CONCLUSION

Kanyakumari District, though it was a part and parcel of Tamil Country during the Sangam age, along with the Chera country, it came under the Venad kingdom during the ninth century A.D. Though the Chola and the Pandya kings had intruded every now then, it was considered as a part of Chera and Venad kingdom only. Its geography also had a major role in that. Later, when the Venad kingdom passed over to the hands of the Travancore kings during the eighteenth century, this part of the land also came under their sway. Thus, this region or parts of Kanyakumari District came under the political control of Travancore rulers.

However, their socio-economic and linguistic patterns, customs and traditions were different from that of the Malayalees of Travancore State. Malayalam, though a branch of Tamil, dominated in the day to day life of the majority of the people of Travancore State. The culture and tradition of the majority of the Malayalam speaking people was totally different from that of the Tamil speaking minority people.

Nambudiri Brahmans and the Nairs were there at the top position in the hierarchical ladder of the society. They enjoyed more privileges than the others. Further the other community people, particularly the Tamil speaking people, who were at the low position in the society faced so many hardships. They had to pay heavy taxes and to follow unworthy rules and regulations. Christian Missionaries and the religious reformers like Muthukutti Swamigal fought against this evils. Freedom movement of India also supported this move. The Suchindrum Satyagraha was the best example for that.
In the meantime, a legislature named Sri Mulam Assembly was formed on the model of British-India. The elected members from the Tamil speaking areas raised many questions to fulfill the needs of the Tamil people. But they were objected or rejected. One such incident happened in 1918, when P.V.Daniel, an elected member of Sri Mulam Popular Assembly, requested the government to establish sufficient number of Tamil schools in the Tamil speaking areas of Travancore, it was rejected. Then, he asked for the conversion of Malayalam schools into Tamil schools in the Tamil locality. However, it was also objected. These, along with other socio-economic and cultural causes, had created a feeling of separatism in the mind of the Tamil speaking people of Travancore.

When Indian independence was approaching in 1945, there was a move for a ‘United Kerala’ extending from Kanyakumari to Kazarcode. But this was opposed by the Tamils of Travancore, because they feared that their condition would be worsened after independence. So, All Travancore Tamilar Congress formed by P.S.Mony aimed at promoting Tamil language and safeguarding ethnic interest of the Tamils. In 1946, a delegation of the All Travancore Tamizhar Congress under Sam Nathaniel with R.K.Ram, P.S Mony, V.Dass, R.Velayuthaperumal and others went to Madras. They met the leaders like K.Kamaraj, M.Bakhtavatsalam and L.S.Karayalar and sought their support for the struggle. Their proposal was accepted by all the leaders and hence the party was renamed as Travancore Tamilnadu Congress.

Nesamony, a senior advocate, belonging to the Nadar community, led the Travancore Tamilnadu Congress and consolidated the people of Kalkulam, Vilavancode, Neyyatinkara, Devikulam, Peermedu and Chittoor Taluks. Under the leadership of Nesamony, the Travancore Tamilnadu Congress was made popular among the oppressed
community, particularly the Nadars. The movement became very popular within a short period among all the southern taluks. The police atrocities increased day by day against the movement. In the meantime, A.Nesamony met Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru on 21st November 1954 and explained the atrocities of the Travancore Cochin Government and stressed the necessity for the merger of the nine Tamil speaking taluks of Travancore-Cochin State with the State of Madras.

At the time, there was a growing demand at the All India level for the Re-organization of States on linguistic basis. Hence, the Government of India formed a State Re-organization Commission in 1956 under the Chairmanship of Fazil Ali. The Commission recommended the merger of the four Tamil speaking Taluks of South Travancore with Madras State. The State Re-organization Act was enacted by the Parliament in 1956. As per the Act, the four taluks of Thovalai, Kalkulam, Vilavancode and Agastheeswaram were merged with the Madras State and grouped together to form a new district, namely Kanyakumari District on 1st November 1956. The new district came into being with Nagercoil as its headquarters.

The administration of the area of present Kanyakumari District was under monarchial rule up to 1949. Then it came under the democratic set up. As per the Constitution of India, Collector became the administrative head of the district since 1956 onwards. The first Collector of Kanyakumari District was Mr. Thirumalai. This district was divided into six constituencies for the Madras Legislative Assembly and one constituency for the Parliament of India. Apart from these, there were local bodies also. One of the local bodies which existed from ancient period is panchayat which means a group of five persons selected by the villagers. Generally, this common place of
administration was under a tree in the centre of the village, called Manram. The zenith of local administration was made during the rule of the Cholas. One of the important features of Chola administration was the method of election for the local self-governing bodies, known as *Kudavolai Murai*. Through this system, members of various variyams were elected. Some of the variyams were *Era Variyam, Thotta Variam, Ponvariam, Lake Variam* and so on. After the disintegration of the Cholas, Venad rulers and later the Travancore kings ruled over this region. They followed the local administration with some modifications.

