CHAPTER IV

BODY BUILDING AND REPAIR WORKS

The extension of bus routes needed the introduction of new buses which necessitated a separate department for bus body building. The activities of the department are spread over the entire State and in order to have maintenance facilities, various workshops and depots were constructed at all important places. The department has two well-equipped workshops, one at Chrompet and the other at Nagercoil for the purpose of body building and attending to major repair works. In addition to these, there are nine depots and seventeen sub-depots in various district headquarters.

Before the Reorganization of the States, the major overland of all the buses were carried out in the Trivandrum Central Workshop. Repairs for obtaining half yearly fitness certificate were also carried out in the Trivandrum Central Workshop. At the same time, Nagercoil Depot looked after only the maintenance work for the buses of the Depot.\textsuperscript{1} It was absolutely essential to organize a proper workshop on modern lines up to date with standards at Nagercoil for the purpose of carrying out heavy repairs to the vehicles of the depot. At the time, there was absolutely no place in the existing depot for carrying out major overhauls.\textsuperscript{2} Because of that, the Government had taken steps to find out alternative place with sufficient land area for the proposed workshop. The first step for the construction of the workshop at the Kanyakumari Branch was to acquire suitable land. The Assistant Engineer and the Junior Engineer of the Civil Section, the Mechanical Engineer and S. Sundaresan, Works Manager visited the various sites in and

\begin{flushleft}
\textsuperscript{1} G.O.Ms. No.2966, Home Department, dated 15\textsuperscript{th} November 1957.  \\
\textsuperscript{2} G.O.Ms.No.438, Home Department, dated 20\textsuperscript{th} February 1958.
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around Nagercoil for the purpose of locating the workshop on different dates. Finally, they selected the site on the Asaripallam road comprised in S.NO 53 (part) 55,585,586 and 587 of Vadaseri Village at Nagercoil. This entire site (called Ranithottam) belongs to Srimathi Utharam Lalith Bai Attingol Kochn Thamparan. The extensive site was suitable and a portion in the S.Nos. 585, 586 and 55 are covered by mango graves. Finally, the land was purchased at a cost of Rs.30/- per cent on an average and the total cost of acquiring the 15 acres of land was Rs.45,000. Besides, this land had proper electricity and water facility. The Government sanctioned a total sum of Rs.3 Lakhs for the construction of buildings in the Kanyakumari Branch. It was founded from the interim budget estimate in 1957-58.

**Condition of Buses**

At the time of States Reorganization, the Travancore Cochin State handed over sixty four buses to the Madras State on 01.11.1956. The Madras State Transport Department, immediately added six new Mercedes Benz buses on 01.11.1956 as the vehicles got from the Travancore Cochin State were in a poor condition, and additional schedules had to be run. Again on 07.12.1956, six more new Mercedes Benz vehicles were spared from the Madras city fleet for the public needs, especially for the frequent fairs and festivals in the Kanyakumari District. In this year, thirty petrol, and forty six diesel buses were functioning and most of them were Chevrolet 195"W.B,137” W.B, International 190"W.B, comer and

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3 Home Department Memo No.58108/ Tr. III/57-1, dated 17.06.1957
4 Letter from the Civil Engineer of the Public Works Department, Lr.(Genel)No.10313 Wks.1(1) 58-1, dated 25.02.1958
6 Letter from the Director of Madras State Transport Department to the Transport Commissioner of Kanyakumari branch, Lr. No.745/ Gen A/57, dated 01.06.1957.
Mercedes Benz.\textsuperscript{7} Among them, 15 new Mercedes Benze were regular operation, and the remaining sixty one buses, were considered to be not in good condition. Moreover, three fourth of the fleet were overaged or in bad condition including many of the 1953 comers needed repairs. These buses run inefficiently and gave in satisfaction to the public. Hence, it could be gain said that the expeditious replacement of a number of overaged buses was a dire necessity in the interests of efficiency and economy and in public interests.\textsuperscript{8}

The Director of the Madras State Transport Department inspected the department at Nagercoil and classified the buses in to five categories, viz. Vehicles in good condition (Group A), fair condition (Group B), passable condition (Group C), requiring heavy repairs (Group D) and to be condemned (Group E).\textsuperscript{9} Group E include all the overaged petrol buses (30 buses) and 2 international Diesel buses which were already decrepit. The primary object of the scrapping of petrol vehicles was in the interests of economical operation. As the petrol buses were running for about 2,500 miles a day and it was consuming about 350 gallons of gasoline per day, the elimination of these vehicles in the depot could save nearly Rs.20,000/- per month and Rs.2.4lakhs in a year.\textsuperscript{10} Moreover, the proposal was to condone 22 Chevrolet petrol buses of 1948 to 1951 model (Fleet nos.K.1 to K.22).

