\textsuperscript{13} 2011 Census of India, Indian Government, 16 April 2011.
\textsuperscript{14} http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kanyakumari_District.
days, and during the South-West monsoon 537 mm is received from June to September in 27 rainy days. In summer, 332 mm of rainfall is received in 11 rainy days between March and May. The annual average rainfall in the District is 1465 mm with a maximum of around 247 mm in October and a minimum of 21 mm in February. Relative humidity ranges between 60 to 100 percent.\textsuperscript{15}

2.8 RELIGION

Hinduism, Christianity, and Islam are the three main religions of the district. The distribution of population based on religion is as follows: Hindus – 51.27 percent, Christians – 44.47 percent, Muslims – 4 percent and Others – 0.057 percent.\textsuperscript{16}

2.9 FESTIVALS

The Mondaikad festival is celebrated by the locals as well as Keralites. The festival is celebrated for ten days and later became a social function especially on Sunday. Today Mondaikad is more of a departmental festival.

The Ayyavazhi festival, Ayya Vaikunda Avataram, is widely celebrated throughout the District.\textsuperscript{17} The Kodiyyettu Thirunal is celebrated in the Ayyavazhi headquarters at Swamithope pathi and attracts large crowds\textsuperscript{18} from Tamilnadu and across India.

\textsuperscript{15} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{16} Ibid.
In the St. Xavier’s Church at Kottar, the annual festival in December is celebrated with grandeur, and attracts Catholic people (some Hindus too) from over South India.\textsuperscript{19}

New Year is celebrated with Vana Vedikkai (fireworks) and the games such as Valukku Panai (slippery palm), a game in which a person has to climb a bamboo stick which is flooded with oil\textsuperscript{20}.

\textbf{2.10 FOOD}

Rice is the staple food of the people, although for some people in the hilly areas tapioca is the main food. Though there are some vegetarians among the populace, a majority of the people use agro, meat and fish products. Fish caught in the seas bordering the District during the night or early morning reach the markets in the interior towns and villages in the early morning. The food is spicy, and the people in the district tend to use more grated coconut in their curries and food-preparations, like neighboring Kerala\textsuperscript{21}.

\textbf{2.11 REVENUE DIVISIONS AND DEVELOPMENT BLOCKS}

For the purpose of administrative convenience and revenue collection, Kanyakumari District has been divided into two Revenue Divisions, namely, Nagercoil and Padmanabhapuram\textsuperscript{22}. The four Taluks of the District, namely Thovalai, Agasteeswaram, Kalkulam and Vilavancode have their Headquarters at Boothapandi, Nagercoil, Thuckalay and Kuzhithurai, respectively.

\textsuperscript{19} http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kanyakumari_District
\textsuperscript{20} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{21} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{22} Statistical Hand Book of Tamil Nadu, 1985, pp. 91.
In order to promote agricultural Kanyakumari District has been divided into nine development Blocks with separate headquarters as shown in Table 2.1.

**TABLE 2.1**  
**NINE DEVELOPMENT BLOCKS AND THEIR HEADQUARTERS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sl. No.</th>
<th>Name of Taluk</th>
<th>Name of Block</th>
<th>Name of Head Quarters</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Thovalai</td>
<td>i) Thovalai</td>
<td>Thovalai</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Agasteeswaram</td>
<td>i) Rajakkamangalam</td>
<td>Pazhavilai Perumalpuram</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>ii) Agasteeswaram</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Kalkulam</td>
<td>i) Thiruvattar</td>
<td>Thiruvattar Kozhiporevilai Kurunthancode</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>ii) Thuckalay</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>iii) Kurunthancode</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Vilavancode</td>
<td>i) Melpuram</td>
<td>Pacode Munchirai Tholaiyavattam</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>ii) Munchirai</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>iii) Killiyoor</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Credit Plan for Kanyakumari District-Lead Cell, Indian Overseas Bank, 2007-'08
The map of the blocks of Kanyakumari District is given in Figure 1.

FIGURE 1

MAP OF THE BLOCKS OF KANYAKUMARI DISTRICT

There are 66 Town Panchayats, 88 Village Panchayats and 4 Municipalities such as Nagercoil, Thuckalay, Kuzhithurai and Colachel.

