CHAPTER - V

WELFARE MEASURES OF MARIA LOURDHAMMAL SIMON

Generally the fisher folk occupied a backward place in the social hierarchy of Tamilnadu. During Lourdhammal Simon’s ministry, she had initiated a lot of encouraging services for their welfare. When she was in the Ministry, there was an opportunity to add ‘Mukkuvas’ as Scheduled Tribes but she was against this opportunity and she talked openly on many stages.\(^1\) Since, ancient times fishing has been an indigenous industry of various people with diverse castes, rights and customs even though mainly it belongs to fisher folk. The fishermen community is totally depending upon the fishing trade for its substance in life. The wealth and status are obtained only by the way they do their traditional trade. Keeping these points in mind, Minister Lourdhammal Simon had introduced several useful plans in the field of Fisheries for the development among fisher folk. It led to the beginning of social consciousness among the fishermen. She became instrumental in the formation of Fishermen Co-operative Societies, a Fisheries Technological Institute, Fishermen Schools where free education and mid-day meals were offered, and more than a hundred Fish Curing Yards which distributing duty-free salt for processing, arrangements for fishery loans and subsides. And also, with the all around programme of the Inland and Marine Fisheries every fishermen including adults, of school going children had given full time and part time works respectively. Among them, the main progressive achievement was the appointment of two Assistant Directors of Fisheries and several non-gazetted officers

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from the Fishermen community by Minister Lourdhammal Simon.\(^2\) These plans had put a strong base for the advancement of the fisher folk.

During the period of Minister Lourdhammal Simon both her respective departments Local Administration and Fisheries earned immense reputation besides a lot of profits especially in the field of fisheries. A Fisheries Welfare Officer was appointed by Minister Lourdhammal Simon to give round the clock attention to this socio-economic work.\(^3\) Fisheries Welfare Officer had conducted surveys of several fishing villages and studied their requirements with reference to communication, lighting, medical, sanitation, housing and other facilities. She had arranged a lot of relief measure for the fishermen community through the local authorities.

The fishermen were assisted by the Department to perform their due role in increasing fish production and distribution through the co-operative movement. Besides, several relief measures were given to the fisher folk affected by natural calamities, natural disasters like cyclone, sea-erosion, fire havoc, accidents in the sea and failure of normal fisheries. She also had paid attention in rebuilding houses and feeder roads for fishermen community.

The existing arrangements for training of co-operative personnel both official and non-official were not adequate and so steps were being taken to expand and improve the training facilities so as to meet the growing need for trained personnel. She introduced many schemes in the State of Madras.\(^4\) The Central Co-operative Institute, Madras, had no building of its own. The trainees were undergoing training in the Central Co-operative Institute, Madras, were put too much difficulty for want of hostel accommodations. In the year 1959, Minister Lourdhammal Simon had approved the proposal of the Registrar

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for the construction of building and hostel for the Central Co-operative Institute, Madras, at an estimated cost of Rs. 3.75 lakhs. According to the construction plan the institute had a building and hostel for accommodating about 100 trainees. The Co-operative Training Institutes Tanjore and Coimbatore have also proposed to construct a hostel buildings providing accommodation for about 35 trainees and Government had agreed to provide 50 percent of the cost of the hostel buildings as Government loan.

Thus, Lourdhammal Simon had rented her service for the welfare of the fishermen community. During her tenure she was very much honest and free from corruption and executed all the plans of the government in a rapid manner. She had also shown profound interest in the life and livelihood of the coastal community.

ASSISTANCE TO FISHERMEN THROUGH CO-OPERATIVE SOCIETIES

Fishermen coincided to be the most backward community of Madras State. Efforts were therefore being made to help them to increase their income. Along with this, social welfare measures for fishermen were also receiving special attention. The fisheries schemes had therefore been formulated with the following main objects:

(1) To develop inland, estuarine, in-shore, off-shore and deep-sea fishing through improved fishing methods, technology and research

(2) To provide fishermen with modern crafts and tackles at subsidised rates and through the hire-purchase system and also to provide other equipment like nylon nets and hooks and facilities like fishing harbours

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(3) To provide fishermen with long-term credit facilities through Fishermen Co-operative Societies in order to make them less vulnerable to exploitation by the money-lenders, traders and middlemen.\footnote{7}

At the beginning of her career, a number of societies were dormant either for want of funds or for leadership in guiding and running the day-to-day affairs of the Fishermen Co-operative Societies. During her period, Lourdhammal Simon introduced various development schemes for the fishermen under the Second Five-Year Plan. And especially, after the grant of long-term Government loans, supply of Mechanized Boats (Pablo type), Nylon Nets, motor vans, etc., on hire-purchase subsidy basis, the fishermen had come to realise the importance of Co-operative Societies.\footnote{8}

In those days, the fishermen were mostly poor and many of them were indebted to money lenders, merchants and middlemen within or outside their community. In their poverty and indebtedness, they were not to own any modern equipment for fishing. With a view to relieve them of their indebtedness, and to provide them with Crafts and Tackles, a scheme was drawn and approved by the Government. This scheme had provided the community lot of grants and long term loans to the fishermen through Fishermen Co-operative Societies for the following aspects:

1) For clearing partly the prior debts to money-lenders
2) For mainly purchasing fishing equipments such as crafts and tackles and other requisites for fishing
3) For purchasing motor vehicles for transport of fish. And the loans can also be used,

\footnote{8} \textit{Madras Information}, Volume: XI, No: 8, Director of Information Publicity, St. George Fort, Madras, August, 1957, p.23.
4) For purchasing or constructing buildings such as godowns, curing sheds and tanks for the storing or processing of fish or fish products, and

5) For purchasing, constructing and for erecting machinery, plant or other appliances for demonstration of improved methods of fishing, and for the preservation, processing or marketing of fish and fish-products

Only fishermen, who were members of registered Fishermen Co-operative Societies, were eligible for these loans in accordance with the special by-laws of the Societies. One of the main objects of the District Fishermen Co-operative Federation was to provide facilities for modern methods of marketing, which was included quick hardling, quick transport, and preservation of fresh fish. The Societies (about five in each centre selected and brought under the loan scheme had contributed a sum of Rs.1,000 to Rs.2,000 each, as share capital to the Federations.) In addition to the above share capital, Government had also granted share capital loan of Rs.2,000 to each of the Federations, repayable after 5 years in ten half-yearly installments.9

Maximum members (226) had taken licences for fishing in all the Reservoirs during 1957-62. All the member licencees market their catches through the Society from their catching points. The departmental boat and the motor van had been given to the society on hire, which were hither to engage by the merchants.10

During the year 1957-58, the number of Fishermen Co-operative Societies and their District Federations increased to one hundred and ninety nine11 with a total membership of 23,855 and with a total paid up share capital of Rs.19,002 and working capital of Rs.54,950. The various assistance programmes such as grants of loans and supply of Pablo Boats, Nylon Nets and Yarns, fish transport vehicles etc, of the

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9 Ibid., p.23.
10 Ibid., p.24.
department were canalized through these co-operatives societies. With a view to 
popularize the co-operative movement among the fisher folk, several of the societies 
were initiated by Minister Lourdhammal Simon to undertake fish marketing for the 
benefit of their members.

In the year 1958-59, the number of Fishermen Co-operative Societies and their 
District Federation had been increased to 206 with a total membership of 24,100 and a 
paid up share capital of Rupees 1,95,000. District Federations of these societies 
functioned in Madras, South Arcot, Thanjavur, Ramanathapuram, Tirunelveli, and 
Kanyakumari Districts.\textsuperscript{12} The various assistance and relief measures such as grants of 
loans, supply of Pablo boats, nylon nets and yarn, fish transport vehicles, etc. were 
granted through the societies and their federations. The provincialised waters in the 
inland areas were also leased in favour of the Fishermen Co-operative Societies on the 
basis of average rentals, whenever possible.

In 1959-60 there were 148 Marine Fishermen Co-operative Societies and 76 
Inland Societies in the State of Madras,\textsuperscript{13} while in 1958-59 there were 136 marine and 70 
Inland societies respectively. The distribution of yarn and other assistance through 
Fishermen Co-operative Societies had given an impetus to fishermen to form 18 more 
co-operative societies during the year. A sum of Rs. 10,230 was sanctioned by Minister 
Lourdhammal Simon to enable the co-operative societies in Kanyakumari district 
(Pozhikkarai, Rajakkamangalam, Erayumanthurai and Eraviputhenthurai) to give relief 
to their members on the failure of fishing season.\textsuperscript{14} The District Federations functioned 
in Madras, Thanjavur, South Arcot, Ramanathapuram, Kanyakumari and Trinelveli 
districts. Under the scheme for assistance to fishermen co-operative societies, loans were

\textsuperscript{12} Ibid., 1958-59, 1960, p.123.
\textsuperscript{13} Ibid., 1959-60, 1961, p.74.
\textsuperscript{14} Ibid., p.75.
distributed to fishermen for the purchase of improved crafts and tackle for construction of godowns and for clearing of old debts.

There were 160 Fishermen Co-operative Societies and 70 Inland Societies in the State during 1960-61. There was a total membership of 20,686 in marine societies and 8,052 inland societies. The total paid up-of share capital in both marine and inland societies was Rs.2.64 lakhs. The District Fishermen Co-operative Federations functioned in Madras, Chinglepat, South Arcot, Thanjavur, Ramanathapuram, Tirunelveli and Kanyakumari Districts, under the scheme for Assistance to Fisherman Co-operative Societies. Loans were distributed to the fishermen for the purchase of fishing crafts and tackle for clearing of old debts and construction of godowns. Fifty-eight Fishermen Co-operative Societies were given a total loan of Rs.7,24,360 as long term, medium-term and elimination scheme loans. The loans were sanctioned by Lourdhammal Simon without any delay. Through it three thousand two hundred and fifty-five fisherman members got the benefit. Further four Fishermen Co-operative Societies were given a loan of Rs.8,000 and a subsidy of Rs.8,000 for construction of godowns during that year.

During the year 1961-62, there were 186 Marine Fishermen Co-operative Societies and 140 Inland Societies in the State as against 160 Marine and 70 Inland Societies during 1960-61. The total paid up share capital in both Marine and Inland Societies was Rs.4.33 lakhs. The District Fishermen Co-operative Federation functioned in Madras, Chingleput, South Arcot, Thanjavur, Ramanathapuram, Tirunelveli and Kanyakumari districts motivated the fishermen. Thus during the whole

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16 Ibid., p.67.
service period of Lourdhammal Simon the Co-operative Societies had functioned very fairly without any prohibitions.

By the proposal of Lourdhammal Simon the Corporation had agreed with the decision of the Government to reduce the rent to be charged on the allotters under these schemes from Rs. 3.50 nP to 1.75 nP per mensem. The Government had also sanctioned a full grant of Rs. 97,220 for providing sewers, individual F.O.Ls Washing Platforms, Water-supply, Lightning and other amenities for the fishermen colonies.