The eight International petrol buses which were in a bad state giving poor mileage (Fleet nos.K.23, 27,33,35,38,42,43 and 45) in addition to two International diesel (Fleet nos. K.29 and 40) which were in ramshackle state. Though some of the 1948 Chevrolet buses were running regularly and were better

\textsuperscript{7} G.O.Ms.No.2454, Home Department, dated 18\textsuperscript{th} September 1957, pp.13-14.
\textsuperscript{8} Ibid.,p.15
\textsuperscript{9} G.O.Ms.No.2965, Home Department, dated 15\textsuperscript{th} November 1965.
\textsuperscript{10} Minutes of the Madras State Transport Department, dated 29\textsuperscript{th} August 1957.
than some of the 1952 International or 1952 commers. Nevertheless, their engines were rebored and overhauled several times, the engines were rebored and overhauled several times, the chassis and cross members were fatigued or event cracked in many vehicles, transmission worn-out, body panels corroded and framework deteriorated. If these ramshackle vehicles ran, the public discontent will be intensified and breakdowns and inefficiency to in keeping up to the schedules would be more. Among these vehicles, the two diesel buses (international) became derelict because one was involved in a major accident and the other, it had been a non-runner from the beginning as the Travancore- Cochin State did not supplied engine spare parts and other components. Subsequently, some of the axle parts like brake drums, wheel discs and other parts of the 10 international buses to be condemned and used to keep the other Diesel international in fair order turn came for condemnation in 1958-59. Further, some of the international buses were scrapped and till the end of 1958-59, 16 commer vehicles of 1952 and 1953 models were run under the 1954 registration. But these vehicles were brought to Madras because the main reason was only one exit cum entrance. The interior height was not enough for city standees. Moreover, the seating arrangements were three seaters and longitudinal seat with narrow gangway which caused inconvenient for traffic in the city and the panels were also in a bad condition. But the real difficulty was the need of spare parts like crown wheel, pinion gear parts and bell housing and the some difficulty was experienced in Madras also. In 1956, six Mercedes Benz buses sent from Madras to the Nagercoil branch, but a diffidently was faced by the Nagercoil Branch, for luggage carriers were not provided. Because of this, the madras state transport buses replaced them by

11 Proceedings of the meeting of the Transport Committee held in the Chambers of Ministers (I), dated 29th August 1957, p.3.
12 Ibid., pp5-7.
13 Memo.No.49314, Transport Department III/57-5, dated 16.07.1957s
fitting luggage carriers, drawing them from moffusil routes. This was easily done by replacing them with six of the new comets with luggage carrier as and when received from Chrompet in May and June 1957.\textsuperscript{15}

During the discussions held by Deputy Director (Kanyakumari Region) with the representatives of workers in Ranithottam workshop, it was represented that it is not fair to adopt the same rate (percentage of bonus for the units produced in excess of the norm for both State Transport Central workshop and Ranithottam workshop. It has been argued that the strength of workers in the Bus body building section in Ranithottam workshop is 150 only whereas the strength of workers attached to the New Bus Body building group in State Transport Central Workshop is over 750 and that if the workers in Ranithottam workshop produce one unit over and above the norm in a month, with the same effort the workers in State Transport Central Workshop could produce 5 units over the above the norm for the workshop.\textsuperscript{16} It has also been argued that since the effort put in by the workers in both workshops will be the same in the above case, the sliding rate of bonus per unit for Ranithottam workshop should be five times the sliding rate fixed for State Transport Central Workshop which is only 1/5\textsuperscript{th} of the staff in State Transport Central Workshop. There is some weight in this demand of the workers. Further, the norm fixed for Ranithottam workshop (adopting the formula N/22 -1) is slightly higher than that fixed for State Transport Central Workshop (adopting the formula N/25-1). This was also discussed by the Deputy Director, Kanyakumari Region with the Special Secretary to the Government during his inspection visit to Kanyakumari on 12.11.71.\textsuperscript{17}