2.12 INFRASTRUCTURAL FACILITIES

Infrastructural facilities include trade, marketing, storage, transportation and communication, credit institutions, research institutions and extension agencies to promote agriculture production.
From time immemorial, Kanyakumari District has an important trading centre, Kottar as its central market. In the early days, the market commodities of commerce at Kottar were pepper, ivory, teak, sandalwood, rosewood, and fruits\textsuperscript{23}. At present, it is an important paddy milling centre\textsuperscript{24}.

2.12.1 Transport and highways

There are two major National Highways (NH) roads emanating from Kanyakumari town. One is NH7 that starts from the town and runs through Madurai and the other is NH 47 that runs to Salem through Kerala, touches some important cities in Kerala like Trivandrum and Kochi and also in Tamil Nadu.

The state-owned Tamil Nadu State Transport Corporation is the main operator of bus services in the District, though licenses are issued for specific routes to private operators. Today, there are 3495.80 km of surfaced road in the District\textsuperscript{25}.

The District has no airport. The nearest airport is at Trivandrum, the capital of the Kerala State which is 66 km away from Nagercoil\textsuperscript{26}. The Airport Authority of India has proposed for an Airport in Nagercoil to tap the tourism potential of the Southern Districts of Tamil Nadu\textsuperscript{27}.

2.12.2 Railways

The District had no rail route till 1979. The first rail route from Kuzhithurai West to Nagercoil Junction and the branch line from Nagercoil to Kanyakumari

\textsuperscript{23} Gazetteers of India, Kanyakumari District, pp. 481
\textsuperscript{24} Census of India, Kanyakumari District Census Hand Book, Parts X111, A and B, 1 pp. 14.
\textsuperscript{25} http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kanyakumari_District
\textsuperscript{26} Gazetteer of India, Kanyakumari District, 1995, pp. 504.
\textsuperscript{27} http://www.hindu.com/2008/01/15/stories/2008011555560100.htm
were opened on 16th April 1979. On 3rd August 1984 train service between Kanyakumari and the Himalayan border was inaugurated.

Railway routes are under the jurisdiction of Southern Railway’s Thiruvananthapuram Division. Most of the train services are through Kerala. Nagercoil Junction Railway station is an ‘A’ category station with annual passenger revenue of over 20 crore. There are plans for setting up a suburban railway station in Nagercoil at Parvathipuram. Kanyakumari District is connected through direct train services with all the metropolitan cities in India, like New Delhi, Mumbai, Chennai, Bangalore and Kolkata. These Express trains originate either from Kanyakumari or Nagercoil.

2.12.3. Ports

In the early centuries of the Christian era, Kanyakumari served as a harbor. Similarly Manakudi and Rajakkamangalam were also ports and trade centres. From the foreign coins unearthed at Muttom, it is evident that Muttom was a leading centre of foreign trade. Colachel on the West Coast has been a natural port, engaged in export trade. The chief exports are palmirah fibre, mineral sands, fish and salt. Colachel Port would certainly have advantages over the neighbouring ports in India when developed, that it would be closer to international shipping lanes-shipping traffic between Europe, West Asia and the Far East passes, not far from the Port. Also, the Port is naturally deep. Being situated close to the tip of the Indian Peninsula and with major ports like Colombo and Singapore in the vicinity.

30 Padmanabhan S., the Contributions of Kanyakumari to the Tamil world, 1981, pp. 3.
31 Gazeteer of India, Kanyakumari District, 1995, pp. 482.
the port will become a big one and hence the Singapore Government has sent its team to study the Port\textsuperscript{32}.

As a result of recent technological development in the field of communication, every village in the District is provided with postal and telecommunication facilities. At present there are more than 40,000 telephone connections in this District.

2.13 ELECTRICITY GENERATION

Kanyakumari District is a major centre of windmill electricity generation. There are two hydroelectric power stations at Kodayar, generating combined 100 MW of power. Aralvoimozhy in Kanyakumari District is a major centre for generation of windmill power and the largest in the world, led by Major Corporations, like Suzlon Energy and Micon\textsuperscript{33}.

