CHAPTER I

EARLY HISTORY OF ROAD TRANSPORT

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

Genesis of Early Transport

In early times man being a hunter or a food gatherer was forced to move from place to place in search of food and shelter.\textsuperscript{1} For centuries, he travelled no farther than he could go on foot and moved only with those goods he could be carried on his back.\textsuperscript{2} When the earliest man established a permanent settlement and could cultivate the land, he realized the importance of agriculture. The development of brisk, safe and economical transportation enabled them to transform the world. By carrying the raw materials and finished goods of commerce and industry to world market, transportation makes food, clothing and other necessities of life readily available to the people who required it. By bringing distant people into contact with one another, transportation helps to

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spread ideas and culture and to foster international understanding and cooperation too.\textsuperscript{3} Until the development of telegraph, telephone, wireless, television and such other scientific inventions in the 19\textsuperscript{th} and 20\textsuperscript{th} centuries, transportation was the only means of conveying information over great distances.\textsuperscript{4} In ancient times civilizations flourished on river valleys and many developments took place in the river valley settings. It is natural that there was significant development in water transport, which also had taken place early in human history.\textsuperscript{5} No doubt, the first watercraft, bundles of papyrus rushes made into a simple raft or canoe served well in Egypt, where there were few native woods for boats, while dug-out canoe and wicker baskets covered with hides were used on the river valleys.\textsuperscript{6} People discovered that travelling on water was faster and easier than travelling on land and it seems that a floating log may have served as the first boat. It was later found that heavier loads could be carried on rafts made by lashing several logs together. In the Middle East, rafts were kept afloat by sheepskin and goatskin filled with air. Wherever people could find large trees, the hollowed out logs with fire or a chisel and made long, narrow boats called dugout canoes. These boats were propelled with long poles and later with paddles as oars. An important discovery was made when it was found that the wind could be harnessed and used as power to drive boats. Different materials, such as grass mats, animal hides, or cloth, served as sails in different countries.

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

\textsuperscript{3} The New Book of Knowledge, Vol.18, Danbury, 1994, p.281.
\textsuperscript{5} Grolier Encyclopedia of Knowledge, Vol. 18, Danbury, 1993, p.325.
\textsuperscript{7} Leon L. Baram, Funk and Wagnall’s New Encyclopedia, Vol.25, 1876, p.281.
to a carrier or drawn vehicle. No doubt, the earliest form of such a carrier was
the sledge, the first of the wheelless vehicles.\(^8\) Those of bark or hide were
useful only for light work, but others made of boughs of trees were quite
adequate for dragging light loads over grass marsh or snow. But, the true
sledge appeared when an inventive individual saw the advantage of adding
carefully shaped runners to slide smoothly over the ground.\(^9\) The next
development in the ancient form of transportation was the litter, which may be
used as the first vehicle designed to carry people. Usually, litters were made by
stretching animal skins across two poles.\(^10\)

For many centuries even the invention of the wheel had little effect on
transportation, because of the absence of roads. It is believed that the
Sumerians, who lived in Western Asia about 3000 B.C., seem to have been the
first people to use the wheel, as a great step forward in transport.\(^11\) The earliest
wheels were probably made of three wide planks held together by cross pieces,
with a hole in the center for the axle. In some places, a solid disk cut from a log
was used.\(^12\) With the introduction of the wheel, a revolution in land transport
occurred. Carts and Wagons (with wheels first of solid and later of spooked
construction) were used as *hearses* at royal funerals, as engine clumsy two-and
four- wheeled vehicles never were popular because good roads were seldom
available. One of the major exceptions was the development of the war chariot
an adaptation of the spooked wheel and delicately balanced two-wheeled
vehicle. So long as there were no wheeled vehicles, roads with prepared
surfaces were not needed. Paths and tracks first made by wild animals and later
by domesticated cattle were always available and were put to use.\(^13\)

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Earliest man, confronted by a hostile environment, was forced to move from place to place in a never-ending journey in search of food. Quite logically, he took with him only those parcels of his personal property that he (and most of all, his woman) could carry. However, in course of time he learned that many animals could be domesticated and used not only for food, milk and hides but also as beasts of burden and draft. Perhaps, the oldest draft animals were the asses, elephant, camel, horses, ponies, mules and bullocks. Subsequently, some of them were also used to draw carts.\(^{14}\)

Elephants were mostly used to transport heavy and bulky commodities like timber from dense forests, where no other means of transport was possible. Though they are expensive, they are valuable for the work they turn over as well as their ivory, skin and bones got when they die.\(^{15}\) Nowadays, we see elephants being used to transport huge logs of wood in hilly regions and in dense forests besides in the timber depots. Camel, the next important animal was used for transportation in the desert region. It carries the commodities from one place to another very easily. Still, camel is used mostly in North India as a vehicle for transport and is quite valuable in desert areas.\(^{16}\) Besides camel, donkey was another important animal mostly used for carrying goods from one place to another. It carries many types of commodities including sand, bricks, provisions and timber. Even now, donkeys are mainly used by washer men\(^{17}\) to carry the dirty clothes to the rivers and to bring back the washed clothes to their homes or shops. Even today, in Kerala one could see that, merchants use the donkeys to carry goods to the top of the hills especially to the place where the Ayyappa temple is situated. Still, in many places donkeys are serving as vehicle to carry goods.