**FEEDER ROADS**

The construction of Feeder Roads connecting fishing hamlets with main roads had been sanctioned by Minister Lourdhammal Simon in several coast villages during her service period. And this work was continuously carried out by department of Fisheries throughout the years 1957-62. The construction of the following feeder roads in Tirunelveli district, Kanyakumari district, Ramanathapuram district and Tanjavvor district had been taken care of and maintenance of these roads were effectively carried out throughout her service period, especially in the years 1959-62 under her council.

**Tirunelveli District**

In the year 1960-61, the construction of feeder roads to the landing places in Tirunelveli district was started at a total cost of Rs.50,000 which was sanctioned by Minister Lourdhammal Simon to the following places.

1. Formation of feeder road from Pazhayakayal and Ratchanyapuram.
2. Gravelling of a feeder road from Tiruchendur to Amalinagar.
3. Formation of a feeder road from Alanthalai to the landing places
4. Formation of a feeder road from Manapad to the landing places.\(^\text{18}\)

And in the year 1961-62, the construction of feeder roads in 5 places of the district covering a distance of 6 miles and 5 furlongs at a estimated cost of Rs.93,500 was completed. The Highways Departments had taken up the works and the works were in progress and ended successfully.

**Kanyakumari District**

In the year 1960-61, a sum of Rs.5,91,000 had been sanctioned by Minister Lourdhammal Simon\(^{19}\) for the following works in Kanyakumari District.

1. Forming and metalling of the coastal road from Colachel to Neerodai.\(^{20}\)
2. Improvements to the existing road from Kalkulam to Manakudi village.\(^{21}\)

One feeder road from Thoothur to Poothurai at an estimated cost of Rs.18,500 was completed during December 1961-62. The departmental contribution for this work was Rs.4,317. It was completed her period very effectively.\(^ {22}\)

**Thanjavur District**

Minister Lourdhammal Simon had sanctioned a sum of Rs.22,000 for the formation of a road from Mallanallur to Chinagudy with two culverts in the Sembanarkoil Block of this district including the cost of land acquired in the year 1960-61.\(^ {23}\) This sanction also had been accorded for the formation of a road from Manamelkudi to Sethukodikarali with a pipe culvert at the big drain at a cost of Rs.6,325.\(^ {24}\) The construction of a feeder roads in 8 places for a distance of 5 miles 4 furlongs at a cost of Rs.31,098 were sanctioned by Minister Lourdhammal Simon during

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\(^{19}\) G.O.Ms.No.1461, Food and Agriculture Department, dated 24\(^{\text{th}}\) June 1960.


\(^{23}\) G.O.Ms.No.596, Rural Development and Local Administration Department, dated 25\(^{\text{th}}\) July 1960.

the year 1961-62.\textsuperscript{25} Construction of feeder roads in 19 places in Ramanathapuram district for a distance of 15 miles and 5 furlongs at a cost of Rs.2,42,900 was sanctioned during the year of 1961-62.\textsuperscript{26}

**CONSTRUCTION OF HOUSES**

Minister Lourdhammal Simon had concentrated her special attention on the building of houses by providing the necessary facilities. A subsidy of Rs.550 and a loan of Rs.300 were sanctioned for each house under the Fishermen Housing Scheme during 1960-61. Minister Lourdhammal Simon had proposed that the houses should be constructed by the Fishermen Co-operative Societies, under the direct supervision of the Regional Assistant Directors.\textsuperscript{27}

The Housing Scheme for Fishermen was originally sanctioned on the recommendations of the State Housing Board. Subsidy of Rs.550 and loan of Rs.300 were granted for building 60 houses in a year. The total commitment to the Government was Rs.51,000 a year. The main condition was that the fishermen should have a site of their own for constructing the house. The loan of Rs. 300 was interest-free and was repayable in 5 years. Fishermen could also contribute for building the house. The type of building should be of the design approved by the Government for the Harijan Welfare scheme. Under the scheme of Rural Village Housing, in Kootapuli village 220 houses had been ordered by Minister Lourdhammal Simon for construction.\textsuperscript{28}

Under the special Housing Schemes at Kasikoil Kuppam in the Chingleput district 28 houses were sanctioned to the victims of fire havoc in the village. Out of 28 houses, 14 houses had been completed in 1958-59. And fourteen houses had been

\textsuperscript{25} Ibid., 1961-62, 1964, p.72.
\textsuperscript{26} Ibid.,72
\textsuperscript{27} Ibid., 1961-62, 1964, p.72.
\textsuperscript{28} Tamilselven.Jo.,\textit{Ullatchi & Meenvazhathurai Manthiri Lourdhammal Simon,} Therku Pathipagam, Nagercoil, May 2015, pp.43-44.
completed in 1960. A sum of Rs. 500 for each house was sanctioned as subsidy and the total relief disbursed was Rs. 14,000.

In Rural Village Housing Scheme the fishermen had been benefited by loans granted by the Rural Housing Cell, Madras. The amount sanctioned in respect of Kootapuli village was Rs. 3,91,690. Nine houses had been sanctioned for nine fishermen families in Manapadu village in the year 1961 as the fishermen lost their houses in sea erosion. The amount sanctioned was Rs. 7,550 and the houses were constructed by the Public Works Department.29

**Thanjavur District**

During the year 1960-61, (i) Kaveripatinam sea fishermen had been sanctioned a loan of Rs.2,700 and a subsidy of Rs.4,950 for the construction of nine houses. (ii) The construction of 12 houses in Marayar Street Sea Fishermen Co-operative Society, Adirampatnam and eight in Eripurakarai Sea Fishermen Co-operative Society, were completed. The Mallipatnam Sea Fishermen Co-operative Society undertook the construction of 12 houses.30

a) In the year 1961-62, sanction was given31 for the construction of nine houses to nine members of the Kaveripattinam Sea Fishermen Co-operative Society.

b) Sanction was granted for the construction of 12 houses to 12 members of the Mallipattinam Sea Fishermen Co-operative Society.32

c) Permission was granted for the construction of 10 houses to 10 members of the Karaiyar Street Sea Fishermen Co-operative Society.33

d) Orders were issued for the construction of 200 houses for the benefit of the members of the Ammapattinam Sea Fishermen Co-operative Society.34

34 G.O.Ms.No.4172, Food and Agriculture Department, dated 11th December 1961.
Kanyakumari District

During the year 1960-61, a sum of Rs.5,100 as loan and a sum of Rs.9,350 as subsidy was sanctioned for the construction of eight houses at Muttom and nine houses as Melmidalam in Kanyakumari District and the work had taken in 1961-62. In the year 1961-62, sanction had been preceded by Minister Lourdhammal Simon for the construction of nine houses for nine members of Midalam Fishermen Co-operative Society for the construction of 10 houses for 10 members of Kovalam Fishermen Co-operative Society. The eight houses for Muttom Fishermen Co-operative Society sanctioned during 1960-61 were completed during 1961-62.

Cuddalore Division

A sum of Rs.4,250 was given as grant and a sum of Rs.1,500 as loan to the Tindivanam Fishermen Co-operative Society for the construction of five houses during the year 1960-61. (Rs.530) subsidy and Rs.300 loan for each house).

Tirunelveli District

A sum of Rs. 10,700 was sanctioned towards the cost of acquisition of land in this district for providing house-sites for 165 fishermen in the year 1959-60 and also in the year 1960-61, sanction was accorded for the construction of 40 houses to the fishermen of the following places (10 houses for Tharuvaikulam, 10 houses for Amslinagar, 20 houses for Ratchayapuram) and a sum of Rs.550 as subsidy and Rs.300 as loan for each house was sanctioned by Lourdhammal Simon. Permission had been accorded for the construction of 10 houses at Tharuvakulam village during 1961-62. The construction work at Tharuvakulam has been completed. Under the Government of India

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38 Ibid., p.71.
Rural Housing Scheme Construction of 200 houses at Kootapulli fishing village in Tirunelveli district was sanctioned by the Government of India on the condition that two third of the cost of the scheme should be borne by the Government of Madras as a loan and the balance of one third should be borne by the beneficiaries by way of labour or cash. As the fishermen of Kootapulli represented that they were not able to contribute one third share of the cost of the scheme, though the Minister of Fisheries Lourdhammal Simon had sanctioned a sum of Rs.92,404 as subsidy to the fishermen beneficiaries of Kootapulli. This subsidy to the fishermen enabled them to meet 50 percent of the one third share payable by them. The one third of the estimated cost of construction is to be met by the Fisheries Department subject to the conditions that no person gets more than the subsidy given under the State Housing Scheme. Out of the sanctioned subsidy of Rs.92,404, a sum of Rs.6,656 had already been disbursed to 16 beneficiaries at 416 rupees for each fishermen.

**Chingleput District**

In the year of 1960-61, a sum of Rs.8,500 was sanctioned for the construction of ten houses to fishermen in Uttiramerur of Chingleput District. The sanction had been accorded for the construction of 10 houses for 10 members of the Kathivakam Fishermen Co-operative Society.

**South Arcot District**

A sum of Rs.3,000 as loan and Rs.5,500 as subsidy was granted to Koonimedu Fishermen Co-operative Society for the construction of 10 houses in the year 1961-62.

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40 G.O.Ms.No.4301, Food and Agriculture Department, dated 26th December 1961.
**Coimbatore district**

Minister Lourdhammal Simon granted sanction for the construction of 10 houses to 10 members of the Anthiyur Fishermen Co-operative Society in the year 1961-62.\(^{44}\)

**Madras district**

In the year 1957, Under the Harijan Welfare Scheme a provision of Rs.2.45 lakhs had been sanctioned for construction of houses\(^ {45}\) in South Madras and in Kasikoil Kuppam in Chingleput district. Under the Harijan Welfare Scheme a free subsidy of Rs.51,000 was given for constructing 74 houses in Mullikuppam\(^ {46}\) through Madras Fishermen Co-operative Societies and 28 in Kasikoilkuppam in Chingleput district, where 28 families lost their houses in a fire accident at a cost of Rs.500 each. Necessary funds had been placed at the disposal of the Additional Director for constructing the house during 1957-58.\(^ {47}\)

Various schemes for the betterment of the fishermen had been undertaken with a view to improve the economic condition of the fishermen and a State Fisheries Advisory Council had been constituted for advising the Government on matters of policy and on the effective implementation of the plan provided in the Second Five-Year Plan.\(^ {48}\) The Co-operative Organisation among the fishermen played an eminent role to defend the fishermen from economic distress and social evils. As the improvement of the economic and social interests of this down trodden but a very useful community to the consuming public is of vital importance to the country as a whole, the Government of India had

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\(^{43}\) Proceedings No.KI.44775/61, dated 14\(^{th}\) December 1961.


\(^{46}\) *Madras Information*, Volume: XI, No: 8, Director of Information Publicity, St. George Fort, Madras, August, 1957, p.25.


\(^{48}\) *Ibid.*, p.25
placed funds at the disposal of the Government of Madras for granting long-term loans to fishermen and have also agreed to meet 25 percent of the cost of supervisory staff.