2.14 AGRICULTURE

Kanyakumari District accounts for more than 95 percent of the production of natural rubber in the State of Tamil Nadu. Rubber is cultivated mainly in the hilly areas in the interior, while paddy fields and other crops are mainly found on the plains, near the coast. Cultivation includes crops, such as rice, coconut, tapioca, banana, pulses, cashew, mango, palmyra, tamarind, areca nut, jackfruit and clove\textsuperscript{34}.

\textsuperscript{32} http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kanyakumari_District
\textsuperscript{33} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{34} Ibid.
2.15 RIVERS

The major river in the District is Tambaraparani River locally known as Kuzhithuraiar. This river has two major tributaries with the Pechiparai dam and Perunchani dam respectively built across them, Kodayar and Paralayar. There are many tributaries for Kodayar River of which Chittar 1 and Chittar 2, with their dams, are the major ones. The origin of Tambarabarani river is in the western Ghats and it confluences with Arabian sea near Thengapattanam, about 56 km. west of Kanyakumari Town.35

Valliar, another small river and its tributary Thoovalar, originate from the Velimalai Hills, collect the drainage from P.P. Channel has its branches, ayacuts and confluence with the Arabian Sea in Kadiapattinam.

The Pazhayar River, another small river, starts at Shorlacode, a place about 18 km north-west of Nagercoil. This is mainly a drainage river, mostly collecting the drainage of Thovalai, Aananthanar and N.P. Channels. The Parali River also flows through the District. The Mathur Hanging Trough, the highest and longest aqueduct in Asia, was built over it near Mathur.

2.16 FORESTS

The Forests in kanyakumari District are about 75 Million years old. Of the total district area of 1671.3 km², Government Forests occupy an area of 504.86 km², which comes to about 30.2 percent of the total geographical area of the District. The Forests of the district are administered through Kanyakumari Forest Division, with Headquarters at Nagercoil, the capital of Kanyakumari District. There are 14 types

35 Ibid.
of forests from luxuriant tropical wet evergreen to tropical thorn Forests. This
variety occurs in the District because of diverse locality factors\textsuperscript{36}.

The District is rich in wildlife with at least 25 types of mammals, about 60
species of birds including 14 species of migratory birds and many species of fish,
reptiles and amphibians listed\textsuperscript{37}.

2.16.1 Fauna

Animals on the hills of the district include Bengal Tiger, Elephant, Sambar
Deer, Porcupines, Hedgehogs and wild boar, while pied kingfisher, Painted Stork
and cranes are commonly found in the water bodies and wetlands. Reptiles
include Monitor Lizards, Pythons, Blood Viper and other snakes.

In Mahendragiri hills (about 4,000 ft (1,200 m) above sea level), one can
find Elephant, Tiger, Leopards and deer. Leopard cubs often stray onto the highway
near the hills and are sometimes run over by motorists.

The Keeriparai and Maramalai hills are habitats for
wild elephants and Indian Bison. The Kodayar hills are the breeding centers for the
Indian rock pythons and Indian Bison. In the Theroor wetlands, one can see several
varieties of storks and migratory birds during specific seasons. Trout and other
varieties of freshwater fish are found in the Pechiparai reservoir. The district also
has a wildlife sanctuary and a bird sanctuary.

\textsuperscript{36} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{37} Ibid.
2.16.2 Flora

Kanyakumari district is noted for its medicinal plants and herbs. The district also has a huge forest cover, accommodating a wide variety of plants, trees, and shrubs.

Commercial varieties include various kinds of Plantain (like Nenthiram, Palayamkottan, Thuluvam, Matti), Jackfruit (like Varikila and Koolan), Mango (varieties like Alphonsa, Bangalora, Neelam and Ottu) and Coconut. In addition to fruits, a variety of flowers like roses and jasmine are also produced. Common garden varieties in the district include crotons, lillies, and dahlias. Keeriparai is home to varieties of ferns, bamboos and other tropical plants. Flame of the Forest (Butea monosperma), a tree with reddish and orange leaves and flowers, is found in the Pechiparai Reservoir. Rubber estates are found in the hilly areas surrounding Arumanai, Kaliyal, and Kadayal.