\(^{17}\) It can be noted that even today donkeys are used to transport goods on hilly regions where automobiles cannot ply. Washer men in certain location used donkeys to carry loads.
The symbol of the antiquity in road transport in India is the bullock cart, which is even today the main means of transport in the villages in India. Considering the volume of goods it carries, it is as important as the railway in land transport, though the two are by no means competitive and comparable.\textsuperscript{18}

The bullock cart as we know is essentially a slow, short-haul carrier of the rural areas and is a feeder and distributor to the railways. In spite of the rapid mechanization of the transport system, the bullock cart has definitely retained its place even in the modern days. Therefore, it cannot be ousted for many years to come, because the average rural roads in India would not accommodate any means of transport other than the bullock carts. The design of the bullock cart is simple and that it is made and maintained locally by using simple mechanism to suit the local environment.\textsuperscript{19}

Other than bullocks, horse is yet another important animal domesticated for transport of goods. Horse carts exist mostly in town side, as they need good roads. The most revolutionary innovation, however, was the development of an efficient method of harnessing a horse to a vehicle. In the 5\textsuperscript{th} century A.D, the Chinese devised a collar that placed the stress on the horse’s chest muscles rather than the neck muscles. The animal was then able to exert its full strength and to pull comfortably. This collar harness was not widely adopted in the 10\textsuperscript{th} century A.D. However, about the same time, horseback riding was facilitated by the introduction of iron horseshoes and the general use of stirrups.\textsuperscript{20} Thus, the job of pulling heavy loads tells to the more solidly built oxen, which were strong but slow. With the improved horse collar, the horse could pull heavy loads without being choked. In addition, the new shoes protected the horse’s hooves, enabling it to travel faster and longer distances.\textsuperscript{21} These two inventions greatly speeded up transportation on land.

\textsuperscript{18} Transport in India, Publication Division Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Delhi, 1967, p.15.
\textsuperscript{19} Role of Bullock carts and Trucks in Rural Transport-Case Studies, Planning Commission, Government of India, Delhi, 1963, p.3.
\textsuperscript{20} The New Book of Knowledge, \textit{op.cit.}, p.282.
\textsuperscript{21} New Standard Encyclopedia, \textit{op.cit.}, p.364.
In course of time, the mounting population facing the multiplicity of demands and requirements felt that the means of transport through animals is slow and its carrying capacity is limited though it is cheap, as it has no fuel or maintenance costs like the mechanized transport. Most animals eat natural vegetation and hence the owner incurs negligible expenses in buying them fodder. Moreover, they felt that transport through animals is also a flexible service. Since it is available at all hours of the day, it takes any route and needs no prepared track. However, it is regrettable facts that pack animals have been neglected in recent years in economic planning.

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

Stage coaches were used in the American colonies about A.D 1756 with the setting up of a stagecoach service between Philadelphia and New York. A good percentage of people used to travel from one place to another through the

24 Grolier Encyclopedia of Knowledge, op.cit., p.84.
stagecoaches. In the early stage, people travelled freely, but in a very short time, the owner collected fares from the travellers. Subsequently, the Conestoga wagon, which was first built in Lancaster County, began to be used in Pennsylvania by about A.D 1750. It was considered the most dependable freight carrier until the road-rail began to see the light of the day. The body of the Conestoga wagon was designed with an upward slope at each end to keep the cargo from spilling out when the wagon travelled uphill or downhill. A large canvas cover over a hoop frame protected the passengers and their goods from the rain and the scorching heat of the sun. The wagon was drawn by two to six horses or mules and could hold from 2 to 4 tons of cargo.\textsuperscript{27}

In spite of various developments in the field of the transport system, human porterage continued to be fairly significant in our country. Human porters carried goods wherever no alternative transport is available in the city lanes, hill tracks or at other places. In recent years, there has been an increase in the number of persons who have adopted porterage as a means of livelihood due to the large degree of unemployment and poverty in the country. Still recently, porterage and rickshaw pulling are the main means of livelihood to migrants in the city from villages affected by droughts and unemployment.\textsuperscript{28} They also used handicrafts for the purposes which are sometimes licensed by local bodies. The porterage depends normally on the load, the hour of the day, the distance and the state of competition particularly from other porters and the paying capacity of the person requiring the service and was determined by bargaining between him and the porter. Some porters like railway coolies have organized themselves effectively to prevent underpayment and unhealthy competition. Moreover, they have their porterage rates fixed by the authorities.\textsuperscript{29}