FISHERIES SCHOOLS

Minister Lourdhammal Simon has established many schools in the coastal villages and she had elevated these schools into high schools. Lourdhammal Simon accepted honorable Chief Minster K.Kamaraj as her only one best leader. So, she followed K.Kamaraj’s education and encouraged all the students of coastal villages to get education. Each and every school got rebirth during her period of administration. All the coastal people sent their children to schools. The credit for such changes want to Minister Lourdhammal Simon.

The Fisheries Department had maintained three elementary schools at Sathankuppam, Alambarikuppam and Kaveripatnam and these schools had a total strength of seven teachers and 256 students.\(^{49}\) The student’s strength continued to increase rapidly by the effective steps of the department.\(^{50}\) Mid-day meals were served to the children in all the three schools and milk was also supplied to all the children free of cost every year.\(^{51}\) Through these schools several fisher folk children got a good education and a better awareness.

In the year 1959-60, the Sathankuppam School had five standards, 1\(^{st}\) to 5\(^{th}\) with a total strength of 124 pupils, consisting of 73 boys and 51 girls. The adult literary school functioned at Sathankuppam with an average attendance of 23 adults.\(^{52}\) The elementary school at Sathankuppam continued to function with five standards (1 to 5) in the year 1960-61 also. The strength of the school was 72 boys and 41 girls. The adult night


\(^{50}\) Ibid., 1958-59, 1960, p.123.

\(^{51}\) G.O. Ms. No. 2954, Food and Agriculture Department, dated 10\(^{th}\) August 1959.

\(^{52}\) Madras State Administration Report, 1959-60, Department of Fisheries, Government of Madras, Madras, 1961, p.76.
school also continued to function with 24 adults.\textsuperscript{53} In the year 1961-62 the school was continued to run gradually. Mid day meals, mild powder, books and slates were supplied free of cost to the fishermen children without fails.

The elementary school Alambarikuppam village had also five standards with a total strength of 147 pupils, consisting of 98 boys and 49 girls in the year 1959-60.\textsuperscript{54} The school continued to function with five standards in 1960-61 also. The strength of the school was 75 boys and 20 girls. Mid-day meals and free milk were served to all the pupils. The adult night school also continued to function with 24 adults.\textsuperscript{55} And also in the year 1961-62 the school continued to function with V standards and mid day meals, mild powder, books and slates were supplied free of cost to the fishermen children.

Kaveripattinam School continued to function with a total strength of 86 pupils\textsuperscript{56} (67 boys and 19 girls) during the year 1959-60. Books and slates were supplied to the pupils throughout the year. Besides, the adult literacy night school continued to function successfully at this centre. And in the year 1960-61 this elementary school run by the department continued to function with the Higher Grade Teachers and one Secondary Grade Teacher. Free supply of Mid-day meals, books and slates were supplied to the fishermen children.\textsuperscript{57}

During the period of Minister Lourdhammal Simon, a free grant of Rs.120 was given to the fishermen children of District Board Elementary School Kankollanpattinam for the purchase of books, states, etc and also a sum of Rs.200 was sanctioned for decreasing the cost of books, slate, pencil, etc into half for the 126 poor fishermen.

\textsuperscript{53} Ibid., 1960-61, 1963, p.71.
\textsuperscript{54} Ibid., 1959-60, 1961, p.76.
\textsuperscript{55} Ibid., 1960-61, 1963, p.71.
\textsuperscript{56} Ibid., 1959-60, 1961, P.76.
\textsuperscript{57} Ibid., 1961-62, 1964, p.76.
children who studied in the Roman Catholic Elementary School at Karangadu in Ramanathapuram District by the Minister Lourdhammal Simon.58

EDUCATIONAL GRANTS

No improvement can be possible with the state of illiteracy, backward condition, poverty and indebtedness of the fishermen as a community which is also conservative and superstitious. The fishing hamlets (kuppams) are isolated and not connected with public roads and therefore no proper housing, drinking water, medical, maternity and child welfare facilities. The rehabilitation of the fishing community is thus confronted with several administrative and social problems of considerable magnitude. The Fisheries Department under the council of Lourdhammal Simon in collaboration with other departments did its utmost to improve the weakness in the economic background of the fishing industry of the State. Minister Lourdhammal Simon had suggested that the vendors as well as the customers must realize the importance of cleanliness in fish markets and act accordingly. For this, propaganda and education were necessary among the vendors and the public. And Model fish stalls were constructed throughout the State for better maintenance.

Though, Lourdhammal Simon had given several contributions to all the coastal village schools. She was the first Minister who had given utmost care to educate the people of fisher folk and she also achieved almost the objectives in her five year service period. Her services to the Kanyakumari district schools are listed below:

a) Rs. 3,200 was given as a contribution from the Fisheries Department to Kuruthancode Block for the construction of an additional accommodation to Puthenthurai Lower Primary School, at a cost of Rs.8,000.

b) Rs.3,160 was given as a contribution from the Fisheries Department to Kurunthancode Block for providing additional accommodation in the Muttom Upper Primary School, at a cost of Rs.7,100.\(^{59}\)

c) Rs.2,400 was given as a contribution from the Fisheries Department to the Karunthancode Block for providing additional accommodation to the Kodimunai Lower Primary School, at a cost of Rs.7,100.

d) Rs.2,480 was given as a contribution from the Fisheries Department to the Karuthancode Block for providing additional accommodation in Puthan Lower School at a cost of Rs.6,200.

e) Rs.3,480 was given as a contribution from the Fisheries Department to Rajakkamangalam Block for providing additional accommodation in the Keezhe Manakudy Lower Primary School, at a cost of Rs.8,700.\(^{60}\)

f) Rs.2,760 was given as a contribution from the Fisheries Department to the Rajakkamangalam Block for providing additional accommodation to the Pilliarthope Primary School, at a cost of Rs.6,900.

g) Rs.3,000 was given as contribution from the Fisheries Department to Rajakkamangalam Block for providing additional accommodation to the Puthanthurai Holy Infant Joesph Upper Primary School, at a cost of Rs.9,500.\(^{61}\)

h) Rs.1,120 was given as a contribution from the Fisheries Department to Rajakkamangalam Block for construction of a building for the C.R.C. at Kesavanputhanthurai at a cost of Rs.2,800.\(^{62}\)

\(^{59}\) Ibid., 1961-62, 1964, p.75

\(^{60}\) Ibid., p.75

\(^{61}\) Ibid., p.75.

\(^{62}\) Ibid., P.75.
i) A sum of Rs.94 was granted to the St.Mary’s Basic School, Olaikuda for the purchase of books and other essentials for free supply of books, slates, etc. for 35 poor fishermen children studying in the school.

j) In South Arcot district and Vaiyankudi in Virudunagar Taluk elementary schools were constructed.63

**RELIEF MEASURES TO FISHERMEN**

Fishing is one of the dangerous working fields in the world. While fishing, fishermen happened to face lot of troubles and natural calamities. Minister Lourdhammal Simon extended several relief measures to the fishermen affected by calamities of sea erosion, fire and accident in the sea and failure of normal fisheries like poor fish. She had sanctioned several such rescues throughout her service period 1957-62. They are given below:

**Sea accidents**

a) Cash grant of Rs.200 and loan of Rs.100 was given by way of relief to the wife of a fisherman of Mattankuppam who was drowned to death while fishing in the sea of 16th December 1959.64

b) Two persons who lost their sails, oars, etc in stormy weather received a free grant of Rs. 100 a loan of Rs. 150 each as relief and the dependants of two other fishermen who lost their lives in the same accident were also given a free grant of Rs.100 each.65

c) A grant of Rs.500 was sanctioned by the department to be distributed to the families of fishermen who lost their lives in an accident to a fishing canoe off Punnakayal in

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Tirunelveli district on 26th May 1959. A grant of Rs.100 was sanctioned to the wife of a fisherman, Cape Comorin, who lost his life in an accident.

d) Five fishermen of Tharuvaikulam who went for fishing on 2nd July 1959 were capsized and sunk due to sudden outburst of squally. The fishermen were rescued and the owner of the canoe was given a loan of rupees 2,000 to clear of the debts received from private parties for the construction of a new canoe.

e) Due to sudden gale in the sea off Devipatnam in Ramanathapuram district a fishing boat with seven fishermen capsized resulting in the death of one fisherman and the loss of fishing lockets of all the seven fishermen. The father of the deceased fishermen was given a grant of Rs.100 and a loan of Rs.150.

f) A loan of Rs.200 by way of relief was sanctioned to one fisherman of Koonimedukuppam who lost his net in the sea due to rough weather.

g) Out of the five fishermen of Mattankuppam who went for fishing in the sea one fisherman died struck by a whirl-pool wave. A cash grant of Rs.100 was sanctioned to the sister of the deceased fisherman to look after the children of the dead fisherman.

h) A loan of Rs.100 by way of yarn was given to one fisherman of Tuticorin who lost his net worth Rs.240 in the sea due to squally weather.

i) A cash grant of Rs.100 was given to the widow of one fisherman of Kovelon Kuppam who was drowned in the sea due to squally weather on 24th November 1959.

j) An ex-gratia grant of Rs.500 was given to the wife of one chank diver of Tuticorin who lost his life due to an accident occurred while diving for chanks.67

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66 Ibid, p.75.  
k) A loan of Rs.100 was given to one fishermen of Tiruvanmiyur Kuppam for the loss of fishing implements.

l) An amount of Rs.50 and a subsidy of Rs.50 were given was given as loan to one fisherman at Killai who lost his canoe while fishing.

m) A loan of Rs.100 by way of relief was sanctioned to a fisherman of Tuticorin for the loss of fishing nets.

n) Payment of Rs.300 by way of relief was sanctioned as loan to a fisherman of Punnakyal who met with an accident in the sea of Punnkayal.

o) A cash grant of Rs.100 was given by way of relief to families of five fishermen of Puthoor village who were missing in the sea while fishing.

p) A grant of Rs.50 was given by way of relief to one fisherman who survived an accident in the sea for being temporarily disabled.

q) A sum of Rs.162 was sanctioned by way of relief to 36 fishermen of Kovalam, Kanyakumari district for replenishing their damaged nets.68

Fire Accidents

a) Two fishermen families of Panianager in Tirunelveli District were given a loan of Rs.100 to one family and cash grant of Rs.50 for each family for the loss incurred in a fire accident.69

b) Six fishermen of Cape Comorin who lost their properties in a fire accident were given relief by a cash grant and loan to the extent of Rs.680.

c) Eight fishermen of Chinna Muttom (a village near Cape Comorin) were given a cash grant and loan amounting to Rs. 1.550 for losses in a fire accident.

d) The fishermen of Thangachimadam (Ramanathapuram district) who were involved in a fire accident were sanctioned a subsidy of Rs. 545 and a loan of Rs. 350.