2.16.3 Medicinal Plants

The hills and mountains of the area contain herbs of medicinal value and minerals. Marunthuvazhalai or Maruthuvamalai, a hill in the district located near Kanyakumari, literally means medicinal hill, and is referred to by Therapeutics (Buddhist monks) who belonged to the period of Emperor Ashoka, as having medical and spiritual heritage. According to traditional beliefs, the hill was a piece of the mountain Gandha Madhana which dropped, while the mountain was being carried by Hanuman to Lanka during the epic war between Rama and Ravana. Today, rare medicinal herbs are available here in abundance.
The sage Agasthiya was also the foremost of the Siddhars (the practitioners of herbal medicines). This sage is believed to have lived in "the land’s end" and there is also a village by name Agasteeswaram near Maruthuvamalai which owes its name to the dwarf sage. Besides medicine and grammar, Agasthiya was also adept in Varma Sastra. General palm leaf records like Varmani and Varma Sastra were written by Agasthiya.

2.17 MARINE LIFE AND RESOURCES

More than 200 species of marine fish have been recorded in the coastal region of Kanyakumari district, which includes skates, rays, sharks, sardine, mackerel, etc. Apart from fish different species of prawns, lobsters, crabs, bivalves, gastropods, cephalopods and turtles are seen in the catch.

2.18 WADGE BANK

Wadge bank is a fertile fishing place where rich marine biological diversity occurs. Wadge bank may also be defined as a place of marine environment, where there is a rich availability of fish food organisms. The water depth of this region is low. The physical features of the water like under-water current, tides and waves will have less impact on the fish and animals of this region. Fish select this region for feeding and breeding purposes. Throughout the maritime countries of the world, there are about twenty such wadge banks. Of these one is situated near Kanyakumari on the coastline of Kanyakumari District on the eastward as well as on the westward region for about 30 km. Here representatives of fish species of the three seas occur.
2.19 MINERAL SANDS ON THE COAST

Beaches in specific areas of the district are rich in mineral content (and the sand looks partly black). Sand in all colors are available in small pouches for tourists. The Government-owned Indian Rare Earths Limited (under the Department of Atomic Energy, Government of India) has a plant at Manavalakurichi which mines the beach-sand for Zircon, Ilmenite, Monazite, Thorium and other Zirconium-based minerals. Thorium is used in India's nuclear programme and nuclear power reactors.

2.20 TOURISM

The District attracts tourists throughout the year. Kanyakumari, land's end, and the confluence of three water bodies, is 20 km to the south of Nagercoil, with tourist attractions of its own which include the Vivekananda Rock Memorial, 133 ft high statue of Tamil poet-Saint Tiruvalluvar-both on the mid-sea on rocky islands; the place is also famous for its distinctly beautiful sunrise and sunset.

The Kanyakumari wildlife sanctuary is a hot spot in the country. The sanctuary is an important breeding ground for Tiger, Elephant, Leopord and 33 other Mammals.

Gandhi Mandapam is a special monument, one of the most important place to visit at Kanyakumari in the southern tip of India. The Gandhi Mandapam has been built on the spot where the urn containing the Mahatma's ash was kept for public viewing before immersion. Resembling central Indian Hindu temples in form, the Mandapam was designed in such a way that on Mahatma Gandhi's birthday, 2 October, the first rays of the sun fall on the exact place where his, ash was kept.
Vettakottai Fort, or Circular Fort, is a fort near Kanyakumari, right on the sea-shore, built under the orders of De Lann during the reign of Marthanda Varma. The view from the top of the Fort, of the sea and the palm-fringed beach below is fantastic.

Suchindrum Temple, about 6 km from the heart of the town and Nagaraja Temple, are some tourist attractions within the town.