\textsuperscript{27} New Book of Knowledge, \textit{op.cit.}, p.283.
Chariot was also one of the transport vehicles in ancient times. A chariot was a fast, open, two-or four wheeled vehicle pulled by horses. It was also used for warfare, hunting, processions and racing in ancient times. It was built in Mesopotamia as early as 3000 BC. This vehicle spread to Egypt, Greece and Rome eventually even to Britain.\(^{30}\) The Chariot was important as an instrument of war, as also a racing one. In ancient Tamil Nadu, one of the important organs of war was chariots. It was mainly used as a vehicle by the kings and other members of the royal house. Now, the chariots of a large size are available in Hindu temples and Catholic Churches. However, nowadays, chariots are not used for the purpose of transport.

Another significant development in the transport system is the use of the rickshaw and the cycle-rickshaw propelled by human labour, which are two main passenger-transports available in towns and cities even at present. The man pulled rickshaws are becoming unpopular because they are considered as inhuman. The cycle rickshaw substituted the man-pulled rickshaw, which was not a healthy occupation, though it may be less in human, as it causes in many instances hernias, varicose veins and other complications within a few years. It was also common among the youths and old men driving them due to sheer poverty. Restrictions regarding the number or age of rickshaw drivers are not immediately practicable due to the serious unemployment problem in cities.\(^{31}\) However, with the passage of time, human rickshaws were replaced by cycle-rickshaws and later on by motor-rickshaws.

**Invention of Automobiles**

With the growth of population coupled with large number of demands, the available transport system was found inadequate. Therefore, people began to stem the tide to find out new means of transport. One such facility invented

\(^{31}\) Ramaswami, K.S., *op.cit.*, p.156.
was the automobiles. Auto is a Greek word meaning “self”, while “mobile” is a Latin word, meaning movable, and so automobile is a self-powered vehicle capable of being steered by an operator and designed for use on a roadway or street.\textsuperscript{32} The term is used more specifically to denote such a vehicle designed to carry two to seven people. In due course, depending on the necessity, large vehicles were designed for more passengers and are called omnibuses or buses and they were designed to carry freight or trucks.\textsuperscript{33} The primary components of an automobile are the power plant, the power transmission, the running gear and the control system. These constitute the chassis, on which the body is mounted. The power plant includes the engine and its fuel, carburetion, ignition, lubrication and Cooling systems and the starter or electric plant.\textsuperscript{34}

The first new mode of transportation that challenged the railroad was the motor vehicle, which was made possible by the invention in the 1860’s and 70’s of the Internal-Combustion Engine.\textsuperscript{35} The automobile found its greatest popularity in the United States, where the first “horseless carriages” appeared in the 1890’s.\textsuperscript{36} The application of this invention to transportation in the early 1800’s led to the development of the railway, which gradually replaced the stage coach, carriages, wagons and many other overland systems of travel. Early self-propelled road vehicles were powered by steam or electricity. Opening the way for the modern automobile was the invention of the internal combustion engine, fueled by gasoline in AD 1876.\textsuperscript{37} Etienne Lenoir of France developed a gasoline-powered internal-combustion engine in AD 1860.

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\textsuperscript{32} Leon L.Baram, \textit{op.cit}, Vol.3, Chicago, 1876, p.126.
\textsuperscript{36} The New Book of Knowledge, \textit{op.cit.}, p.283.
\textsuperscript{37} New Standard Encyclopedia, \textit{op.cit.}, p.365.
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the German Nikolans Otto built an improved gasoline engine.\textsuperscript{38} Within a few decades, automobiles and other motor vehicles such as cars, trucks and buses were in widespread use. Highways were laid and then improved to accommodate the ever-increasing number of vehicles. Gasoline stations and other auxiliary services were established. Land transportation in the years since the invention of the internal combustion engine had been marked by the improved vehicle design and new applications of power. The development of the diesel engine, a type of internal combustion one that uses oil for fuel, provided a powerful but economic source of energy for locomotives, large motor vehicles and increasingly, automobiles.\textsuperscript{39} The turbine engine continued to be held back by high manufacturing costs and other problems, technical hurdles remained for the revived sterling engine, the steam engine, which was the object of experimentation in passenger cars during the 1960’s and 70’s.\textsuperscript{40}