\textsuperscript{15} G.O.Ms.No.2454, \textit{op.cit.}, p.17.
\textsuperscript{16} G.O.Ms.No. 253, Transport Department, dated 31\textsuperscript{st} December 1971, p.3.
\textsuperscript{17} \textit{Ibid.}, p.4.
The actual replacement programme of the 32 over aged buses at Nagercoil. It no doubt be expedient and desirable to replace all of them in 1957 itself. But after taking into account the practical difficulties involved, the position of the city Transport to spare buses and the capacity of the workshop to build bodies and also commensurate with the budget provisions that exists at present the above proposals is submitted. The reasons are as follows. From Madras City, we cannot spare immediately 24 buses with luggage carriers. Difficulty is experienced in Nagercoil in not having provided luggage carriers for the 6 Mercedes Benz buses sent in December 1956 as the depot is unable to handle it. What we have to do is to send in June, 6 Mercedes Benz (Composite Body) fitted with luggage carriers (C.M.S type) with drawing them from moffusil routes. This can be easily done by replacing them with 6 of the new comets with luggage carrier as and when received from Chromepet in May and June 1957. There will not be dislocation to send 6 buses immediately. Then for the second batch of 6 buses we cannot send in July in which month, there will be heavy traffic and congestion in the city due to the opening of High Court, colleges and schools etc. and due to marriages. But we may withdraw 6 more Mercedes Benz at the end of July or in August fit them up with luggage carriers at Chromepet and send them in August to Nagercoil. These 12 new buses will be quite welcome at Nagercoil and will ease the situation considerably. Similarly one more batch of 6 Mercedes Benz may be sent in November after fitting up with luggage carrier to be in time to meet the Suchindram festival. This will considerably improve the situation. In the meantime, the comets would all have been received for the city transport to replace the Mercedes Benz sent from Madras though, of course, we have to halt the actual scrapping and disposal of some of the over aged blue Fords and defer the withdrawal from the Fleet for three or four months from June, to keep the madras fleet at 450. This is the only way to help the piquant situation in Nagercoil in

18 G.O.Ms.No.2454, Home Department, dated 18th September 1957, p.11.
1957. Though the city transport will be faced with difficulty in view of the retention of some old buses, yet we can try to manage the schedules in view of the new commets as action to acquire new chassis for replacement proposals is to be taken now.\textsuperscript{19}

The District Transportation Superintendent informs me that he has not experienced so far any trouble in running one case of clutch finger snapping. One but has done almost a lakh of miles and two about 60000 miles. The fleet sent from the city has done 25 to 30000 miles. We may therefore send 12 or 18 Mercedes Benz to Nagercoil and try them there. It is bearing failure in the Mercedes Benz Vehicles operated by Kerala Transport in some routes. One other consideration is not rushing more of the city type Mercedes Benz to Nagercoil is, all the bodies are 8’ broad. They are somewhat too broad for some of the narrow roads in Kanyakumari District. Some of the future buses after sending 12 or 18 City buses may be of 7’ – 6" in width when new chassis are bought for Nagercoil. 7’ – 6" bodies can be built at Chromepet for 1958 replacements.\textsuperscript{20}

Side by side with the above arrangements to reinforce the Fleet at Nagercoil, it is expedient and necessary to all for tenders for the medium diesel chassis suitable for city replacements and suitable for Nagercoil. Madras city will have still about 130 over aged vehicles after the comments are put on the road in September and Nagercoil will have, if the above programme is approved, 23 old buses to be replaced in 1958. It is essential to acquire at least 60 or 70 medium diesel buses in 1957 for our replacement programme from October onwards till the end of the financial year and for replacement in the beginning of 1958. From August 1957, there will not be much work for the frame work and blacksmith section at Chromepet and it is desirable to take action to acquire 60 or 70

\textsuperscript{19} Ibid., p.12.
\textsuperscript{20} G.O.Ms.No.2992, Home Department, dated 27\textsuperscript{th} October 1956, p.6.
medium chassis immediately. We can build some 7' -6" in October and November and send them to Nagercoil for replacement early in 1958.²¹

On receipt of Government orders approving condemnation of buses, auctions will have to be held both at Nagercoil and at Madras by bringing a few buses here as they will not fetch good prices there. But a few international buses may be kept there to canobalise the parts and keep the 1951 international diesels in reasonable condition.