e) A loan of Rs. 900 and a subsidy of Rs. 270 were given to the fishermen of Vallinukkam village in Kanyakumari district.

f) Forty-four fishermen houses were burnt in a fire accident destroying the utensils and personal articles. Cash grants of Rs.30 and clothing grant of Rs.10 for each family was given by the District Collector and also in addition, Rs.2,750 worth of yarn was distributed free of cost to the affected fishermen as per the orders of Lourdhammal Simon.70

g) She had issued orders to the collector of Chingleput to give a cash grant of Rs.30 and clothing grant of Rs.10 to each of the five fishermen families of Nemalikuppam who lost their huts in a fire accident. One fisherman was given a cash grant of Rs.100 for purchase of catamarans. Six and a half bundles of 20s’ yarn was distributed free of cost to the affected fishermen.71

h) A sum of Rs.1,560 towards the cost of 52 bundles of 3/20 yarn was sanctioned and granted to 26 fishermen affected by the fire accident occurred at Ratchayanpuram in Tirunelveli District.72

i) A free grant of Rs.100 was sanctioned to one fisherman at Ovari affected by fire accident.

j) A loan of Rs.50 and cotton yarn worth Rs.50 was given by way of relief to each of the two fishermen of Koothankuli who were involved in a fire accident.

k) A grant of Rs.50 and subsidy of Rs.50 by way of loan was given to one fisherman of Enayam for the loss incurred in a fire accident.

l) A loan of Rs.315 and a subsidy of Rs.315 by way of relief were given to 12 Fishermen of Colachel for the loss incurred in a fire accident.73

71 Ibid., p.70.
72 Ibid., p.70.
Sea erosion

The Government of India succeeded Willow trees (Kashuvarina) to India from Australia to prevent soil erosion. Consequently Minister Lourdhammal Simon also implemented this scheme throughout Tamilnadu to prevent soil erosion in all the coastal by planting Willow trees. These trees have the capacity to grow fertility in such places like salt water and dried places. During her period, many coastal villages like Manapad in Tirunelveli district, Dhanushkodi were severely damaged by sea erosion and this was the highest problem of these coastal areas. Hence planting of willow trees suggested by the minister became an effective remedy to prevent sea erosions in future. Further the department had sanctioned cost for the houses which had collapsed by sea erosion at Manapad.

OTHER RELIEF MEASURES

a) Kovalam a village in Kanyakumari district was frequently affected by the movement of sand due to heavy winds, blowing towards the village. Several huts belonging to the poor fishermen were buried in the sand dunes. Minister Lourdhammal Simon had sanctioned a sum of Rs.21,800 for the removal of the sand dunes by the Public Works Department and also she had ordered that the planting of suitable trees as a remedial measure by the Forest Department.\(^74\)

b) For preventive measures of soil crossing a sum of Rs.68,530 was sanctioned for the urgent protective works to prevent sea erosion in Manapad and also a sum of rupees 7,550 was sanctioned for the construction of nine houses for the fisherman who were affected by the sea erosion. A sum of Rs.44,000 was sanctioned for the


execution of intensive protective measures to stop sea erosion in Ovari village and the work was taken up by the Public Works Department.\textsuperscript{75}

c) An amount of Rs. 11,250 was allotted to 10 Fishermen Co-operative Societies by the Government as a short term loan for the purchase and distribution of yarn for making nets, etc.\textsuperscript{76}

**SUPPLY OF YARN AT SUBSIDED COST**

In the year 1959, Rs.15,550 was sanctioned by Minister Lourdhammal Simon for 15 Fishermen Co-operative Societies as subsidy to meet the loss in selling fishing nets to the members by lowering the cost price by one anna for each net. Among the 15 societies, only the Tuticorin Fishermen Co-operative Societies purchased and sold the net pieces and claimed Rs. 2,500 as subsidy which was duly sanctioned\textsuperscript{77} by the minister. The scheme for the supply of yarn to Fishermen Co-operative Societies at subsided cost was developed during her period of service. In the year 1960-61, a total quantity of 379-1/2 bales of different counts of cotton yarn and 100 gross of Kohinoor yarn at a cost of Rs.3,66,125.16 nP. was distributed to fishermen through the various Fishermen Co-operative Societies in this State.\textsuperscript{78} During the year 1961-62, a total quantity of 348 bales, 10 ½ bundles of varies counts of cotton yarn 40 grams of Kohinur No.10 and 6 grams of Kohinur, 30 yarn were purchased at a cost of Rs.2,73,678.77 by the department and these were distributed to the fishermen through Fishermen Co-operative Society at subsided cost.\textsuperscript{79}

\begin{footnotes}
\textsuperscript{75} Ibid., p.70.
\textsuperscript{76} Ibid., 1959-60, 1961, p.75.
\textsuperscript{77} Ibid., p.75.
\textsuperscript{78} Ibid., 1960-61, 1963, p.71.
\textsuperscript{79} Ibid., 1961-62, 1964, p.76.
\end{footnotes}
RESETTLEMENT OF FISHERMEN

a) Leepuram – A sum of Rs.12,207.43 (including 15% solatiam) was sanctioned for acquisition of 12 acres and 151 square feet of vacant *patta* land at Meelavittam.\(^{80}\)

b) Manapad – An amount of Rs.7,550 had been sanctioned for constructing nine houses for persons whose houses had been eroded by the sea.

LOURDHAMMAL SIMON AND FISHERIES DEPARTMENT

Under the Second Five Year Plan the Government of India had included several schemes for the well-fare of fishermen. The schemes were construction of mechanized boats, establishment of model fish stations and fishing harbours at river mouths, proper training for the fishermen to operate mechanized boats, steps to produce more fingerlings in reservoirs, to increase the amount of fish food, ice factories and also to modernize fish markets. For the promotion of these aspects 18 lakhs were released by the Government during 1957-58. Minister Lourdhammal Simon had a hope that by bringing these schemes into Tamilnadu, fishing industry would gain more profits. Nevertheless her dreams were almost achieved.

In the Second Five-Year plan the Fisheries Department had been provided with Rs. 7 to 8 lakhs for the proposed fishing harbour. As Lourdhammal Simon knew every nook and corner in when the members had asked why Royapuram would be the harbour and why Tripicane would not be. She replied that the Royapuram side harbour was better suited than Triplicane for the purpose and already there was large fishing and it was better than Triplicane.

Also in the Five Year Plan the Indian government had introduced new technologies for fishermen to develop their job range. Along this, fresh water fishes also recommended because this type of fishes have a tendency of faster automatic growth

without any care. So Indian Government introduced ‘Tilebiya Mosambika fish’ (Thilebi Kendai) in India from Southeast Africa. This type of fishes could increase the economic level of people and also fulfill the needs of protein among the people. In this great occasion Tamilnadu Fisheries Department also introduced ‘Thilebi Kendai’ in entire Tamilnadu. Being the minister of Fisheries, Lourdhammal established this plan throughout Tamilnadu. In this way, the people of Tamilnadu started to grow these fishes in ponds. From this scheme people benefited a lot. In Kanyakumari district this Tilebiya fish was known as ‘Lourdhammal Fish.’

On 18th July 1957 Minister Lourdhammal Simon had spoken in the Legislative Assembly and she had placed many proposals to the Government for the welfare of Fisheries. Rs.29.77 lakhs was asked for the department because the department had to work out needs. In the fishing industry many people were connected and fishing is their only life hope. Not only for profit to the department, this industry had enabled to get sufficient food to the people. Through the license system pearl fishery, chank fishery had gained considerable revenue. To enable the fishing at both In-shore and Off-shore department would cultivate more. For the growth of fishing, fisheries researches and technical advancements have to be brought and passing through the new advancements fishermen’s living status would be faced certain developments.

Minister Lourdhammal Simon also introduced Refrigerator System for preservation of fishes. Through her numerous offers the fishermen got awareness. They voluntarily asked for schools, boats and money and this self awareness was possible by her effective steps. The fishermen were stimulated by her proper guidance.

**Plight of Fishermen**

On the socio-economic side, the department took active steps for the amelioration of the problems of the fishermen. Construction of feeder roads to connect fishing villages was being undertaken, and the housing problem was also being tackled to the extent possible with the funds available.\(^{84}\) There had been a considerable improvement in the landings of marine as well as fresh water fish in India as a result of the implementation of fishery development schemes in the Second plan.

The increased production of such a perishable commodity like fish has significance only when the produce reaches the consumer in a prime quality at a reasonable price. This could be achieved by preventing the produce from bacterial spoilage at the source, during transport and its subsequent marketing. It was estimated that the spoilage of fish were marketing of inferior quality of fish accounts for 20 to 25% to the total landings in India. This wastage could be prevented by adopting improved, packaging handling and efficient system of transport. This aspect of the problem brings to the fore a number of other factors like facilities for icing of fish at a low cost, insulated fish carriers, fast moving vehicles, cold storage and marketing facilities at the other end and finally consumer preferences. All these operations were inter-related and are of equal importance for providing the consumer with a quality product. In this chain of efforts, the fishermen who is the primary producer, the middleman, the carrier, and the salesman have to work efficiently to realize this objective. Adequate icing and packaging and efficient system of transportation by rail or by road in insulated trucks, played a significant role in saving the perishable commodity like fish, and were directly linked with the economy of the country.\(^{85}\)

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The scheme of training the Panchayatdars of Co-operative Societies

During 1957-58 the scheme was implemented in Tirukkamikundram Block in the Chingleput district and Madurai Block in the Madurai district. For the year, 1958-59 the Tiruvallur Block in the Chingleput district and the Melur Block in the Madurai district were selected for implementing the scheme. According to the scheme the members are to be given training for three days, the Panchayatdars for one week and the office-bearers for five to six weeks. The candidates attending the classes were paid a stipend of Re.1 per head per diem. The services of one Co-operative Sub-Registrar and two Senior Inspectors were given to the union for the implementation of the scheme. The Co-operative Sub-Registrar assisted the unions at its headquarters and the two Senior Inspectors conducted the classes in the district. During 1957-58, 5,682 members and prospective members 464 panchayatdars and 68 office-bearers received the training.\footnote{Ibid., Volume: XIII, No: 3-4, March & April, 1959, p.25.}

The Madras State Co-operative Union was the Central institution charged with the duty of carrying on co-operative propaganda in the State. It conducts the Madras Journal of Co-operation, a monthly journal devoted to the spread of co-operative knowledge, subsidises co-operative journals in various regional languages, runs a co-operative library, publishes propaganda literatures. The union was subsidised annually by the State Government and by the Madras State Co-operative Bank. It participated in the local exhibitions, conducted periodical conferences on a State basis and organised propaganda lectures. The magic lantern slides, films and posters of the union were in great demand in other States.

