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RESEARCH ARTICLE

LOCAL ADMINISTRATION IN VILLUPURAM DISTRICT – A HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

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Abstract

This paper explores the historical and contemporary facets of local administration in Villupuram District, Tamil Nadu, emphasizing its evolution and current structure. The study examines the administrative setup of Villupuram District, tracing its historical development from ancient times through colonial rule to its present-day configuration. The research highlights the emergence of local self-government, tracing its gradual development from early kinship-based systems to modern democratic institutions. The paper clarifies the distinctions between "Local Government" and "Local Self-Government," particularly within the Indian context, and underscores the importance of local self-governance in ensuring tailored and responsive administration. Villupuram District's administrative structure is analyzed, including its division into revenue and local administrative units. The district's revenue administration encompasses nine Taluks and 34 Firkas, with 928 Revenue Villages. The local administration features both rural and urban components: rural administration includes a District Panchayat, 13 Panchayat Unions, and 688 Village Panchayats, while urban administration comprises 3 Municipalities and 7 Town Panchayats. The study provides detailed insights into the number and structure of these local bodies, their electoral processes, and their roles in governance.

Keywords: Local Administration, Local Bodies, Municipality, Town Panchayat, Firkas, Councillors, Executive Officer, Commissioner

Introduction

Within the administration setup of India, local administration is a basic unit of democracy. Participation and control of Government by the people of the country is the essence of democracy. Local administration is very close to citizens. People can sit together and discuss their problems and

suggest solution. It is a connecting bridge between the Citizens and State and Central government. Central and State Government schemes were implemented through the Local Administration.

Objectives of the Study

In this paper we will be discuss about

- The Administrative set-up of Villupuram district.
- The Emergence of Local Administration
- Types of Local Bodies, Establishment and its structures in Villupuram District.

Methodology of this research paper

Methodology adopted for the study is narrative, Descriptive, analytical and historical in approach. The study is primarily carried out and based on descriptive analytical and qualitative research method. I partially used online sources of Government's official website for this article. The main purpose of descriptive research is to ensure factual description of the affairs as it exists.

Sources of the Study

Sources consulted for the completion of the including both primary and secondary data. The primary sources which include the first hand records from the Archives and includes Government official websites and the Secondary like text books, journals, Articles ect., are also used for the successful completion of the Study, along with the internal sources.

Historical background of Villupuram District

Villupuram district is in northern part of Tamil Nadu. This region was called initially Nadu Naadu, Thondai Naadu and Malayaman Naadu. It was located also Coromandel Coastal. This district was ruled by various dynasties in various periods. In early period sangam cholas were ruled here and malayamaan ruler kaari was also ruled this area underheadquarter in Tirukoilur and one of the oldest Tamil Bhrami inscription is located at Jambai, It was belongs to Dhakattur ruler Adhiyaman. Later the Pallavas were also ruled here. The first rock cut cave temple of Pallava ruler first Mahendrawarma's Mandagampau rock cut cave temple is located nearby Villupuram and another famous Pallavas temple is located at Panamalaipet.

Later Cholas were also ruled here and those donated inscription were many located all over in this district. Gingee fort is a very famous and one of the important forts of India. Various rulers were ruled in Ginger fort. Koneri rulers were constructed this

Gingee. This fort was gradually developed by many Rules. In 1677 Shivaji took Gingee area with the assistance of Golkonda forces. Then came the Mughals. During the Mughal regime, both the English and French acquired settlements in South Arcot. During the Anglo-French rivalry, the entire district was turned into a war land. After sometime, the entire area came under the control of East India Company. It remained under British authority till 1947 when India became independent. In 1855 the Arcot state was annexed with Madras Presidency due to the death of Arcot Nawab. British took over the control on Arcot. Later it was divided into two districts. One is North Arcot under headquarter in Vellore and another one is South Arcot under headquarter in Cuddalore.

In 30th September 1993, the Villupuram Ramaswamy Padaiyachi district was established, which was bifurcated from South Arcot district. Later its name was changed and called Villupuram district. In 21th November 2019, Villupuram district was divided into two, Villupuram and Kallakurichi. In present Villupuram district covered 3725.54 Sq.Kms. According to 2011 Census report, Villupuram district had total Population was 20,71,179 including male population was 10,40,471 and female population was 10,30,708 with a sex-ratio of 987 females per 1,000 males, which is well above the national average of 929.

Revenue Administration

Villupuram district was divided into 9 Taluks under the Two Revenue Divisions, Melmalayanur, Gingee, Tindivanam and Marakanam Taluks were under in Tindivanam Revenue Division and Vanur, Vikiravandi, Villupuram, Kandachipuram and Tiruvonnainallur Taluks were under Villupuram Revenue Division. That Nine Taluks were divided into 34 Firkas and that 34 Firkas were also divided into 928 Revenue Villages.