In addition, in the very next month the transport department sent the second batch of 6 buses to the Nagercoil Depot. These 12 new buses inspired a welcome step at the Kanyakumari District and eased the situation considerably. Similarly one more batch of six Mercedes Benz buses were sent in November fitted with luggage carriers to be on fine to meet the needs of Suchindram Festival.²² It has considerably improved the situation. In the mean time, the comments would all have been received for the city transport to replace the Mercedes Benz set from Madras, through of course, to halt the actual scrapping and disposal of some of the overaged Blue Fords and defer the withdrawal from the fleet for three or four months from June, to keep the Madras fleet at 450. This was the only way to help the piquant situation in Nagercoil in 1957.²³ The Transport superintendent of Kanyakumari depot informed that the Mercedes Benz faced only one case of heavy failure and in another case, of clutch finger snapping. One bus had done almost a lakhs of miles and two about 60,000 miles. However, it was learnt inefficiently that there had been some case of bearing failure in the Mercedes Benz Vehicles operated by the Kerala Transport in some routes. Another consideration was not rushing more of the city type Mercedes Benz to Nagercoil was, all the

²¹ Ibid., p.7.
²² Letter from the Director, Madras state Transport Department to the Secretary to Government, Lr.No.KM.Engg./2224/57, dated 22.06.1957.
²³ G.O.Ms.No.1920, Home Department, 16th July 1957, p.34.
bodies were 8’ broad. But, they were somewhat too broad for some of the narrow roads in the Kanyakumari District. In the subsequent year of 1958, the buses of 7’-6” in width when new chassis were brought for Nagercoil. Side by side with the arrangements to reinforce the fleet at Nagercoil, it was expedient and necessary to call for tenders for the medium diesel chassis suitable for city replacement and it suitable for Nagercoil.

Consequent of the reorganization of States, transport department took over the state Transport service from 1.11.1956. The services in the Kanyakumari District were previously operated by the Travancore- Cochin State. They had parter with only 52 vehicles to the Nagercoil Branch and all the major repairs to Buses were carried out at their workshop at Trivandrum. This department was maintaining a fleet strength of 75 buses in the Kanyakumari branch. All the repairs were necessarily to be carried out in the Nagercoil depot itself and for this purpose, became a necessity a full-fledged workshop, well equipped with modernized machinery. So the Madras State Transport Department purchased the tank bed area of about 1 ½ acres adjacent to the Meenakshipuram depot from the Nagercoil Municipality. Moreover, at the Meenakshipuram depot a regular workshop carrying out major annual overhaul repairs, B.C. repairs and unit repairs. In addition, it carried out the day to day maintenance works were also done at the depot itself, for which the required ramps, washing platform, tyre inspection and booths for maintenance work were provide finally, collector of the Kanyakumari District opened a Municipals Bus Stand at Meenakshipuram.

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24 Ibid., p.38.
25 Letter from the Municipal Commissioner, Nagercoil to the Director of Madras State Transport Department, Lr No.1344, dated 24.08.1957.
26 G.O.Ms.No.2966, Home Department, dated 15th November 1957.
Kattabomman Transport Corporation came into being effect from 1.1.1974. At the time of take over it 106 Buses the Workshop and other Assets of the TamilNadu State Transport Department in Kanyakumari Region and about 106 Buses of the Pandiyan Roadways Corporation Ltd., in Tirunelveli District. The Transport Department did not release any of the Reserve Fund to the Corporation for drawing necessary Funds whenever the need occurs. In the Management of this Corporation which has nearly 500 Buses, have been experiencing considerable difficulty in the ways and means position.\textsuperscript{28}

At the time of take over the Corporation has got only the Capital Assets like the Buses and the Buildings in the Kanyakumari District and only Buses in Tirunelveli District. It got stores to the tune of about Rs.20 lakhs only of which the spare parts value only Rs.8 lakhs and the accessories to the Rs.12 lakhs. This amount has to be found from the resources of the Corporation either internally generated of obtained on cash credit from the Commercial Banks or by Loans from the Government. Besides, this Corporation has to build the minimum structures and procure the minimum machineries so that the repairs could be carried out effectively.\textsuperscript{29}

In the year 1972, the depot at Ranithottam having 100 vehicles was began to function with a maintenance shed of 12 boys where only 12 vehicles can be attended to at a time. Moreover repairs to other vehicles were to be carried out only in the open yard. Ranithottam is a place where we have more runs. It was therefore impossible to carry out the repairs with out sheds and the necessity for

\textsuperscript{28} Letter from the Secretary of State Transport Department to the Managing Director of Kattabomman Transport Corporation Limited Kanyakumari branch, Lr.No.169/PC/KTC/74, dated 13.07.1974.
\textsuperscript{29} G.O.Ms.No.507, Transport Department, dated 24\textsuperscript{th} July 1974, pp.1-3.
additional maintenance sheds was keenly felt. In addition to another twelve bays with servicing shops in the vicinity to accommodate machine shop, tinkering, welding, tailoring and carpentry. As a result of this inadequacy, Tamil Nadu State Transport department sanctioned an amount of Rs. 1,62,000 for the construction of an additional Maintenance shed at Ranithottam depot.