Diesel V-8 engines appeared in the late 1970’s in General Motors Corporation cars and 4-cylinder diesels were used increasingly.\textsuperscript{41} During the early 1980’s because of the engine’s superior fuel economy, which was up to 25 percent better than that of a comparable gasoline engine was more commonly used? It is estimated that diesel use in new cars could reach 25 percent or more by 1985, but the concern that diesel exhaust may contain carcinogen continued to retard diesel development.\textsuperscript{42} There were many early attempts to produce a horseless vehicle. As a result, Cugnot, a Frenchman, was, however, entitled to the credit of constructing a vehicle in 1970 which contained the features of the modern car.\textsuperscript{43} Also the ever increasing costs of running a car, especially the rising costs of petrol, led to the introduction of

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\item \textsuperscript{38} Britannica Student Encyclopedia, \textit{op.cit.}, p.237.
\item \textsuperscript{39} Rajan Pendharkar, “Automobile Industry the Vehicle Growth”, \textit{The Economic Scene}, Vol.IV, No.6, June 1979, p.27.
\item \textsuperscript{40} \textit{Ibid.}, pp.30-33.
\item \textsuperscript{42} \textit{Ibid.}, pp.44-45.
\item \textsuperscript{43} Collingwood, L., \textit{op.cit.}, p.58.
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more economy cars on to the market from both home and overseas manufacturers.\textsuperscript{44} The modern development in the motorcar was centered on production of new batteries for powering electric cars, diesel engine and petrol engine carburetion to improve fuel consumption.

**Bus Transport**

The buses used today are a large motor vehicle, equipped with seats for passengers that are usually operated on a regular schedule along a fixed route. Because it is relatively inexpensive to purchase and to operate, it can be used on existing roads and highways. The motorbus is the most common form of public transportation worldwide. The motorbus is a descendant of the horse-drawn omnibus. The mathematician Blaise Pascal helped to introduce the first known omnibus service in Paris in AD 1662. At first, the service was free and so very popular. As soon as a fare was charged, however, patronage declined, and the service too was soon withdrawn.\textsuperscript{45} But, in 1819, the omnibus service was revived in Paris and New York, which could carry up to 16 passengers. Soon, most of the major cities had an omnibus service, and the Latin word omnibus (“for everyone”) was shortened to the well-known term ‘bus.’\textsuperscript{46}

During the first two decades of the 20\textsuperscript{th} century, large and long-framed automobiles that seated 12 to 20 persons and bus like bodies were set on truck chassis. But this design was neither durable nor comfortable for the passengers.\textsuperscript{47} In Oakland, Calif, Frank and William Fageol built a more suitably designed bus in AD 1920. The floor was lowered to allow easy boarding and the seats were made comfortable, with improved brakes and engine.\textsuperscript{48} However, the motor transport development in India had many handicaps. Motor vehicles, spare parts, petrol and diesel had to be imported.

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\textsuperscript{44} Academic American Encyclopedia, *op.cit.*, p.278.  
\textsuperscript{46} *Ibid.*, p.586  
\textsuperscript{47} Leon L.Baram, *op.cit.*, p.13.  
\textsuperscript{48} Rajana Pendharkar, *op.cit.*, p.28.
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But, with the establishment of refineries in India, and the reorganization of the automobile industry, this ceased to be a serious limitation.\textsuperscript{49} Motorbus is a big sized motor vehicle used mainly for the purpose of carrying passengers. It can accommodate 40 to 80 passengers. The double deckers are capable of carrying even more passengers. They are generally controlled or common carriers and are rarely owned by individuals for private use. Though the capital costs as well as operating charges were high, it proved to be the cheapest means of transport. It serves on long routes ranging from 100 to 800 kilometers. The contract buses may undertake journeys even for long distances. It is a very popular means of transport and is a great competitor and supplementary to rail transport. The motor buses are increasing in all the countries for shifting passenger traffic at short distance.

The growth of the use of motor vehicle has greatly increased during the pre and post-war periods accompanied by the expansion of road laying all over the country. The present highway system can therefore be described as a concurrent development with motor vehicles.\textsuperscript{50} Thus, the motor vehicle emerged as an important means of transport during the inter-war period and has gained rapid popularity in the post-independence period.\textsuperscript{51} Beginning in a small way, after the First World War, by AD 1938-39, commercial motor transport system comprised a total fleet of 23,645 buses and 12,397 trucks were in operation in ‘British India’.\textsuperscript{52} At the end of the Second World War in 1946-47, the number of buses had increased to 40,107. At the commencement of the First Five Year Plan, there were 34,411 buses, in 1960-61 the number increased

\textsuperscript{49} Ramaswami, K.S., \textit{op.cit.}, p.163
\textsuperscript{50} “Faster Pace of Vehicular Growth and more Transport Facilities”, \textit{Tamil Arasu}, Vol.III, No.13, May 1973, p.32.
\textsuperscript{51} Srivastava, S.K., “Economics of Transport with Special Reference to Transport Development in India, New Delhi, 1971, p.10.
\textsuperscript{52} Committee on Transport Policy and Coordination-Final Report, Government of India, Planning Commission, New Delhi, January 1966, p.76.
to 57,049. Thus, over the decade, buses increased by about 66 percentage.\textsuperscript{53} Realizing the indispensability of the transport system as a major factor for the development of national and international economy, various steps were taken by the government to co-ordinate and regulate the development of road transport.