There were three Tamil journals, viz., Kutturavu, published by the Tamilnadu Co-Operative Federation, Coimbatore. The Madurai and Ramanathapuram Kutturavu, published by the Madurai District Co-operative Central Bank, Madurai and
Kutturavu Thondu, published by the Tanjore Co-operative Employees Association, Thanjavur under the scheme for the training of non-official personnel of the Co-operative movement, pamphlets explaining the duties of members panchayatdars and office-bearers and their role in the co-operative sector were also distributed during the classes. Seminars were also conducted where one or two office-bearers from each society and the supervisors of Central banks were invited for group discussion and the difficulties experienced in the development of the operative movement were discussed.

It was hoped that the arrangements made for co-operative education and propaganda in the State availed of by the co-operative institutions, co-operators and the general public so that co-operative movement might render greater service to the cause of national development.

**Elimination of Middlemen**

Under the scheme for assistance to the Fishermen Co-operative Societies, during the end of Lourdhammal Simon’s service period, about 22 lakhs of rupees had been distributed to 200 Fishermen Co-operative Societies either by way of loan or grant for disbursement to their members. About 9,500 fishermen got the benefit by the grant of loans. In addition to the above scheme, another scheme for eliminating middlemen had been sanctioned with a view to relieving fishermen from their indebtedness. During the Third plan period, it was proposed to spend about Rs.30 lakhs for giving assistance to fishermen co-operative societies and federations in the form of loans.

**Health and Rural Sanitation**

During the period of Minister Lourdhammal Simon, through Community Development Blocks and National Extension Service Schemes several measures were

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87. Ibid., p.25.
89. Ibid., p.2.
taken to improve rural health and sanitation. Through the Construction of numerous dispensaries, hospitals, child welfare, Maternity centres and rural dispensaries treatment was given to the rural people.\footnote{Ibid., Volume: XI, No: 4, April, 1957, p.13}

**AIDS TO THE FISHING COMMUNITY**

The fishermen were the providers of a needed addition to the supply of food and therefore assisted by the Department of Fisheries to play their due share for increasing fish-production and distribution through the co-operative movement which was gaining popularity among them. So far Fishermen Co-operative Societies and Co-operative Federations had been organized. Through these co-operatives the fishermen have so far been given long-term loans, medium-term loans and subsidy towards credit facilities for the elimination of middlemen, purchase of domestic as well as production requirements, construction of curing sheds, godowns and markets and for marketing of their produce.\footnote{Ibid., Volume: XIII, No: 1, January, 1959, p.33}

**Employment of Inland Fishermen**

This is an example of profitable utilization of an old neglected fort moat for production of protein food for supply to the people of inland areas, for giving employment and fair earnings to inland fishermen, and for biological control of mosquito breeding.

**Fish as Food**

The main aim of Central Government was to develop sea protein foods; to achieve this aim the government provided plenty of schemes in the Second Five Year Plan. The flesh of fish is generally white and flaky, an agreeable flavour, is soft and easily digested. It contains a high percentage of proteins and fats. It is stated that eighteen of the amino acids which build up the human body are the first digestion products of fish food. The other essential and accessory food stuffs in fish are
nitrogenous elements, iodine, sulphur, phosphorus, magnesium, iron and copper, Vitamin A, B and D the growth-promoting and disease-resisting factors of all animal and vegetable life is present in large quantities in the liver and body fats of many species. Above all, fish is cheap and healthy. These advantages make it a desirable item in the dietary of the rich and an unavoidable factor in the food of the poor. Even from Kautilya’s (321-300 B.C.) Arthasastra, it is evident that even in the dim past, fishery was a well-established industry in India and that fish was relished as an article of food.

**FISH POND MANAGEMENT TECHNIQUE**

The technique introduced by the Fisheries Department Minister Lourdhammal Simon for fish-pond management was simple and consists of following rules:

a) Selection and preparation of the pond  
b) Selection and stocking of fish  
c) Feeding the fish and manuring  
d) Care of the fish  
e) Reaping the crop.

All kinds of ponds, whether perennial or seasonal, could be utilized for the culture of fish. In the case of semi-perennial waters, there is need for digging a sub ditch, for the fish to retreat during the summer months. The outlets, if any, should be properly screened to prevent the fish from escaping through them, especially during the monsoons. Control of the growth of vegetation, both, emergent and submerged, is also necessary. While the removal of water-hyacinth and grasses is advisable, tender plants like Hydrilla, Vallisneria, etc., should be retained. They served as food for the fish and also helped to aerate the water. A certain amount of surface vegetation is necessary to provide shade for the fish; but in no case should it be allowed to cover the entire water

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92 Ibid., Volume: XIII, No: 2, February, 1959, p.79.  
93 Ibid., Volume: XIII, No: 2, February, 1959, p.79.  
surface. The enemies of the fish, such as snakes, tortoises and frogs, should be eradicated either by repeated netting or by drying the pond completely.\textsuperscript{95}

**SALT-WATER SPECIES**

The water of river-estuaries is brackish owing to tidal influence. It aids the immigration of many species of sea fishes into fresh waters by gradual adaptation to the transitional conditions. Many sea-fishes resorted were in the State for breeding purpose. The fauna and flora of the estuaries were very rich and it provided food for the fishes and consequently produced a valuable fishery. The estuaries abound in prawns, shrimps, crabs, oysters, clams and whelks. The young of estuarine fishes such as the Pearl spot, Mullet, Milk-fish, Bekti, Indian Salmon and the Rock perch could be easily acclimatized and reared in fresh water.\textsuperscript{96} Hence, along with fresh water species, salt water species also were given importance by the Department. Through this innovation caring of salt water species, department had earned somewhat advantages.

**DEMONSTRATION CENTRES**

With a view to assisting pond owners and prospective fish farmers, Rural Fishery Demonstration Centres had been opened in the coastal areas throughout the State to survey all cultivable waters and their fishery resources and to organize demonstration farms for facilitating fish seed distribution and for imparting instruction on fish-farming to interested riots. To make every acre productive of the crop that can yield best, the farmer wanted to stock properly and manage his pond for a good crop of food fish. Fishlings were sold at the demonstration centres at nominal rates.\textsuperscript{97}

\textsuperscript{95} Ibid., p.12.  
\textsuperscript{96} Ibid., p.12.  
\textsuperscript{97} Ibid., p.13.
Fish Seed Supply

During the service periods of Minister Lourdhammal Simon, the public had commenced to show great interest in fish culture. The growing demand for fish-seed is suggestive of the great popularity of this enterprise of the Fisheries Department. In 1957-62, more than 18 ½ crores of fish seed were distributed by the demonstration centres to the various inland waters in the State. In 1957-58, the production increased to 107,300 tons, consisting of 67,000 tons of sea fishes and 40,300 tons of inland fishes. The percentage of increase was thus 11.66 in Marine Fisheries, 4.40 in Inland Fisheries and 8.80 in over-all production. There were four lakhs of inland water in Madras State and the total production from these in 1957-58 was 40,300 tons. By more intensive piscicultural operations, the production had increased considerably in all the remaining years. And it was expected that fish-farming would soon become one of the main rural industries in the Madras State, for fish constitutes a basic food resource and an important and necessary item of diet which is just as vital in many instances as agricultural products. In fact, the expectation was achieved and the production had increased gradually.

MARINE AND INLAND FISHERIES

During the first Five-Year Plan, special attention was paid to the programmes of the Fisheries Development by implementing eight schemes with a total outlay of Rs. 57.83 lakhs. The implementation of these schemes gave considerable impetus to the improvement of the existing methods of fishing and fish culture in inland waters. For the second plan, 17 schemes were formulated at a total outlay of Rs.95.14 lakhs, keeping in view the need for greater development and exploitation of inland, estuarine, in-shore and off-shore fisheries and for introducing improved techniques and technological methods,

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98 Ibid., p.13.
99 Ibid., p.13.
besides improving the socio-economic conditions of fishermen by providing them with better credit and trading facilities. For the Third plan period, the financial outlay was likely to be Rs.222 lakhs, of which the probable expenditure during the first year of the Third plan would be Rs.42.75 lakhs.\textsuperscript{100} Besides the extension on a large scale of the schemes that were already under operation in the Second Five Year Plan, and it was proposed to take up intensive development of marine and inland fisheries during the Third Five Year Plan period.

Fishing in the river estuaries and reservoirs were regulated by issue of licences and by mesh regulations by the Fisheries Department. Destructive and sweep types of nets were prohibited from operation according were not allowed to be captured, and if captured, they were requested to be released back into the water.

**COLD STORAGES**

Cold storage facilities had been provided under four places in the Second Plan in order to preserve the fresh fish. Cold storage places were set up at Madurai and Pulicat. Thirty-Five thousand pounds of nylon nets were distributed in the Second Plan at a cost of Rs.6 lakhs had been advanced to them as loans through co-operative societies. Two ice plants-cum-cold storages, one at Tuticorin and another at Mettur Dam, had been set up and more plants also established at Colachel, Cape Comorin, Thangachimadam, Pulicat and other places.

The Government had also under consideration a proposal to install a 2 ton ice-cum-cold storage plant with provision for display cabinets in Madurai, which was an important consuming centre. The feasibility of setting-up of such plants at other important centre like Coimbatore and Thiruchirapalli was considered in due course. This chain of cold storages and the quick transport facilities provided by the Department and

the refrigerated van service also was introduced by the Railway authorities from West Coast to Madras.\textsuperscript{101}

**FISH CURING SCHEME**

A number of methods for curing and preservation of fish were used varying with local conditions and quality of catch. The chief methods adopted for curing fish in India were sun-drying and salt curing by the wet and dry process preservatives and spices are also added in some places to enhance the keeping quality of preserved fish.\textsuperscript{102} The Corporation conservancy staff had done a good deal to maintain perfect hygienic condition in fish markets and suggested improvements in curing fish.

The fish should be cured in separate premises or enclosures where hygienic and sanitary conditions could be maintained strictly. Only fresh fish of prime quality should be used for curing. Salt of sodium chloride not less than 96 % should be used and fish must be salted in good quantities of salt for the prescribed minimum period. The fish should be washed well both before and after curing and after draining should be dried in the sun on raised platforms or on mats spread over such barbecues with intermittent turning over to ensure uniform drying. "The final product should not be above 30 or 35 % in moisture and should be firm and white in appearance. This should be properly kept in storage without admixture with sand or contamination with insects or rodents. Special wooden boxes lined with waterproof lining should be used for packing fish for export. By adopting these methods preserved fish of uniformly high quality can be easily obtained and the market would get firmly established. Preservation of fish by salting and drying is one of the age-old practices adopted by fishermen to preserve excess fish catch in our country where icing, chilling and freezing of fish are comparatively developments in the fish processing industry. In spite of the advantages of


\textsuperscript{102} *Ibid.*, Volume: XIII, No: 8, August, 1959, p.27.
preserving fish by these latter methods and marketing them in a fresh state being widely known, still salt curing of fish is resorted to.\textsuperscript{103}

**Fish Canning Industry**

As an impetus to the fish canning industry and promotion of exports, the Union Ministry of Food and Agriculture had introduced a scheme to give a subsidy on tin plate used for the manufacture of open top sanitary cans and Dingley' type cans for wet packing of various types of fish and prawns. The step was intended to help the industry, which was in the early stages of development, to increase its production and at the same time keep the quality of the products high and the cost of production sufficiently low. The industry was able to offer its products to the internal market at reasonable prices and compete favourably in foreign markets.