Under the Travancore rule, the State was divided into three divisions, namely southern division, northern division and the western division for administrative purposes. The whole of Kanyakumari District formed the southern division. Each of these divisions was placed under Valia Sarvathi Karyakar. The Karyakrs formed the backbone of the administrative system. Each division had number of villages under its control. Every village had a fund collected in the panchayat and the fund was utilized to meet the welfare schemes and other expenditure. By the act of 1939, the administration of the local bodies was taken away from the Revenue Department and entrusted with the Public Health Department. On the eve of Indian Independence, the Travancore Cochin State took steps to bring some notable changes in the administration of village Panchayats.

After the formation of Kanyakumari District, the administrative setup of local bodies were formed according to the Panchayat Act of 1958 which continued till 1962. In 1956, the National Development Council appointed a committee under Balwantrai Mehta to suggest the three tier system of village Panchayat administration in the State. They were Grama Panchayat at the village level, Panchayat Samiti at the Block level and at the
district level, Zilla Parishad. Kanyakumari District was divided into four taluks and nine blocks, 88 villages and 66 town panchayats for the purpose of administration. At the district level, District Collector was the supreme authority to control the local bodies. There were many officials to maintain the day to day administration of the Grama Panchayats, Panchayat Samitis and Zilla Parishads.

Further, Municipal administration was also duly maintained by the well organised officials. Besides the Director at the State level, there were Regional Directors to administer the municipalities. There were two municipalities in Kanyakumari District. They were Nagercoil Municipality and Padmanabhapuram Municipality. The municipalities were headed by the Commissioner in the official side and Chairman and his Council in the non-official side. For the progress and development of the villages and municipalities, the Congress Government introduced Community Development Projects and Block Developments programme. Because of these programmes, the economic welfare of the district has been improved a lot in various fields. This clearly shows that the efforts of the Government did not go in vain.

To implement all the programmes, the Government needs revenue. In Indian economic scenario, agriculture is the main source of revenue. Agriculture is an activity involving a close interaction with the environment. Soil, climate, topography, hydrological and biological condition together, extract a major factor upon forming the operation and profitability of agriculture. Apart from rain and soil, the availability of water also plays a vital role in the productivity of agriculture. Availability of water can be given to the crops in the form of irrigation. In the ancient time, tanks and canals were the
major sources of irrigation in Kanyakumari District. Later dams were constructed to extent water resources to the extreme ends of Kanyakumari District.

Because of these dams, cropping area was enlarged. The gross cropped area of this district was nearly 33 percent of net cultivated area excluding the forest. Double cropping was the rule in the low lands. Almost the whole of the irrigated area was utilized for rice cultivation in both seasons. The upland areas which could be irrigated by canals or tanks were used for growing dry crops like tapioca, condiments and spices. The warm and sunny climate of the district is extremely suitable for horticulture. That is why Nanchilnadu was called the granary of Travancore State. The efforts of agricultural re-organization by way of introducing land reforms, schemes of integrated rural credit and efforts to produce more pesticides and fertilizers improved the agricultural production in Kanyakumari District.

The idea of growing rubber in Kanyakumari District was conceived during the Second Five Year Plan. It is a perennial tree. When Kamaraj became the Chief Minister of Tamilnadu, he started the government rubber plantation at Keeriparai for the purpose of implementing employment opportunities to the poor peasants of Kanyakumari District. It was known as Arasu Rubber Corporation. It is one of the largest rubber plantations in Tamilnadu. It contributes 25% of the total natural rubber production in Kanyakumari District and 0.6% of the total rubber production in India. The government is running a Fruit Research Station near Kanyakumari. It is sponsored by the Indian Council of Agricultural Research and the State Government. The station is serving the needs of the fruit growers by way of producing high quality fruit plants. Pepper is the dried pungent fruits of the perennial cropping plants. It is largely cultivated on the northern and the
central region of Vilavancode and Kalkulam Taluks. In Kanyakumari District, a pepper nursery was established in 1967 at Valiya Yela, Pechiparai. The total area of the farm is six hectares on forest land. The farm produces annually two lakhs pepper plants of the variety *Kulltanadan* for distribution to growers of the district and in other parts of Tamilnadu through Hill Area Development Schemes.