**Regulation of the Transport Department**

The regulation of passenger transport seems to be simple, thanks to the policy of nationalization worked out by the states.\textsuperscript{54} The only protection that the public needs is to provide freedom to the Road Transport Authorities to functions independently to prompted enough number of vehicles and services on-every route.\textsuperscript{55} Each state has one State Transport Authority and as many Regional Transport Authorities as the number of regions into which the state is divided for the administration.\textsuperscript{56} The authorities are appointed by the State Government.\textsuperscript{57} The administrative set-up of the Transport Department in the state was reorganized with the effect from 1\textsuperscript{st} January 1950 when the amendment issued in the Motor Vehicle Act 1945 came into force.\textsuperscript{58}

Motor transport was first regulated under the Indian Motor Vehicles Act, 1914. This legislation did not distinguish between different kinds of motor vehicles and imposed no restriction on their movement. As motor transport began to grow, the need for greater control over motor transport was felt, from the point of view of the safety and convenience of the public, as well as the development of a coordination system of transport. This led to the passing of the Motor Vehicles Act, 1939. The Act created regional and Provincial

\textsuperscript{53} Ibid. pp. 112-118.
\textsuperscript{54} Transport in India, *op.cit.*, p.15.
\textsuperscript{55} Ramanadham, V.V., *Economics of Road-Rail Policy*, Madras, 1957, p.257.
\textsuperscript{56} Committee on Transport Policy and Coordination-Final Report, *op.cit.*, p.81.
\textsuperscript{58} Madras State Administration Report 1955-56, Madras, 1957, p.28.
Transport Authorities. They were authorized to grant permits for stage carriages, public and private carriers, and to provide rules concerning routes, timings, specifications of vehicle, standards of maintenance and other conditions under which holders of permits were expected to operate. The Transport Department was under the administrative control of the Transport Commissioner who was the first member of the Board of Revenue. The Transport Commissioner is the State Transport Authority. He is assisted by a Joint Transport Commissioner who is the Secretary to the Transport Commissioners and two Deputy Transport Commissioners, one functioning as Secretary of the State Transport Authority.\textsuperscript{59} Thus, there are four zonal Deputy Transport Commissioners and eighteen Regional Transport Officers in the State.\textsuperscript{60} The Regional Transport Officer in the districts acted as Secretaries to the Regional Transport Authority who is District Collectors. The Department administered the provisions of the Motor Vehicle Act 1939, “Tamil Nadu Motor Vehicle Taxation Act 1974” and the rule made there under.\textsuperscript{61}

With a view to advice the Regional Transport Authorities under the new set up, the Government has constituted District Transport Advisory Committees in each district with the District Collector as the Secretary. Moreover, the District Superintendent of Police, the President of the District Board and the Chairman of the Municipality in the headquarters of the district are also appointed as members of the Advisory Committee.\textsuperscript{62} The Regional Transport Officer has the right to issue the license. In the beginning, the Regional Transport Officer managed the Transport Department. Bus transport management consists of many segments such as traffic operations, marketing of seats provided in the buses and their maintenance, Material Management, Personnel Management and Financial Management. All these segments need to

\textsuperscript{59} Madras State Administration Report 1958-59, Madras, 1960, p.32.  
\textsuperscript{60} Madras State Administration Report 1957-58, Madras, 1959, p.63.  
be integrated into a system of proper management. The present day transport management has become system-oriented and sophisticated in management techniques.

Public Transport

On 28th December 1944 the General Committee of Post-war reconstruction resolved that the post-war period Public Passenger Transport Service in the Presidency should be owned and managed by the State itself. Therefore, it recommended to the Government to take immediate steps to work out in detail a plan for (i) taking over existing bus services, (ii) drawing plans of opening new service routes not served by the existing transport companies, and (iii) working out service conditions on a uniform standard. In pursuance of this, the Government of Madras decided to nationalize the bus transport service in the State and appointed a sub-committee to work out the details in December 1946. Based on the findings of the committee, the Government decided to nationalize the bus services in stages spread over a definite period. Thus nationalization was started with the first batch of six Government buses put on the road on 24th March 1947. This was progressively increased and replaced the private operators one by one.