The public have reason to doubt whether the Transport Department in Kanyakumari district had been stricken with influenza. Ever since the transport system passed under the control of the Government of the transport service was in a State of paralysis. In the past the transport system was in such a deplorable condition that when a nut was required to repair the machine the superintendent had to go about from shop to shop near the tower-clock junction. Out of the 62 buses received as the share of the Kanyakumari district after State-reorganisation, 30 buses were unfit for the road service. The remaining ones together with the 12 buses that fell to the Kanyakumari district were unreliable and resulted in frequent breakdowns.

Regular periodicals maintenance and repairs to the buses are being carried. But the major repairs like annual overhaul, Fitness Certificate repairs and other works could be taken on the due dates for needs of spare parts vehicles under the situation. Asoka Leyland also assisted the department in attending to the maintenance and repairs in Ranithottam Depot. Maintenance work in the other depots has also been improved. Moreover, for attending to the breakdowns on line

30 Letter from the Director of Tamil Nadu State Transport Department of the Secretary, Transport Department, Lr.No. 8642/EC1/72 dated 23.10.1972.
34 Government Home Department Memo No.98611/Tr.III 157-1, dated 18th September 1957.
immediately, it is proposed to engage breakdown squads for various points in city
and they are provided with wireless sets for immediate attention. Message of
breakdowns will be conveyed over wireless and the squad will attend to the
vehicles without any loss of time.  

**Fleet Utilization**

The fleet utilization gives an idea of the share of the revenue earning
vehicles and is calculated by expressing the average number of vehicles on road as
a percentage of average number of vehicles held by the corporation. It is an
indicative of the number of vehicles that were available for operations by the
corporation on an average. There is every possibility of improvement of fleet
utilization in Tamil Nadu State Transport Department. Increase in fleet utilization
is a basic requirement for improving the operational and financial performance of
an undertaking. According to an estimate, an improvement of one percent fleet
utilization having a fleet of 100 and 5000 buses will mean a saving of Rs.15.0 and
75 lakhs of rupees per annum in capital investment. Therefore, efforts should be
done to increase fleet utilization in Tamil Nadu State Transport Department more
that 90 percent.

**Vehicle Utilization:**

Kilometers covered by a vehicle on road each day is called vehicle
utilization and it indicates the extent of use of vehicles made available for
operation. It is an indicator of efficiency of the traffic department of the
undertaking. While it is important that the maximum number of buses held should
be on road, it is equally important that they should be run for the maximum
number of kilometers possible per day. Higher vehicle utilization helps in

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36 Ibid., p.137.
distributing the fixed cost like the cost of personnel, motor vehicle taxes over a large number of kilometers thereby reducing the unit cost of operation and leads to better margins. For improving vehicle utilization, steps should be taken to increase the speed of the buses. Plying of buses on long routes and operations of extra services are other important factors which require attention for achieving better results in respect of vehicle utilization.

Fuel consumption is measured in terms of average kilometers obtained per liter of Hindustan Standard Diesel Oil, and which is commonly referred to as Kilometer per Litter (kilometers per liter). Better rate of Kilometer per Litter reduces the cost of operation of vehicles and vice versa. In Tamil Nadu State Transport Department branch at Ranithottam; Kilometer per Litter has been continuously improving during the period of study except 1989-90 in which Kilometer per Litter showed a minor decrease over its previous year. It increased from 4.12 in 1985-86 to 4.41 Kilometer per Litter in 1988-89. Moreover, Kilometer per Litter is dependents on many factors, some internal and some external. The internal factors are the age of the vehicle, driving habits etc. The external factor includes type of terrain, road conditions and other things.