Irrigation is one of the important factors for the existence of human life in any part of the country. Rivers are the natural irrigation sources. In Kanyakumari District, River Kothaiyar, River Thampraparani and River Pazhayar are the main sources of irrigation. Apart from these rivers and natural streams, canals, tanks and dams also play a vital role of the source of irrigation. Knowing this, the rulers of the ancient Pandya country built dams, excavated canals and created ponds or tanks wherever necessary. In course of time, the population of the country increased. This made them to think of further alternative arrangements to improve food production and to improve drinking water facilities.

The frequent border conflicts and the Mysore aggression caused severe economic problems in Travancore during the 18th century. The maintenance of the irrigation work was not done properly. Consequently, the agricultural operations were affected severely. Therefore, the government decided to solve the problem of water scarcity in South Travancore. Maharaj Sri Mulam Thirunal gave sanction for the proposal of Kodaiyar project. Subsequently, a quarter of a mile lower down the Pandyan dam, another dam, the Puthan dam, and the Padmanabhapuram Puthanar Channel (P-P channel) were constructed about the year 1750 A.D to get the benefits of the irrigation works done
centuries ago. The Puthan dam and the P.P Channal which form the nucleus of the present system of irrigation gradually expanded and increased year by year.

The Kothaiar irrigation system begins at the Puthan dam, which with the head works serves as the main diversion were the combined waters of the Kothaiar and the Paraliyar pass through the head works out into the main channel system, the Pandyankal and the Padmanaphapuram Puthanar Channel and to the fields through a network of branch and sub-branch channels. The main distribution system of the project consists of the Left Bank Channel system 10½ miles, the P.P Channel system 45 miles, Thiruvithamcode Channel system 41½ miles, the Erattakkarai system 22 miles, the Thovalai Cannel system 55½ miles, Anandanar system 59 miles, the Pazhayar system 46¾ miles and the Nanchilnad Puthanar Channel 35 5/8 miles. An area of about 56,000 acre was benefited by this project. The water from Pechiparai (Kothaiar) Reservoir is taken by a channel on the left bank of the dam and let into the Paraliyar above Puthan dam from where two channels take off to irrigate 60000 acres in Kalkulam, Thovalai and Agastheeswaram Taluks.

Industry plays an important role in the economic growth and development. Kanyakumari District is predominantly an agriculture based district. Almost the entire area is suitable for paddy cultivation. Hence food related activities are done in Kanyakumari District and they are the main source of revenue in this district. Further some village and cottage industries are functioning in this district. Old time industries were handloom weaving, wood carving, coconut industry, shell carving, village smithy, stone carving, chunk industry, oil extraction and so on. The crops of coconut, cashew and rubber played a significant role in the emergence of industries in the district. There were
no major and medium industries during 1950’s in the district. The district has had some medium industries such as cashewnut unit after 1960. Cashewnut is an important commercial and foreign exchange crop of the district. There were 99 small scale cashew karnal processing registered units in this district in 1963. Rubber industry occupies an important place in the economy of the district. This industry provides employment for a large labour force.

The Indian Rare Earth Limited, Manavalakurichi and the Nagammal textile, Nagercoil are the two leading large scale industries in the district. Its raw material, the mineral sand is abundantly available along the beaches of Midalam, Vattakottai, Leepuram and spreading about 2 km west of Valliar river mouth. Ilmenite is being exported to United Kingdom, Japan and other foreign countries. After 1956, a quantity of about 3000 tones of illumenite was loaded. The Nagammal Textile Mill, Nagercoil is a large scale industry under the private sector. The capacity of the mill was 12,600 spindles and the turnover in terms of production was about 5000 boles of yarn in. The Kanyakumari District Co-operative Spinning Mill Limited is located at Aralvaimozhi. The Tamil Nadu handloom weavers co-operative society is the major consumer of the yarn produced in this mill. About 75 percent of the production is distributed to weavers of co-operative societies through its depots. About 20 percent of the production of the mill sold to powerloom units in Bombay on consignment basis.

The small scale industries and the cottage industries play a very important role in the economy of India. The state assists the small scale industries to improve their technologies of production and management, providing credit facilities for both investment and for working capital. They function on small capital investment, cheap
local labour and locally available raw materials. They are a source of employment and income for the artesian and farmers of villages. The industries like processing agriculture produce, oil extraction, poultry, Bee keeping, fruits preservation, handloom, weaving and basket making and the full time employment industries include pottery, carpentry, blacksmith, wood carving and so on which are very important to rural economy.