Private Transport

Prior to the introduction of nationalization of bus operation in Tamil Nadu, private managements enjoyed the right to own and operate buses for the conveyance of the people. But, in due course, they dominated the scene and

64 Ibid., p.4.
66 Ibid., pp.50-51.
introduced various restrictions according to their whims and fancies. The commuters normally have to depend on the bus management. The major transport operators before national station of bus routes were T.V.S of Madurai, Annamalai Bus Transport of Coimbatore and Raman and Raman of Kumbakonam. The present Kanyakumari district was not a part of the State of Madras till 1956. The State Re-Organisation Committee carved out the present district by composing the Tamil speaking areas of erstwhile Travancore-Cochin State. The Kanyakumari district, before its formation, had the benefit of enjoying nationalized transport system. The erstwhile native state of Travancore nationalized the road transport system by plying state owned buses in long routes like Trivandrum to Nagercoil and Kanyakumari. As such, the district at its dawn itself had its own nationalized transport buses. For sometime, the district headquarters was connected with Tirunelveli, Kovilpatti and Madurai buses owned by private operators. Most of the routes connecting Nagercoil were dominated by Pioneer Transport, Sri Ganapathy Motors and P.T.M, all of them were private bus operators. These private operators were controlled by the Regional Transport Officers. This private transport system was mostly abolished and all routes were nationalised. Not only in the Kanyakumari district, but in other areas as well where private buses were operated when the Drivida Munata Kazhalagam Party came to power in the State in 1967.

**Nationalization of Transport**

According to the Government records, the intention of the Government is to nationalize the public motor transport in the Madras province. It has to be noted that the General Committee of the Post-War Reconstruction Committee as early as December 1944 resolved to recommend to the Government that

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public transport should be state-owned and state-managed.\textsuperscript{69} The scheme of nationalisation of bus transport was first implemented in this State in October 1947\textsuperscript{70} and by June 1948 the entire bus services in the Madras city were nationalised. By the end of 1947, the Government Bus Service had put on the roads 100 buses which rose to 202 in 1948. At the end of 1948 all private operators had been eliminated from the routes in the city and the Government fleet strength rose to 320.\textsuperscript{71} The strength further increased to 322 at the end of June 1951.\textsuperscript{72} Accordingly, the traffic needs have to be increased to cope up with the increasing strength from year to year and the fleet strength by the end of 1960 was 550.\textsuperscript{73} Consequent to nationalisation, buses of various makes and types were taken over. Therefore, to maintain the various types of vehicles and to get spare parts for them there was a force to follow standardization of the vehicles.\textsuperscript{74}

\textbf{Bus Transport System in Kanyakumari District}

Kanyakumari district was merged with the State of Madras from the former Travancore Cochin State on 1\textsuperscript{st} November 1956.\textsuperscript{75} The bus transport service operated by erstwhile Travancore state in the Kanyakumari District was also taken over by Madras State Government.\textsuperscript{76} Consequent on the reorganization of state the Government of Madras took over on 1\textsuperscript{st} November 1956, the State Transport Services in the areas got transferred to state of Madras from the former Travancore-Cochin State.\textsuperscript{77} On 1.11.1956, 45 bus services in the Kanyakumari District were taken over from the erstwhile

\begin{thebibliography}{9}
\bibitem{69} “Nationalization of Road Transport”, \textit{Madras Information}, Vol.1, No.10, March 29, 1947, p.10.
\bibitem{70} G.O.Ms.No.1751, Home Department, dated 25\textsuperscript{th} March 1964, p.1.
\bibitem{72} \textit{Ibid.}, pp. 98-99.
\bibitem{73} Madras State Administration Report 1957 -58, \textit{op.cit.}, p.63.
\bibitem{74} Madras State Administration Report 1958 -59, \textit{op.cit.}, p.63.
\bibitem{76} \textit{Ibid.}, p.2.
\bibitem{77} G.O.Ms. No. 392, Transport Department, dated 14\textsuperscript{th} July 1977, p.71.
\end{thebibliography}
Travancore- Cochin State by the Madras State Transport Department. Thereafter, every year, the fleet strength has to be increased and several new routes are to be extended. Consequently, new routes were opened in an adhoc basis.\textsuperscript{78} At first, the Kanyakumari Branch functioned with a fleet strength of 76 buses of which 53 buses were operated.\textsuperscript{79} Special services were operated during festival seasons, especially during the St.Xavier’s Church Festival at Kottar, Suchindram Car Festival and Church Festival at Cape Comorin. The system of granting concessions to students at the rate of 50 percent followed by the erstwhile Travancore-Cochin state was continued. The total number of such tickets issued from 1\textsuperscript{st} November 1956 to 31\textsuperscript{st} December 1956 was 1,093.\textsuperscript{80}