Canning factories have to submit in prescribed forms details about their factories to the Fisheries Development Advisor, Ministry of Food and Agriculture for registration under the scheme. The State Directorate of Fisheries and the Joint or Deputy Chief Controllers of Imports and Exports will, after verifying the facts recommended the cases to the Fisheries Development Adviser.\textsuperscript{104}

**FISH MARKETS**

For the welfare of fishermen, Lourdhammal Simon introduced several fish markets throughout the State. She encouraged fishermen to run fish markets hygienically also she had arranged many programmes to create awareness among fishermen. During her ministry, fishermen and coastal villages obviously benefited a lot. Through Fisheries Department many areas had encountered with greater development and several Municipalities sanctioned fish market facilities.


\textsuperscript{104} Ibid., Volume: XV, No: 11, November, 1961, p.9.
Efforts were made to maintain the fish markets in the State in good condition and the fishermen co-operatives and federations were assisted in their marketing programme. The formation of fishermen co-operative societies and encouragement of fishermen to conduct their trade on co-operative basis, continued to be the line of approach and several measures for the development of fisheries were channelized through co-operative societies. The Government had under consideration a scheme for constructing two model fish markets, one at Madurai and the other at Madras to be executed through the agency of the Madurai municipality and the Madras Corporation respectively. According to the Second Five Year Plan fish stalls and dry fish markets were constructed in Kanyakumari district and also at Kollancode in Kanyakumari district a Panchayat Market was constructed. For the improvement of fish markets, loans amounting to Rs.2 lakhs had been provided to 30 local bodies. A sum of Rs.5 lakhs had been provided for the purpose during the Third Five Year Plan.

**MECHANIZED BOATS (PABLO BOATS)**

Community development inserted the state into the everyday life of the fishermen through the presence of the Co-operative Societies. One of the major developments in the Fisheries Department was the introduction of mechanized boats for the benefit of fishermen. The second focus of fisheries community development was ‘to advance motorization without significantly changing the structure of the fishery’, a scheme that the Tamilnadu Fisheries Department initiated with the help of the United Nation’s Food and Agricultural Organisation (FAO). Minister Lourdhammal Simon with the assistance of Narway country introduced mechanized boats in Tamilnadu. It is also known as Indo-

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105 Madras State Administration Report, 1959-60, Department of Fisheries, Government of Madras, Madras, 1961, p.3
Narwegian Project. This Project was introduced in coastal districts like Kanyakumari, Tuticorin, Ramanathapuram, Nagapattinam and Chennai. In all the coastal districts through the Co-operative Societies five reduced fishermen were selected and boats were distributed by the order of Minister Lourdhammal Simon. She had supplied mechanized boats and nets to all the fishermen throughout the State.

Under the Plan scheme for construction of mechanized fishing boats, the mechanized fishing boats were sold to groups of fishermen or members of Fishermen Co-operative Societies at concessional price calculated at 75 % of the cost of hull and 50% of the cost of the engine. The scheme was eligible for a grant of 25 % on cost of staff and 50 % grant on the subsidy allowed to fishermen on the sale of boats from the Government of India. During 1959, Minister Lourdhammal Simon had ordered to supply 25 % of the cost of boat (both engines and hull together) was granted as subsidy. For the construction of Pablo boats the State Government was giving 25 % of the cost of hull plus 50 % of the cost of engines as subsidy, and in this, half was provided by the Central Government.

One hundred and thirty-two Pablo Boats had been constructed and distributed in the Second Five Year Plan. The scheme was expanded in the Third Five Year Plan and a provision of Rs.9 lakhs had been made for 40 Pablo Boats in 1961– 62.

**Tribulations among Fishermen**

During the period of Lourdhammal Simon in 1958 with the assistance of Narway country’s new technology, mechanized boats were introduced in Tamilnadu. Still before, the fishermen were used to fish with the help of traditional methods fishing by *catamarams* and country boats (*vallam*). And before the introduction of mechanized boats, the deep-sea fishing was an unattainable thing to fishermen.
At first introduction of mechanized boat was opposed severely by the fishers throughout the State. Because they thought that, sound produced from these boats would destroy the fishes and they would be died almost immediately. The secretion of oils and smoke produced from these boats, the sea atmosphere would be collapsed and the importance of *catamarams* and *vallams* would be abolished. For these reasons the fishermen got annoyed and led to several illegal riots all over Tamilnadu. In fact in Kanyakumari district, the impact of violence reached its peak.

The distribution work of mechanized boats was done during the 1st year of the Second Five-Year Plan and the results achieved were indeed encouraging and it was hoped that much more would be achieved in the course of the 2nd year. There was no doubt that the income of the fishermen in the State would be doubled, but by greater output which was expected to be three or even four times greater than the previous production.

During the second plan period, so far 65 mechanised fishing boats had been distributed to the Fishermen Co-operative Societies and other groups of fishermen. In view of the popular demand for mechanised boats it was programmed to construct and supply 400 Pablo boats during the Third plan period. The board had recommended that the security deposit collected for the supply of boats might be considered adequate and additional security need not be demanded for the supply of fish net twine and nylon nets. The Government had accepted the recommendations.

**Mechanisation programme**

The main bottleneck of the programme of mechanisation was the shortage of boat building capacity, and to overcome this difficulty, the Department had proposed to construct additional boat building yards at suitable centres. Facilities also developed for

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110 Ibid., p.5.
repairs and maintenance of mechanised fishing boats. A scheme for carrying out research for improving the fishing crafts also one of the features of the programme of work of the Department during the Third plan. Nylon nets worth Rs.6.63 lakhs needed particularly for the mechanised boats had been distributed at subsidized rates to fishermen during the second plan. The scheme was proposed to be continued in the Third plan with a provision of Rs.20 lakhs.\textsuperscript{111}

Two more fishing harbours, one at Royapuram and another at Colachel were to be established during the Third plan and the fishing harbor at Cuddalore already taken up for development had opened to the fishing industry. Mooring facilities like jetties, buoys slipways and the like provided at the fishing centres at Tuticorn, Madras and Colachel.\textsuperscript{112}

NYLON NETS

Like the mechanised boats the introduction of nylon net introduced by Minister Lourdhammal Simon assumed greater importance. With the introduction of mechanized fishing boats, modern fishing gears such as fishing nets, made of nylon and other synthetic material had also been supplied to fishermen to enable them to maximize the catches from the sea.\textsuperscript{113} The fishermen had learnt by experience that these nets made of synthetic material, were more effective and also more durable. Hence the demand for these synthetic materials was constantly on the increase. The Government of Madras, through Fisheries Department, had started introducing nylon nets among fishermen and the nets were gaining fast popularity. Groups of fishermen and Fishermen Co-operative Societies were given these nets on subsidy and credit basis. One-third value was free and the balance of two-thirds value repayable in easy monthly installments out

\begin{flushright}
\textsuperscript{111} Ibid., Volume: XV, No: 1, January, 1961, p.6.
\textsuperscript{112} Ibid., p.6.
\textsuperscript{113} Madras State Administration Report, 1959-60, Department of Fisheries, Government of Madras, Madras, 1961, pp.35-36.
\end{flushright}
of the profits realized in sale of daily fish landed. With the introduction of nylon fishing nets a new and brighter chapter was opened in the State Fishing Industry.  

Regarding subsidy of Nylon Nets, Minister Lourdhammal Simon stated on 18th August 1961 before the house: “I gave certain particulars on 14 March 1961 about synthetic fish net twine supplied to fishermen by the Fisheries Department, and about the number of applications received for issue of import licences to fishermen during the past two years, and the number granted so far. Thus, the State Government was eligible for a subsidy of Rs. 39,122 towards the synthetic net (valued at Rs. 2.65 lakhs) supplied to fishermen by the Fisheries Department during 1957-58, 1959-60 and up to 31st October 1960.”

In 1957, Lourdhammal Simon decided to import nylon nets from Glasgrow for distribution with subsidy. Community Development to the Blue Revolution states: “of the sixty-five nets received by the end of 1957, Colachel secured twenty four. Also in 1957 the Government bought ‘terlene’ from a local branch of the British Imperial Chemical Industries as a cheaper alternative to Glasgrow nylon; Colachel society was the only one of the sixteen societies functioning in Kanyakumari to receive 25 pounds of the material. In 1957 the Government distributed twenty-six boats with nylon gill nets at a per cent subsidy across the State of which seven went to Colachel”.

**Composition of Nylon**

Nylon is a superior textile fibre produced by chemical synthesis from coal-tar and limestone. While it is difficult to believe that such strong, beautiful and silky fibre as nylon comes out of coal-tar and limestone, the fact remains that the fibre is out of these

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116 Ibid., p.44.
two “impossible combinations”. While there is an old proverb in Tamil to say that ‘it is impossible to make fibre out of stone’, the time had come to prove its fallacy and that really nylon is out of limestone.\textsuperscript{117}

**Nylon in textiles**

Nylon textiles are popular in the market. Nylon slack shirts are in great demand in the State and nylon saries are adorning women. The secret of the sudden popularity of synthetic textile clothes is because the public have realized their manifold advantages. They are light, attractive, comfortable to wear, longstanding and available in scores of shades and designs to suit the pocket of rich and middle class alike.\textsuperscript{118}

**Nylon in fishing**

Nylon means longer life to nets and larger catches to fishermen.\textsuperscript{119} Rot-proof fishing nets and ropes have long been a dream of the fishermen. The application of nylon to fishing nets and ropes had brought a revolution in the fishing industry during the year 1958-59. Minister Lourdhammal Simon had introduced nylon nets in the fishing combo and it attained utmost fame among the fishermen. The benefits of nylon net are given below:

**Rot proof**

Fishing nets made from natural fibres like cotton and hemp are subject to rapid deterioration under water. Outside water also living organisms like bacteria, fungi, white-ants, dermestid beetles, silver fish, moth feed on natural fibres. These organisms are present to a smaller or larger extent in fresh water, sea water

\textsuperscript{117} Madras Information, Volume: XIII, No: 6, Director of Information Publicity, St. George Fort, Madras, June, 1959, p.24.
\textsuperscript{118} Ibid., p.24.
\textsuperscript{119} Ibid., p.24.
or storage rooms. Sea salt also destroyed nets made of natural fibres. But nylon nets are completely rot proof and they cannot be easily damaged and destroyed.

**Exposure to sunlight and weathering**

Nets made of natural fibres like cotton require to be dried in the sun after use. But nylon nets need not be dried after use. Though, nylon therefore relieves troubles of fishermen for drying nets and handling them. Nylon nets have tremendous strength. Nylon is twice strong and half as heavy as aluminum. It withstood heavy loads with a very little elasticity. Thus nylon net has a very long life. They are extremely light size and it is the lightest fibre in the world.