Thiruvattar Sri Adikesavaperumal Temple: An ancient Vishnu temple with lots of inscriptions in Tamil and Sanskrit in the outer prakarams, sculptured Mandapam on a single-stone, unique Sun-rays falling on Adi Kesavan in Bhujana Sayanam posture statue in the Sanctum for a week in the Tamil months of Purattasi and Panguni, etc. are stunning attractions.

Padmanabhapuram Palace, once the seat of the Travancore kings, is India's only palace made completely of wood.

The Kumaracoil is the important and renowned among the Murugan temples is in the district of Kanyakumari, Tamil Nadu. It is located at the foot of Velimalai 15 km from Nagercoil. The deity here, in standing posture is 6 feet tall. The temple has also a long history that dates back to the 17th century.

Swamithoppe Ayya Vaikundar Pathi, about 11 km from Kanyakumari, is the religious headquarters of Ayyavazhi, well known for its non-idolatry system of worship.

Chitharal Jain Monuments are impressive rock shelters and idols dated 9-11th century.

Thirunandikkara temple, rock cut cave temple of Pallava art can be traced back to seventh and Eighth Century AD.
Udayagiri Fort, built by the Travancore kings, is a fort previously used for training the Travancore Forces and also served as Barracks. Travancore Army Chief and European Dutch Admiral, Benedictus Eustachius De Lannoy's tomb is situated within this Fort. The Fort is presently declared as a bio-diversity park and maintained by the Kanyakumari Forest Department.

Mathur Hanging Trough, near Thiruvattar in the District, is an aqueduct that carries irrigation water through a canal between two hills. The canal itself goes above a small river. Built on very tall pillars, it is said to be one of the biggest aqueducts, both in height and length, in Asia.

Olakarivi Waterfalls, about 20 km from Nagercoil is on the middle of a hill and requires an hour's trek by foot from the base of the hill.

Keeriparai-the site of some Waterfalls, including Vattaparai Falls. Pechiparai Reservoir, about 30 km from the Town, in the hills, and also Perunchanni and Chittar dams are a must-see for the nature-lovers.

Mukkadal, about 10 km from the Town, built across Vambaru in 1645, provides water supply for Nagercoil, Suchindram and Kanyakumari Towns.

Muttom, a coastal village, is another popular place with tourists. There is also a 100-year old light-house. This place is very popular with Tamil and Keralite film-makers, especially Tamil film Director, Mr. Bharathiraja.

Sanguthurai Beach, about 8 km from Nagercoil is a palm-fringed and sandy beach. Sothavilai Beach is another good beach, about 7 km from the heart of town.

Panchappathis, the five holy places of Ayyavazhi, are all situated within 10 km radius from Kanyakumari.
Mukkadal Reservoir: Fresh water supply to Nagercoil is from the Mukkadal Reservoir, about 8 km from the Town, in the interior itself a very scenic place, with small bushy island in the middle of the Dam. The Dam is surrounded by hills of the Western Ghats.

Mandaikadu Bhagavathi Amman temple: Known as 'Sabarimala for Women', the Bhagavathiamman deity here is in the form of an anthill, about 15 feet high having 5 heads with a legend linked to it. It was built in simple Kerala style with assistance from Marthanda Varma.

2.21 BANKING SECTOR IN KANYAKUMARI DISTRICT

In terms of banking coverage, the District could be considered as one of the well banked Districts in Tamil Nadu. As on the end of March 2008 there were 24 Commercial Banks, having 149 Branches, spread over 63 Centers, with an average population of 11700. 11 Public Sector Banks and 13 Private Sector Banks operate in the District.\(^{38}\)

In addition to the Commercial Banks, the eight branches of Kanyakumari District Central Co-operative Banks, 5 Branches of the Tamil Nadu State Co-operative and Development Bank and one People’s Co-operative Urban Bank Ltd. are in the District.

For developing Industrial Sector, one Branch of Tamil Nadu Industrial Investment Corporation Ltd. (TIIC), Tamil Nadu Industrial Co-operative bank Ltd. and Small Industrial Development Corporation (SIDCO) Ltd. are also functioning in the District.

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\(^{38}\) Gazetteer of India, Kanyakumari District, 1995, pp. 505-507.
Kanyakumari is one of the industrially backward Districts announced by the Tamil Nadu State Government. This stresses the importance of opening new branches by various Commercial Banks and Co-operative Banks.