**Tyre Consumption:**

Like fuel consumption tyre consumption is also a part of the operational costs having accounts for about on month of the cost of materials. In the Tamil Nadu State Transport Department, average kilometerage for a new tyre it fluctuated between 33 to 37 thousand kilometers. In a year it can be well improved in Tamil Nadu State Transport Department, because the road surface I the State are made better as on better road surface depreciation on tyre is less.
The workers were exhorted to discharge their duties properly and to ensure efficiency. In pursuance of the minister, the workers discharged their duties with sincerity. As a result some buses that could not be put on the road were renovated and put on the road. This was due to the sincere efforts of the Superintendent, foreman Gopi and the technical staff. In this situation, the superintendent appointed a few labourers on daily wages and thus a few unemployed were able to get jobs. The maneuvering of the political parties entered the department also. One of the persons appointed by the Superintendent on daily wages, belonged to a particular community word was the employed as a former driver of the jeep of the Nagercoil District Congress Committee. This seems to have been resented by some of the local leaders. Either one to this or for some other reasons fourteen persons employed under daily wages were disbanded. The poor workers went out weeping. Because of this disbandment several had to be cancelled with consequent financial loss to the Government. Whoever be the officers responsible for these lads deserve to be punished. No doubt, the superintendent who employed the labourers on daily wages and improved the machinery sent by the minister deserves the commendation of the people. The service was demoralised and public dissatisfaction increased and brought loss, and thus created a situation in which the transport system can be entrusted to private companies. This situation was changed by Venkataraman, who Laappnes to be the fit to renovated the consequently, the disbanded workers were reinstated and more workers were appointed on temporary basis. By this more, the old buses renovated.

38 Letter from the Director of Madras State Transport Department Lr.No.8811 Estt.A/57, dated 4.11.1957.
39 G.O.Ms.No. 186, Home Department, dated 22nd January 1957.
40 G.O.Ms.No. 3336, op.cit., p.4.
In accordance with the scheme of intensive bonus applicable to the workers attached to the tyre retreading section in transport department. The workers attached to the plant were sanctioned incentives bonus at 307% of a month basis pay for the bonus year 1969-1970 and a sum of Rs. 15,300 was draw and paid to them. As the attached to the tyre retreading plant in Ranithottam workshop did not earn any bonus, they were sanctioned 75% of a months basic pay as intensive bonus on an adhoc basic and a sum of Rs.1000 approximately was drawn and paid to them. The rate of bonus earned in a month is determined adopting the formula 

\[(P - \frac{9ND}{10})\]

‘N’ represents the number of men of the rolls on the 15th of the month; ‘D’ represents the number of working days on which the section functioned during the month and ‘p’ represents the actual production of the section during the month. For working out the bonus, each vulcanized tyre is treated as equivalent to one retreated tyre. In calculating the percentage of bonus for each month fractions of half and above are rounded off to the next whole number that can be earned in a month is restricted to 40% of a months basic pay. The scales of pay of all categories of staff have been revised with effect from 02.10.1970 by merging a substantial portion of the Dearness Allowance with the basic pay. The average basic pay of a worker attached to the section is Rs.150. The man hour rate (for State Transport Corporation Workers) has also been revised as Rs.120 for the year 1970-1971 and Rs.125 for the year 1971-1972. As the derivation of the formula mentioned was directly linked to the man hour rate and average basic pay of a worker it has become necessary to revise the formula for determining the percentage of bonus earned by the workers during the bonus year 1970-1971. Taking these changes into account, the rate of bonus earned in a month has to be determined by adopting the revised formula “3.2 \[(P - \frac{9ND}{10})\]” for the months from 7th October 1970.

G.O.Ms.No.2136, Transport Department, dated 7th October 1970.
October 1970 to March 1971. As a result, the workers attached to the tyre retreading plant in Madras have earned 162% of a basic pay.\textsuperscript{42}

**Hindustan Standard Diesel Oil**

Supplies of Hindustan Standard Diesel Oil to the Nagercoil Depot of the Tamil Nadu State Transport Department are made from the Trivandrum Depot. The Indian Oil Corporation, Central Sales Tax at 3\% per kilolitre is to the suppliers by the Department. The Indian Oil Corporation informed Tamil Nadu State Transport Department that though the supplies for Nagercoil were to be made from the corporation’s Pettai Depot, recovering Madras Sales Tax at Rs.100/- per kilolitre, it had as a special case, been effecting supplies from Trivandrum Depot, for giving the Tamil Nadu State Transport Department the benefit of lower rate of sales Tax and in the interests of the Department’s operational economy.\textsuperscript{43}