The centres of handloom industries in this district are Kottar, Vadaseri, Eraniel, Palliyadi etc. In olden days, the centres not only met their entire cloth requirements of the district but also exported larger quantities to abroad. In Nagercoil, a central depot of the Madras State handloom weavers co-operative society was setup for the purpose of supplying yarn to weavers in. A sales emporium was opened at Nagercoil to popularize handloom fabrics. The coir industry has grown well in the district due to the availability of raw materials. The government coir school at Ethamozhi imparts training to forty persons every year to do the manufacture of coir goods. Industrial Estate Nagercoil and Marthandam were setup with a view to provide adequate residential, commercial and recreational facilities and self contained industrial township by itself. Because of its efforts the industry has moved from the traditional form to the modern form in this district.

Importance of education was realised by the Tamils as early as the Sangam Age. Oral teaching played an important part and the education of these days offered great scope for the training of memory. Writing was done on the dried and seasonal palmyrah leaves with the aid of pointed iron styles. Thus, from the Sangam literature, it is inferred that the education and learning was at its zenith in Tamilnadu especially in Kanyakumari. After Sangam period, the Pandian kings were the patron of letters and poets. During this
time, learning was either by paying fee or rendering service to the teachers. The three R’s (Reading, Writing and Arithmetic) were taught in village schools which met under the spade of tree or in the varandha of temples and the village officials held assignments of land from the village on condition that they fulfilled specified duties. Sanskrit learning tended to be the monopoly of the Brahmins. Education under Venad kings in the erstwhile Travancore State was that every village had a pial school, the master was called Ashan and the village boys and girls were taught a few simple lesson in Malayalam. The payment was seldom in cash. It was mostly in kind.

The government of Travancore undertook the responsibility of fostering elementary education in this district. The attention of the government turned towards improving vernacular education in the year 1865-1866. During the British period the Protestant Missionaries introduced English Education in the district. The Protestant Missionaries Rev. William Tobias Ringle Taube, Rev. Mead and Mrs. Mead founded a school at Nagercoil and at Neyyoor respectively, imparted education to the children of the Christian converts and youths of other sects who were willing to hear the words of God. They also contributed towards the cause of technical education. It resulted in the foundation of the school of Industry at Nagercoil in 1820. The missionary Mrs. Mault opened boarding school for girls and boys. In 1866, there were five vernacular schools in the respective taluk head quarters. In 1955, there were two hundred and twelve full fledged Christian primary schools in this district. To popularise and expand the vernacular education, a scheme was launched to open one school for one village similar to that of taluk schools. Therefore, the number of Vernacular schools was increased to thirty six in in Kanyakumari District.
Compulsory free elementary education was introduced for the age group between 5 and 10 in 1956. Towards the attainment of education, children of elementary teachers, last grade government servants, constables, head constables were given free education. In the same year, Basic Education was introduced. The existing elementary schools were converted into Basic schools. In these schools, the children studying in the regular curriculum, had to learn many life oriented education like weaving, craft work, gardening, spinning, agriculture and so on. Elementary and Basic education were reorganised in 1959-60. According to the Tamilnadu Panchayat Act 1958, the Panchayat Union in the State was entrusted with the management and maintenance of all elementary educational institutions in the areas under its jurisdiction. Prior to the year 1963-64 the government prescribed the syllabus, but from the year 1963-64, the policy of nationalization of text books was introduced. Private publications were not allowed.

One of the major achievements of the Congress government under K.Kamaraj was the introduction of mid-day meal scheme throughout the State of Tamilnadu in 1956 for the first time in India. The primary objectives of this scheme was to enroll more children in the school and to reduce dropout rate at the primary schools level and opening of schools in school-less centres. The movement caught the imagination of the people and they had responded enthusiastically both in towns and in villages. In addition to this free supply of books, slate and uniform were supplied under midday meal scheme. Another contribution was the implementation of School Improvement Scheme. Donations were collected in cash or in kinds for construction of school building and to increase the quality of teachers. Construction of libraries, laboratories, latrines, repair and white washing of school buildings, supply of book, slate, uniform, teaching equipments and so
on were done with the help of the amount. As per the recommendations of Kothari Commission, secondary education was reorganised in 1964. The new scheme provided with a new pattern for the secondary education which consisted of 11 years of education.

When the district was formed in November 1956, there were 585 educational institutions of all categories in which 103225 male pupils and 81919 female pupils were studying. Of these 585 educational institutions, 344 were Government elementary schools, 82 aided elementary schools, Government. There were 39 Government secondary schools, 59 Mission schools, two schools without receiving aid, for boys and 20786 girls were studying. In all the girls schools 438 boys and 2840 girls were under instruction. Basic schools under the new concept were also established and there were seven such Government basic schools and one aided basic school having 1327 boys and 1116 girls on roll. For all these categories of schools, there were 1242 men teachers and 1123 women teachers imparting education.