During the year 1957-58 twenty-three Tata Benz model vehicles were added to the fleet. Consequently the daily mofussil buses operating strength was increased from 53 to 67 from 16\textsuperscript{th} June 1958. This step had helped to ease traffic congestion.\textsuperscript{81} The vehicle position of this branch improved considerably during 1959, as a number of old vehicles were replaced by Benz vehicles either by purchase or by transfer from Madras. The fleet strength at the beginning of the year 1956 was 90. Thirteen buses were added to the fleet. At the end of this year a total number of 11,939,743 passengers were carried.\textsuperscript{82} The vehicle position of Kanyakumari branch improved considerably in 1960 as the number of old and condemned vehicles were replaced by Benz vehicle either by purchase or by transfer from the Madras branch. The total strength of the fleet at the end of the year was 96. The total number of passengers carried during the year was 14,080,680.\textsuperscript{83} Every year, the fleet strength was increased and several new routes were opened. These new routes were opened not in the context of several private services then existing. This process continued till the end of 1967. All the routes then operated were covered by approved schemes.

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\textsuperscript{78} Ibid., pp.73-77.  \\
\textsuperscript{79} G.O.Ms. No. 1556, Home Department, dated 28\textsuperscript{th} May 1956, p. 4.  \\
\textsuperscript{80} Madras State Administration Report 1955-56, \textit{op.cit.}, p.30.  \\
\textsuperscript{81} Madras State Administration Report 1957-58, \textit{op.cit.}, p.65.  \\
\textsuperscript{82} Madras State Administration Report 1958 -59, \textit{op.cit.}, p.60.  \\
\end{flushright}
By the end of 1967, the Government took a policy decision that all routes emanating from the Kanyakumari District and all routes more than 120 Kilometers in length shall be exclusively nationalized. From 1.1.1968 onwards, the Tamil Nadu State Transport Department started taking over private services. For this purpose, schemes under chapter IV-A of the Motor Vehicle Act 1939 used to be published and got approved sufficiently early. The Government felt that the progress of nationalization of bus services was rather slow and further acceleration of the pace was necessary, with a view to achieve total nationalization in the state of Tamil Nadu in five year’s time the Tamil Nadu Stage carriages and Contract Carriages Act 1973, was enacted. But the private operators challenged the above act in the High court of Madras, and the same was struck down. The Tamil Nadu Government has gone on an appeal to the Supreme Court and was then pending disposal. Based on the said Act, Government took over all the buses operating in the Nilgiri District and handed them over to the Cheran Transport Corporation Limited, for operation. It has not been possible to nationalize completely such of the routes as were taken by the Department as the private operation continued to be in the field by virtue of Writ petitions and Writ Appeals, both in the High Court and in the Supreme Court of India on some grounds or other. This has resulted in parallel operation both by Tamil Nadu State Transport Department and private operators much to the detriment of national economy, especially in the present day energy crisis.

84 Ibid., pp.95-96.
87 Ibid., pp. 326-327.
Kanyakumari Transport Department achieved an almost total nationalisation in June 1971.\textsuperscript{89} As has already been stated, the routes were not opened in a planned manner after the takeover of the private bus services and it was found that many of the routes were serving across purposes and were counterproductive. The necessity for reorganizing the routes in a scientific manner was keenly felt.\textsuperscript{90} In the meantime, the Joint Directors of Tamil Nadu State Transport Department were invested with power to curtail or vary the routes and to introduce any new route. These powers were exercised without any recourse to the provisions of the Motor Vehicle Act and a majority of the routes were reorganized in August 1971.\textsuperscript{91} Permits were also not taken out for the reorganized routes in accordance with the Rules and Regulations. This resulted in 54 of the approved schemes losing their relevance, as a result of various alterations and variations introduced by this wing of the Tamil Nadu State Transport Department.\textsuperscript{92}

The cumulative effect of all this was that the Government themselves deemed it fit to step in and enforce the law relating to Motor Vehicles.\textsuperscript{93} The State Transport Undertakings should take out permits and take such other actions as necessary to regularize the operation of bus services. Since then they have taken out temporary permits in respect of 148 services operating from this District.\textsuperscript{94} The Regional Transport Authority and the Transport Commissioner have insisted that either IV of the Motor Vehicle Act may not be desirable at this stage, as it may enable the private operators to make inroad into the exclusively nationalised sector by making use of the appellate forums like the State Transport Appellate Tribunal has processed the applications under section