As the supplies are made from Trivandrum Depot, Central Sales Tax at 3\% is being paid. Had the supplies been obtained from Pettai Depot in stead of from Trivandrum Depot, no Central Sales Tax would be payable. The extra expenditure towards the difference in freight charges for the supplies from Pettai Depot instead of Trivandrum would be 7.49 per kilolitre whereas the Central Sales Tax paid is Rs.22/- per kilolitre if the supplies are obtained from Pettai Depot. The Department had purchased about 16700 kilolitres from Trivandrum Depot, during the period January 1966 to March 1970. There would thus have been not savings to the tune of Rs.2, 42,317 on this quality at Rs.14.51 per kilolitre. The Tamil Nadu State Transport Department would accrue to the Government of Tamil Nadu. Therefore, the Director to enquire whether this aspect of net savings to the Government of Tamil Nadu was considered before permitting the Department to

\textsuperscript{42} G.O.Ms.No.127, Transport Department, dated 24\textsuperscript{th} November 1971.
\textsuperscript{43} G.O.Ms.No.486, Home Department, dated 9\textsuperscript{th} August 1973.
purchase the requirements of Hindustan Standard Diesel Oil for Kanyakumari Branch from Trivandrum.\textsuperscript{44}

Despite good performance in the physical parameters, which have been appreciated by the Union Planning Commission, time and again, the financial conditions of the State Transport Undertakings have come under considerable pressure in the absence of revision of fare. Due to the increase in the establishment and operational costs and the fare per kilometer remaining unrevised for last seven years which being the lowest in the country, the overall expenditure of the State Transport Undertakings has increased. The loss for the year 2008-09 is Rs.710.14 crores (pre-audit), against Rs.379.57 crores in 2003-04. There is considerable improvement in consumption of HSD and the KMPL of HSD oil consumed has improved form 5.03 during 2003-04 to 5.13 during 2003-04. The approximate savings on account of improvement in KMPL is around Rs.42.00 Crores in 2002-03. Similarly engine oil consumption per 10000 kms has come down from 4.70 litres to 4.07 litres in 2003-04.

The Government of India periodically revises the price of the Petroleum products depending upon global prices. Diesel cost for an State Transport Undertaking accounts for 48 percent. The expenditure on consumption of diesel for the State Transport Undertakings was Rs.1865 crores in the year 2002-03 and Rs.2129.20 crores in the year 2003-04.

**Motor Vehicles Maintenance Organization**

The Motor Vehicles Maintenance Organization was constituted as a separate department of the State Transport Organization of a Director in June 1977. It is responsible for the upkeep and maintenance of the vehicles of various

\textsuperscript{44} G.O.Ms.No.185, Transport Department, dated 30\textsuperscript{th} March 1973.
Government departments throughout the state. Comprising of twenty Government Automobile Workshops situated in various district headquarters all over the state and three Regional Deputy Directorate at Trichy, Salem and Madurai it is functioning for the past thirty years as a Service Department with the Director as the head of the department.\textsuperscript{45} This department is looking after the maintenance of nearly 14,000 Government Vehicles. A Secretariat Service Station is functioning to carryout minor and repairs of VIP vehicles and vehicles of secretaries to Government. There are ten fuel dispensing Bunk functioning under the control of this department. The Motor Vehicles Maintenance Department has already been computerized with broadband and internet facilities. In view of the above, the vehicles position and stock position in the unit workshops are being monitored from the Director.\textsuperscript{46}

The main objective of this department is to provide quality service to Government vehicles in an economical and efficient manner. Inorder to release the vehicles quickly after carrying out repairs, as a first step at the Government Central Automobile Workshops, Chennai necessary action is being taken to provide generator set facility at a cost of Rs.17.40 lakhs.\textsuperscript{47} Government have enhanced the purchase powers to the unit officers of Motor Vehicles Maintenance Department for purchasing spare parts and essential materials to attend to repairs. In view of this, the downtime of the vehicles has been reduced radically and the vehicles reported for repair are released in short period.\textsuperscript{48}

\textsuperscript{45} TamilNadu State Administration Report 1979-80, Madras, 1982, p.369.  
\textsuperscript{46} Transport Department Policy Note 2007-08, Demand No.40, p.22.  
\textsuperscript{47} Transport Department Policy Note 2009-10, Demand No.48, p.35.  
\textsuperscript{48} Ibid., p.36.