For the year 1967-68 the total number of Primary schools are 249 and 76792 students and 1637 teacher were in this district. In the Middle school totally 107 schools are functioning in this district. In all these schools there are 57928 students were studied and 1757 teachers imparted education. In the year 1967 at the High school level there are 104 schools and 120071 students were received education and 3152 teachers were imparted education.

The Congress Government gave importance to Technical Education too. Accordingly, Junior Technical School was started in Nagercoil. The history of the Collegiate Education in the district dates back to 1893 and at present it is named as Scott
Christian College, Nagercoil. It was started with six Christian and six Hindu students. After 1966, all the colleges in the district came under the control of Madurai Kamaraj University. Now the colleges in Kanyakumari District are affiliated to Manonmaniam Sundaranar University. In 1965, separate Department of Collegiate Education was formed under the Directorate of Collegiate Education to look after the administration of the colleges exclusively. Thus, the objectives of free education and compulsory education was achieved in Kanyakumari District. The education in the district of Kanyakumari contributes a lot for the overall development of the district. The people of Kanyakumari therefore, have great awareness about education. So that, through education, the people benefited themselves and this reached the old communities and the influence of education compelled the people to demand changes in social equality which changed the very structure of the society.

For the prosperity of a country, agriculture and industry are very important. Equally important is the system of transport and communication. If agriculture and industry are regarded as the body and bones of the economy, transport and communication constitute its nerves. A modern economy cannot exist without an efficient system of transport. As far as Kanyakumari District is concerned, the history of road was opened in the past for the convenience of militaries and also for passengers. A very good progress was made in road construction from 1866 to 1872 under the Travancore rule. The main Southern road from Trivandrum to Aramboly is 52 miles. There are several roads branching off from the main road in which the most important are Vizhinjam, Puvar, Kollencode, Thengapatanam, Thiruvattar, Colachel, Thiruvithancode, Eraniel, Bhuthapandi, Balamore and Cape Comorin. (Kanyakumari)
The road network in Kanyakumari District consists of National Highways, State Highways, District Roads and Rural Roads. The trunk road from Madras to Nagercoil joins Kanyakumari, Trivandrum road near Aralvoimozhi and passes through important places over a distance of 62.4 km and finally enters into Kerala State. The road from Kanyakumari to Trivandrum is one of the busiest roads in the country. Routes between Trivandrum and Kanyakumari via Nagercoil and Colachel were the first to taken up for Nationalisation. In the year 1967, all routes in Kanyakumari District, including which are radiating from or terminating in this district were nationalized. Special attention was given to the road development programme under the Five Year Plan.

The construction of road depends on the nature of the soil and configuration of land. The severity of sun and rain and the possibility of floods and seepage of water has important bearing on the coast. The Chief Engineers of the State and Central Government met at Hyderabad in 1959, formulated 20 year Road Development Plan for the period of 1961-81 and the plan is known as Hyderabad Plan. The plan aimed at laying metalled road for about 6 km in every village in a developed and agricultural area and for about 2.5 km in a semi developed area. During the year 1951-58 number of buses operating daily from Kanyakumari District to various other plants of the State was increased from fifty three to sixty seven. This step had helped to ease traffic congestion. In 1959, the government had laid the road with an additional length of 183.7 miles in Kanyakumari District. It was maintained by the Highways department. In 1960, the Nagercoil division was formed consisting of one subdivision and six sections. The total milage of the roads to be maintained by the Nagercoil division has exceeded 700 miles. In order to increase the road mileage and to supervise the work efficiently, more sub divisions were created.
Some of the roads laid were Eranial-Rajakkamangalam road, Ethamozhi-Erupukadu road and a bridge across Chempatti Odai, Nagercoil beach road- Extension from Melakrishnanputthur to Sankuthurai, widening National Highway- Trivandrum Nagercoil road (NH 47A) and so on. In addition to these approach roads, car streets were taken by the Highway for maintenance. Till 1969, Kanyakumari District had no railway facilities. As a member of a Parliament, K.Kamaraj made a proposal for the establishment of a Railway junction in Nagercoil with a branch line to Kanyakumari. This proposal was sanctioned and a railway link was made. If railways are essential for the transport of goods and people for long distance, road transport is essential for such movement for short distances.

Thus, the Kanyakumari District which was formed on 1st November 1956 got a tremendous growth during the rule of Congress party in Tamilnadu. Congress government, particularly the Ministries under K.Kamaraj, had implemented more developmental schemes in the fields of agriculture, irrigation, industry, education and transport and communication. Because of these efforts, this district improved a lot during the years from 1956 to 1967.