Nylon nets are un-affected by extremes of temperature. It retains full strength even in frost and its melting point is 490 degrees Fahrenheit. It does not easily catch fire so it suits for all the weathers. They are almost invisible in water. To explain further, in view of the invisibility of the nylon nets fishes easily get caught in nets. But in the case of other conventional nets, owing to their visibility fishes often fight shy of approaching them.

**Elasticity and Maintenance**

Nylon nets have just the right elasticity to gill fishes. The basic nylon yarn stretches up to 20 % without breaking. After normal stretching it recovers completely so that mesh sizes remain the same. Further when trapped, fishes struggle hard in the nets, the elastic nylon gives allowance to their movements without getting easily damaged. Transparency and elasticity of the yarn used for fishing nets, especially gill

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nets, have significant bearings upon the catch. That is why larger catches are guaranteed by using nylon nets.\textsuperscript{124}

Maintenance of nylon nets is easy. Fishermen do not want to suffer too much for its maintenance. Because of these merits, nylon nets were rapidly displacing those made of cotton, hemp and coir and revolutionizing the fishing industry. At first, it may be thought that the nylon net is further costly in comparison with that of the cotton net. When the above merits were taken into account among fishermen it was realized that great benefits accumulate from the use of nylon nets in the long run. Thus nylon nets had become familiar among fishermen throughout the State.

After the introduction of these boats and nylon nets, the fishermen were slowly beginning to realise the advantage of the use of power boats and synthetic nets and there was a glamour for the supply of these modern equipments all over the state. The 1959 Annual Report states: ‘Although there had been sporadic protests about the use of this gear by persons with vested interests supported by middlemen fish-merchants, there has been a great awakening at all fishing centres about the use of this modern gear.’

**FISHERMEN TRAINING SCHOOL**

This scheme implemented to train fishermen in modern fishing techniques was steadily gaining that their use helped to catch more fish and earn more money.\textsuperscript{125} The Fisheries Department organised training programmes at ‘test case’ fishing centres to instruct fishermen in the use of mechanised craft and gear, including elements of navigation such as a compass and its uses, upkeep and maintenance of marine diesel engines, fishing gear utility in different types of fishing and modes of operation, and theoretical knowledge of fish habits, oceanography, fishing craft and boat building.

\textsuperscript{124} Ibid., p.26.  
\textsuperscript{125} Ibid., Volume: XV, No: 8, August, 1961, p.156.
Fishermen Training Schools for training fishermen (during the Second Five-Year Plan) to handle Mechanised Boats and Nylon Nets continued to train fishermen successfully. The Tuticorin Training Centre served the southern coastal districts of Kanyakumari, Tirunelveli and Ramanathapuram while the Training Centre at Nagapattinam served the northern districts of South Arcot, Chingleput, Thanjavur and Madras. The staff at each Training Centre consisted of one Assistant Director of Fisheries, one Inspector of Fisheries and one Junior Engineer. While the Assistant Director of Fisheries and Inspector of Fisheries taught the students the management of power boats, modern methods of fishing and elementary navigation, the Junior Engineer taught the students the fundamentals of marine engines and their mechanism. A large number of fishermen applied for admission to this training course.\(^{126}\)

The medium of teaching in the Training Centre was Tamil. Originally the training was intended only to teach the fishermen the use of new types of Mechanised Boat and operation of engines. Later however, the syllabus was slightly enlarged and the trainees were also taught the modern methods of fishing with improved gears like nylon nets, etc. The fundamentals of navigational traffic were also taught to them. They are taken often on board Mechanised Boats to give them plenty of opportunities to handle the boat and gear by themselves. They were given a scientific understanding of the commercially important fisheries of the State and factors responsible for their occurrence and depletion.\(^{127}\)

The days when fishermen used to be very conservative and refused to take to modern methods of fishing were over. They had now shed all prejudices and superstitions and were ready to listen, consider, understand and take to new methods of

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126 Ibid., p.156.
127 Ibid., p.156.
fishing, if they were convinced of the advantages. It was a good sign and a sign of progress in the Fisheries Department.

So far several fishermen candidates from Madras had been trained and their skill was being fully utilized. Some of them worked as crew in Pablo boats (Mechanised Boats) given to Fishermen Co-operative Societies. Some of them had organized themselves into groups of five each group operating a Pablo boat. Such groups were given nets and boats on the recommendations of the two Training Schools. The boats and nets remain under the charge of the Training Schools until the cost of the boats and nets were recovered from the group in easy installments.

The scheme was started with the intention of bettering the living conditions of fishermen by helping them to catch more and earn more. The results had been very encouraging and in the years to come one might see fleets of mechanised fishing boats moving through the ocean by catching more fish with little effort.

One of the handicaps for the introduction of mechanised fishing on extensive scale was the lack of trained personnel for operating modern fishing boats and engines. Given the proper training and encouragement, the fishermen would be capable of adopting themselves to new methods. In addition to a programme for improving the two existing training centres at Tuticorin and Nagapattinam, it was proposed to establish, under the Third plan, one more centre at Madras to train 20 fishermen every six months.

AD HOC COMMITTEE

Members of the Ad-hoc Committee are the Director of Fisheries, Madras-Chairman. Members: 1) Chief Engineer, Port Trust, 2) State Port Officer, Madras, 3)

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Chief engineer, Public Works department, 4) Principal Officer, Mercantile Marine Department, 5) Corporation engineer, Madras, and 6) Assistant Engineer, Harbour, Office of the Director of Fisheries.

**Duties of Ad-hoc Committee**

a) Go into the question of establishing fishing harbour in the City and the suitability of the site.

b) Examine the adequacy and suitability of the structure suggested for the harbour by the Harbor Expert and recommends improvements.

c) Examine the possibility of combining the sea-face wall scheme so that both aims are achieved at the minimum cost.

d) Suggest phasing of the scheme consistent with the needs of fishing trade, and

e) Suggest an agency for executing the work.\(^{131}\)

**WELFARE MEASURES THROUGH THE LOCAL ADMINISTRATION**

During the period of Lourdhammal Simon as Minister she gave importance to maintenance of roads, street lights, construction of bridges and other measures of public welfare. A number of new roads like Thathanur to Sathambadi via Sripurantham-Govindaputhur, 144/8 of Vellore Anicut to Lattumannarkudi, Ponparappi- Sirugalapur via Peiyakurichi to meet Thittakudi, Kolathur to Vallam to meet Varakaval to Mathur, Vilangudi to T.Palur, Thandalai to Melur road, Subramaniapuram to Siruvallur, Manakkal road, Kuvagam to Vallam road, Kadugar- Athur, Kanavur road, Dhalavai to Thathanur road, Sanniyasinalpur- Thathanur, Manapathur-Venjinaipuram road, Kumulur-Venjipuram Sendhurai road, Illuppaiyaur road, Kovilur-Andipattukadu-Chinnapattukadu, Karaipakkam-Manjamedu road, Muthuservaimadam road, Kundavalur road, Ottakakoil-

\(^{131}\) Tamil selven Jo., *Ullatchi & Meenvazhathurai Manthiri Lourdhammal Simon*, (Tamil) Therku Pathipagam, Nagercoil, May 2015, p.64.
R.S. Krishnapuram-Sreenivasapuram, Silambur to Ayyur, Vadarajampettai-Vilandi, Kovil-Esanai-Elandakoodam road, Royamparanpottaveli road, Angarayanallur-Varathirayanpattinam road, Edayyar road, Manjamedu-Thirumanur road, Klamaligai-Raspalayam road, Periyavalayam road, Athur road, Edanganni road, Valkurichi road, Thelur road, Nannimangalam road, Pirancheri road, Poondi-Veppankuli road, nachiyarpatti road, Devamangalam road, Yadayar-Varthiyanur road, Edayakurichi road, Karadikulam road, Karuppillankattalai road, Anadavadi road, Namunangam road, Kamarasavalli-oriyur road, Kalumangalam road, Pudukudi-Jeyamkondam-Sundurai road, Govindapuram-Kalakurichi-Ottakoil road, Husainabad to Kallankurichi-Ottakoil road and Peruvalappur and Kariamanickam firkas at Lalgudi taluk in Tiruchirappalli district were laid down in the year 1957-1958.\(^{132}\)

**New routes opened in Madurai district since 1\(^{st}\) April 1959**

In the period of Lurdhammal Simon countless important route were opened in Madurai District.\(^{133}\) amongst them some routs of listed below, Ayyampalayam to Thandikudi, Theni to Lower camp, Dindigul to Batlagundu, Melur to Natham, Ayyalur to Vedasandur, Madurai to Anaipatti, Madurai to kallal, Didigul to Anaipatti, Angunagar to Annamalai Mills, N.G.O.s’ Colony to Annamalai Mills (Dindigul Town), Madurai to Dindigul via Alanganallur, Didigul to R. Vellodu, Madurai to Theni, Madurai to Shoavandan, Madurai to Thiruvathavur, Pallampatti to Vedasandur, Madurai to Dindigul via Melakkal, Madurai to Thandigudi, Madurai to Thirupuvanam, Alangarkoil to Urangampatti, Didigul to Palani, Didigul to Pudur, Cumbum to Kumili, Palani to Mulenur, Theni to Palayam and Madurai to Othakadai.

**Government roads other than National Highways**


Karur bypass road in Salem-Thirppathur road, National Highways 7 bypass at mile 10/6 Karur-Pugalur road, National Highways 7 Banaras to Cape Comorin road, Diversion road from miles 16/2 to 19/1 of Karur aravankurichi road, Diversion road from mile 303/4 to 304/3 of National Highways 7 at Madurai, South Arcot Division: Diversion road at Miles 12/3-4, 13/7-8, 14/1-7 and 15/6-7 of Cuddalore- Chittoor road, Thanjavoor Division: granite Metalling Mariammankoil road including land acquisition, Thiruchirapalli Division: Diversion road in Mile 13/4-8 of Thiruchirapalli- Chidambaram road, Diversion road in mile 52/1-6 of Thiruchirapalli - Chidambaram road in Udayarpalayam limit, Madurai Division: Bypass road in mile 27/2-8/0 of Periyakulam-Kumili limit, Tirunelveli Division: Bypass road from mile 0/7-3/3 of Ambasamudram-Tenkasi road, Krishnagiri Division: Uthalairai bypass road in mile 53/5-8 including construction of culvert in Salem -Thiruppathur road and Diversion road in mile 5/8-6/8 of Denkanikottah - Kilamangalam road.