2.22 EDUCATION

Education is a powerful tool, which can bring about a radical transformation in Society. The Protestant Missionaries who arrived in the 19th Century were the first to introduce English Education in the District. The Founder of the English School in the erstwhile Travancore State was Reverend William Tobias Ringle Taube, a native of Russia, who came to the State in 1806.\(^{39}\)

Kanyakumari District ranks first in the State of Tamilnadu in literacy. Kanyakumari District has a literacy rate of 87.6 percent. A variety of colleges of higher education are found throughout the District, mainly, arts, science and engineering colleges. The State runs the Kanyakumari Government Medical College at Asaripallam, a Government Engineering College and a Government Polytechnic at Konam, near Nagercoil. Many private Engineering Colleges including a private University are also started-functioning in the recent past. Not less than 30 Engineering Colleges are functioning in the strict, which are currently affiliated to the Anna University of Technology, Tirunelveli. Arts and Science Colleges are affiliated to Manonmaniam Sundaranar University, Tirunelveli. Noorul Islam University is the only private university functioning near Thuckalay.

Primary education, which is of great significance to the physical, emotional and intellectual development of children, is the most crucial stage of education,

\(^{39}\) http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kanyakumari_District
especially to those with unsatisfactory home background. It comprises of the first eight years of schooling, which lays foundation for the personality, attitude, self confidence, habits, learning skills and communication capacity of students.

Education in the, age group of 11 to 14 is regarded as middle or higher primary education, covering sixth to eighth Standards.

Schools having classes either from standard I to XI or VI to XI or IX to XI are termed as Secondary Schools. But, as a result of the reorganization of secondary education in the year 1966-67, secondary schools have been renamed as “High Schools”.

Formation of the Scott Christian College as a Second Grade College in the year 1893 and affiliated to the University of Madras, marked the beginning of collegiate education in Kanyakumari District. This was the only College in the District up to 1952 when one more College, the South Travancore Hindu College was started. Growth of collegiate education during the first fifteen years of free India was very slow. Since 1964, many colleges have been established in the District. Good infrastructure, efficient management and administration, adequate resources, dedicated faculty members and hard working students are the basic requirements of a sound Educational Institution.
### 2.23 ARTS AND SCIENCE COLLEGES IN KANYAKUMARI DISTRICT

#### 2.23.1 Aided Colleges

**TABLE 2.2**

**LIST OF ARTS AND SCIENCE AIDED COLLEGES IN KANYAKUMARI DISTRICT**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of College</th>
<th>Year of establishment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Arignar Anna college</td>
<td>1970</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Holy Cross College</td>
<td>1965</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lakshmipuram College</td>
<td>1964</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nesamony Memorial Christian College</td>
<td>1964</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pioneer Kumaraswamy College</td>
<td>1967</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S.T. Hindu College</td>
<td>1952</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scott Christian College</td>
<td>1893</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sree Ayyappa College</td>
<td>1969</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sree Devi Kumari Women's College</td>
<td>1965</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St. Jude's College</td>
<td>1980</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vivekanandha College</td>
<td>1965</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women's Christian College</td>
<td>1973</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: http://nxwiki.info/2011/05/list-of-arts-and-science-colleges-in-kanyakumari-nagercoil/
2.23.2 Self-financed Colleges

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of the College</th>
<th>Year of establishment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Annai Velankanni College</td>
<td>1987</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Malankara Catholic College</td>
<td>1998</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Muslim Arts College</td>
<td>1982</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N.I. Arts and Science College</td>
<td>2001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sivanthi Adithanar College</td>
<td>1984</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Udaya College of Arts and Science</td>
<td>2006</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V.T.M College of Arts and Science</td>
<td>2004</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St. Johns college of Arts and Science</td>
<td>2009</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St. Jeromes College of Arts and Science</td>
<td>2009</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: http://nxwiki.info/2011/05/list-of-arts-and-science-colleges-in-kanyakumari-nagercoil

The District has a long and distinguished record of education and literary achievements.