\textsuperscript{89} Chopra, T.C., “Bus operation in Madras”, \textit{Madras Information}, Vol.XXI, No.1, Madras, January 1967, p.16.
\textsuperscript{90} G.O.Ms No.392, Transport department, dated 24\textsuperscript{th} July 1977, p.71.
\textsuperscript{91} \textit{Ibid.}, 72-75.
\textsuperscript{92} G.O.Ms.No.527, Transport Department, dated 12\textsuperscript{th} March 1976, p.21.
\textsuperscript{93} \textit{Ibid.}, pp.22-24.
\textsuperscript{94} “Nationalization of all Bus Routs within 5 years”, \textit{Tamil Arasu}, Vol.III, No.13, Madras, May 1973, p.33.
57 (3) of the Motor Vehicles Act.\textsuperscript{95} Hence the proposal for a comprehensive area scheme for the entire Kanyakumari District was considered a good solution. As already stated the two schemes published in respect of routes like Nagercoil to Thickanamcode and Nagercoil to Radhapuram were pending approval of the Home Department.\textsuperscript{96} Though the schemes were published as early as 1971, consideration of the schemes dragged on due to litigations. The High Court has dismissed the Writ Petitions relating to the said routes in September 1976 and the Residuary Transport Department had taken action for getting the schemes approved.\textsuperscript{97} The route, Nagercoil to Thickanamcode lies exclusively in Kanyakumari District.\textsuperscript{98} Though the scheme was yet to be approved, the operator has ceased to ply the bus on this route more than two years ago. Nagercoil to Radhapuram was an Inter-District route and the private operator would be eliminated by the approved scheme.\textsuperscript{99}

The Institute of Road Transport, Madras was requested to study the traffic pattern and the transport facilities in Kanyakumari District and to suggest a suitable comprehensive area scheme taking into account the need for proper rationalization of services and optimum utilization of the services. Their report has since been received and all feasible propositions have been incorporated in the area scheme.\textsuperscript{100} Being monopoly operators, it has a social obligation for introducing new services or for varying or extending any route to meet special needs.\textsuperscript{101}

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{95} G.O.Ms. No. 392, dated 14\textsuperscript{th} July 1977, \textit{op. cit.}, p.73.
\item \textsuperscript{96} “Faster Pace of Vehicular Growth and more Transport Facilities”, \textit{Tamil Arasu}, Vol. III, No.13, Madras, May 1973, p.32.
\item \textsuperscript{97} Madras State Administration Report 1976-77, Madras 1978, p.263.
\item \textsuperscript{98} G.O.Ms. No. 506, Home Department, dated 1\textsuperscript{st} March 1958, p.1.
\item \textsuperscript{99} Letter from the Director of Madras State Transport Department to the Managing Director of Ranithottam branch Lr.No.327/Tr.II/77, dated 20.01.1978.
\item \textsuperscript{100} Tamil Nadu State Administration Report 1986-87, Madras, 1989, p.438.
\item \textsuperscript{101} Letter from the Director of Transport Department Lr.No.327/P1/57, dated 20.01.1958.
\end{itemize}
Neo-Privatization

In Tamil Nadu the main mode of transport service for the rural people is State-owned buses supplemented with private buses. In addition, considering the importance of road transport in rural Tamil Nadu the State Government introduced the Minibus Scheme in 1997\textsuperscript{102}. The Minibus Scheme was introduced with the intention of providing the rural population with the required transport facilities to go to urban areas for their business, marketing activities and every other activity that might call for such transport. With the introduction of issuing fresh licenses to private individuals and corporation to operate mini buses in large numbers, a new system of private bus transport came into existence in the district. Though the new system aimed at connecting remote villages of the district with the nearest urban areas, this idea remains only on paper, for many of the mini buses are plying in urban areas also. The introduction of mini buses was pleyed in the areas under certain conditions.\textsuperscript{103}

Thus man in his voyage from the nomadic life towards the attainment of civilization used many means of transport to move from one place to another. With the growth of mental faculty, instead of walking from one place

\textsuperscript{102} The main objectives of the introduction of mini buses were, Firstly, the operation of mini buses to be introduced should cover specified rural roads at present unserved by existing bus services. Secondly, the total distance of such routes should not exceed 50 kilometers and should not cover more than 16 kilometers of any existing regular bus route. Thirdly, with reference to a group of contiguous village, a nearby market center or relatively important town should be specified as a appropriate ‘terminus’ for each such rural routes.[G.O.Ms.No.547, Transport Department, dated 12\textsuperscript{th} June 1977.]

\textsuperscript{103} The conditions are (i) where the traffic offering of a particular route was not high enough to warrant plying of ordinary buses. (ii) where the roads were not wide enough on are having too many acute bends to accommodate ordinary type buses, but the villages situated there have to be served by public transport. (iii) where there were certain narrow hill tracts, where it was operationally difficult to ply an ordinary type buses.[G.O.Ms.No.328, Home Department, dated 7\textsuperscript{th} February 1978, pp.117-119.]
to another by using animals to carry their goods and services, they invented
wheels and carts of primitive type and other gasoline and combustion engine
with the dawn of civilization. Further, towards the path of better amenities
much sophisticated transport system was introduced as evidenced in the
extension of bus services in the modern days.