**District Board roads and bridges**

During the year 1957-58, four bridges on Coovum and Buckingham Canal were constructed in Madras City.\(^{134}\) Krishnagiri Division: Bypass road and metalling Kalapattur-Kambienekore road near Dasempatti Railway Station to avoid low bridges and Erode Division: Improvements to Erode-Karur road in mile 12/0-12/6 and providing bypass in Kodumudi Town limits. During the year 1957-58 in Madurai Division Rs.1,00,000 was sanctioned for the roads and bridges work.\(^{135}\) And also Aranmanai puthur bridge was constructed in the year 1958.\(^{136}\) Then in the Chingleput district Rs. 2,84,000 was sanctioned by the Local Administration Department for the

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\(^{134}\) G.O. Ms. No. 1299, Health, Education and Local Administration Department, dated 30\(^{th}\) August 1957.


roads and bridges work. And in the same district for the 50 civil works the Central Government was sanctioned central fund. And Lourdhammal Simon had used the fund accurately to the district. Lourdhammal Simon was sanctioned an additional amount of Rs. 2,60,000 for the construction of bridge at Authoor across Thambaraparani river. 9.6 lakhs expenditure a new bridge had been built and opened across Thambaraparani River near Mukkan. And a bridge was constructed across the Cauvery River between Erode and Pallipalayam in the year 1957-58 by Lourdhammal Simon. Then in the same year dustless surfacing of roads works were completed by Lourdhammal Simon nearly 50 civil works all over the Madras State.

**LOURDHAMMAL SIMON AND KANYAKUMARI DISTRICT**

Lourdhammal Simon as a minister from Kanyakumari district she had sustained a soft corner to the essential needs of the people of her parental district. For the first time, when she introduced Mechanised Boats throughout the Tamilnadu State she gave first priority to Kanyakumari district. When she introduced this development programme, the local clergy were quick to identify it as a much-needed catalyst for fisher integration into the national economic and cultural mainstream, and the long-awaited counterpart in the fisheries sector to the commercialisation of agriculture. The development programme promised to level older hierarchies and provide an avenue of economic and social mobility for the community as a whole. The clergy embraced the programme, speaking of its necessity from the pulpit, and urged their fisher congregations to take up the new technology without hesitation. The development programme was proof, they claimed,
that the state was finally recognising the needs of poor Catholics and their rightful place in a new nation. Lourdhammal Simon set about implementing the mechanisation programme across Tamil Nadu with particular attention to her home district of Kanyakumari. The subsidized gill-netters were channelled mainly to the village of Colachel, a natural harbour in an otherwise turbulent coastline that made it a good test case for the technology. Coincidentally, it was also the minister’s marital village, where her husband Alexander Manual Simon was president of the Fishermen’s Cooperative Society. In the year of Lourdammal Simon’s election as fisheries minister the Tamil Nadu government decided to constitute a State Fisheries Advisory Board. Of its four non-official members, Alexander Manual Simon was one. He continued as the Colachel Fishermen Cooperative Society president by a series of three terms, which firmly secured Colachel’s place within the Congress Party’s patronage system. The village’s privileged place within the district, and unique relationship to the State, quickly became evident. Kanyakumari District’s Fisheries Training Centre was opened at Colachel, in a part of the village that was newly named Simon Colony (after Minister Simon’s husband).

Firstly at Colachel in Kanyakumari district, mechanized boats were introduced and two boats were supplied through Colachel Co-operative Societies to fishermen. In 1957 the government distributed twenty-six boats with nylon gill-nets at a 25 per cent subsidy across the State, of which seven went to Colachel. In the late 1960s there was another, more dramatic, shift in the direction and pace of state fisheries development. And from that time onwards, problems arisen among the coastal people and the fishermen showed their hesitation to accept the new technology.

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143 G.O. Ms. No. 1151, Food and Agriculture Department, dated 20th March 1962.
144 An interview with Mr. Jo. Tamilselvan, Nagercoil, aged 43, dated 04.01.2016.
A man named Samathanam from Kanyakumari, while he was speaking about his experience during the supply of mechanised boats in the coastal villages violence has arisen and he said that a boat supplied by Minister Lourdhammal Simon was 30 and 32 feet. Only six to eight members could work on it at sea. At that time Lourdhammal Simon had met Bishop Agnisamy and Parish Priest Josephfath Maria and informed them that she was going to supply 5 boats to the village. People started to murmur that five boats were not sufficient for fishing and many fishermen would not get job. A person called Siluvai Michael Bernando argued that minimum 100 boats should be supplied otherwise it would not satisfy the people. Thus a dilemma arisen among the fishermen. Later some days the situation was settled. Minister Lourdhammal Simon introduced another scheme soon after first one. According to that scheme the fishermen were supposed to register their names paying Rs.500 at the fishermen office. Only one person would be selected and supply the boat first, this system followed for all the paid one. It was also not acceptable for all the fishermen. At that time a boat constructed at Royapuram in Chennai and sent to the remote villages by way of sea. Later some days there were various types of boats and some boat engines like ‘Samindhar Gear Engines’, ‘Ashok Leyland Engines’ also introduced. Thus Mr.Samathanam shared his experience with the readers who read his book name Meenava Munnodi Lourdhammal Simon.145

When mechanised gill-netters were first introduced through the Colachel Fishermen Cooperative Society, their substantial catches generated considerable tension on the coast, and finally exploded into a clash at sea in 1959. In the beginning, the introduction of mechanized boat was highly opposed by the people in the entire coastal villages of Tamilnadu. At that time a article written by Mr. Dhuraiswamy and Mr.

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Kodikal Chellappa (Sheik Abdhulla)\textsuperscript{146} also had made the fishermen to enact more violently. In opposition to the introduction of mechanized boats by Minister Lourdhammal Simon fishermen all over Madras State protested and also involved in violent activities. It became very strong in Kanyakumari district the people went to the extent of destroying the Minister’s house at Nagercoil in Kanyakumari district. The Minister was not there and she was in Chennai. Hence the disturbance was complained to the police station through a telephone by the watchman and they were arrested. But she asked the policeman to release all of them because she said that they were her people and they did not know what they were doing. The Minister Lourdhammal Simon felt that it was reflection of her people’s sensitivity and ignorance.\textsuperscript{147}

On one side were the artisanal fishermen of Pudur, the next biggest fishing village east of Colachel, and Colachel’s merchant elite; on the other, the gill-netter owners of Colachel were engaged in clash. The fishermen who perpetrated the first clash recollected that they had first tried to impose sanctions at the village level against the new craft, but had finally resorted to violence when the gill-netter owners persisted in using their superior technical power to outrun the \textit{kattumarams} and amass personal profit. During the clash, considerable damage was done to the new craft, but conflict continued in the sea also.

When Kanyakumari district was joined with Kerala government 10 fishermen clubs were there although those were seemed to be useless. During the period of Lourdhammal Simon only, the fishermen clubs functioned in a useful way. Bank loans were given to the fishermen to buy mechanized boats in a subsidized price. The members of Fishermen club were separated into some groups and each group has four members and mechanized boats were distributed to them in subsidized price. So coastal peoples

\textsuperscript{146} An interview with Mr. Kodikal Chellappa (Sheik Abdhulla), Nagercoil, aged 84, dated 23.12.2015.
\textsuperscript{147} \textit{Kadaloram} (Tamil Eathal), Thimil Ezhuthalargal, Nagercoil, October 2014, pp.30-31.
were separated into two groups, one was ‘boat party’ and another was ‘catamaram party’ and the problems continued between these two parties.

Minister Lourdhammal Simon established a mechanized boat driving school at Simon Colony in Colachel and also built hostel for fishermen, for that they could stay there for 6 months and learn driving. Many fishermen had joined the Training School and learnt driving. Venjilas from Thoothoor was the first person who came out from this driving school and he sent many fishermen to this driving school to learn driving. From these mechanized boats many fishermen developed their economic and living status. Like Colachel there were many driving schools started in Tuticorin. The fishermen from Mullur Durai to Thoothoor were the first persons who learnt driving.

**Lourdhammal Simon and A.V.M Canal Bridge**

Minister Lourdhammal Simon had sanctioned a bridge to be built at A.V.M Canal also another bridge at Marthandam Thurai. During her period some 8 coastal villages didn’t have proper transport and road facility to travel. They had to cross nearly 8 km from Ramyuman Durai to Neerodi villages, these villages came under Kanyakumari district. At that time Country Boat (vallam) was the only solution for their travel. People suffered a lot to catch bus, to catch bus they have to go Poovar or Thenkaipattanam hence they requested Minister Lourdhammal Simon to build a bridge on the A.V.M Canal (Ananda Victoria Marthandavarma Kaalvaai). Because the old bridge named Aachan Durai collapsed fully. She accepted their request and fulfilled it in the year 1959 and at the same year Marthandam Durai Bridge also established.

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149 Ananda Victoria Marthandavarma Kaalvaai
150 G.O.Ms. No. 1079, Rural Development and Local Administration Department, dated 22nd December 1960.
At Pallam Puthan Thurai she had built a light house and established one at in Pallam Puthanthurai. One of the lights of the two light houses had been lighting throughout the night. So it was very helpful to the fisher men to find shores. But no one was there to maintain these light houses after her 5 years tenure.\footnote{Tamilselven.Jo., \textit{Ullatchi & Meenvazhathurai Manthiri Lourdhammal Simon}, (Tamil) Therku Pathipagam, Nagercoil, May 2015, p.133.}

For people’s culture she had constructed and inaugurated libraries at Ethamozhi Junction and Rajakamangalam Thurai. She was accompanied by Minister Bhagatavathalam, when he came for the inaugural function of the Azahiyapandipuram library. Who were all sought Minister Lourdhammal Simon for help, she never hesitated the people. During her period, there was a drinking water problem which highly affected the entire coastal areas of Kanyakumari district. Lourdhammal Simon had given priority to drinking water supply through pipe line in all the coastal areas. From her time onwards coastal areas are having a sufficient drinking water supply.

Being a well-planned Woman Minister of Local Administration and Fisheries department Minister Lourdhammal Simon had developed both the departments economically and financially. Schemes introduced by her in the department had regenerated and inculcated curiosity and self-awareness among the fisher folk. The new technologies were the gifts given for the improvement of fisheries by Lourdhammal Simon. Technological stations, Biological stations, Elementary schools at coastal villages, Fish markets etc succeeded to revolutionise their life.

During 1957, through the Pearl fishery and Chank fishery the revenue to the department was approximately 17.4 lakhs. In the beginning her service had led the department to face considerable profits. Using of new technological advancements like Mechanized Bots, Nylon nets and etc, these included more prosperous in the lives of fishing families, merchants and moneylenders who had previously controlled fish
marketing, among Colachel’s Folk whoever initially resisted the mechanised gillnetters, they were started to use the new technology. This is the ultimate success of Lourdhammal Simon.

The Honorable Chief Minister K.Kamaraj never interferes on his minister’s works. He had treated all the ministers in a gentle way. He knew the capacity level of his ministers, so that he has given the right postings to them and also gave freedom to them. Like a way Chief Minister K.Kamaraj had given a suitable posting to Lourdhammal Simon obviously, she had the will power to do all of her duties without any discrimination in castes, race, religion, and etc. Apart from castes, her only one aim was to fulfill the socio-economic requirements of people of Tamilnadu, because of the dedication on her service, till now she had been obtaining a place in the hearts of the People of Tamilnadu.