The Emergence of Local Self Government

Local Self-Government not emerged as immediately or in a particular period. It was gradually developed when people started living together. People were electing their representative as a king to rule our self. That is the birth point of self-government. It was gradually developed as a kinship rule. The Local Self-

Government was gradually developed in various period and various people gave names to local bodies. Local Self- Government is a mother for all forms of government.

Local Government and Local Self-Government

The terms Local Government and Local Self-Government are used indiscriminately and likely to cause some confusion. For example, in Britain, France and America, the phrase Local Government is used to denote what in India we denote by using Local Self-Government. This is so because in India, during British days, the phrase Local Government came to be explicitly applied to the provincial government as distinguished from the central government, while the phrase Local Self-Government came into general use for local bodies functioning in districts, town and villages. As a result, Local Self-Government plays a significant role in the administration of the modern state.

Importance of local self-government

The Local Self-Government makes it possible for tailor-made plans as per the needs of heterogeneous regions and groups. It will ensure better coordination. It will lead to a more flexible, innovative and creative administration. It will also reduce the cost of planning and increase the number of public goods.

Local Bodies in Villupuram District

Local Bodies were very important units in Democracy. In 1992, 73rd and 74th Constitutional Amendments were passed in Indian Parliament. It was related to Local Administration. These two amendments gave the powers to Local Bodies. 73rd Amendment discusses about Rural Administration and 74th Amendment discusses about Urban Administration.

In Tamil Nadu, Local Administration had two types. One is Rural Administration and it had three tiers Administration. They were District Panchayat, Panchayat Union and Village Panchayat. Another one is Urban Administration and it also had three subunits. They were Municipal Corporation, established in all villages. Its cover minimum 500 population, if not there 2 or more villages were

Municipality and Town Panchayat. In Villupuram district, Local Administration had aforesaid types of Administration. But no one Municipal Corporation has in this district. Remain other 5 units of Local Administration is there.

I. Rural Administration

i. District Panchayat

In Tamil Nadu, each Revenue District should have one District Panchayat except in Chennai district. Because of Chennai district is fully urbanized district. So Villupuram district also has one District Panchayat. It's called Villupuram District Panchayat. All Rural Administration is under the control District Panchayat in this district.

Villupuram District Panchayat is divided into 28 electoral wards with the base count of voters. Each ward has minimum or not above the 50000 Voters. Each ward has one Councillor, he was elected directly by people and all Councillors were joined and elected Chairman and Vice Chairman within the Council. Chairman is head of this District Panchayat Council. This Council give sanctions and approved the schemes for Village Panchayat through Panchayat Union. It's headquarter is located at Villupuram town. District Rural Development Officer is an official head of this Administration.

ii. Panchayat Union & iii. Village Panchayat

Villupuram district had 13 Panchayat Unions. They were Melmalayanur, Gingee, Vallam, Olakkur, Marakanam, Vanur, Kandamangalam, Mailam, Vikiravandi, Koliyanur, Kanai, Mugaiyur and Tiruvennainallur. Each Panchayat Union had Number of Village Panchayat. Panchayat Unions were divided into number of wards with base of Voters. Each ward would have maximum or not exceed the 5000 voters. Panchayat Unions had one Council. Number of Councillors is there but not same numbers in all Union Councils. Councillors were directly elected by people and all Councillors jointly elected chairman and Vice Chairman. Block Develop Officer is Official head of Panchayat Union. Village Panchayat were combined and create the Village Panchayat. This is basic unit or smallest unit in Local Bodies. Each

village panchayat have one President and Vice president and Ward Members. Each Village Panchayat have minimum 6 wards maximum 15 Wards. President and Ward Members were directly

elected by people and Vice President is elected by ward members. Village Secretary is official incharge for Village Panchayat. Villupuram district had 688 Village Panchayats under 13 Panchayat Union

S.No	Name of Panchayat Union	No. of Village Panchayat	No. of Wards	S.No	Name of Panchayat Union	No. of Village Panchayat
1.	Melmalayanur	55	24	8.	Kandamangalam	46
2.	Gingee	60	24	9.	Vikiravandi	51
3.	Vallam	66	21	10.	Koliyanur	42
4.	Olakkur	52	16	11.	Kaanai	50
5.	Marakanam	56	26	12.	Mugaiyur	48
6.	Mailam	47	21	13.	Tiruvennainallur	50
7.	Vanur	65	27	Total No. of Village Panchayat		688

II. Urban Administration

i. Municipal Administration

Villupuram district does not have Municipal Corporation and it had 3 Municipalities. They are Villupuram, Tindivanam and Kottakuppam. Villupuram municipality was established in 1919. Villupuram Municipality was upgraded as a second grade Municipality in 1953, first grade Municipality in 1973, Selection Grade Municipality in 1988 and Special Grade Municipality in 2023. In 2011, Villupuram Municipality was extended with a covered area 8.36 sq.km. In 2011, Villupuram Municipality has 1,45,874 population. It was divided into 42 electoral wards. Tindivanam was Constituted as Municipality in 01.04.1949 and it was subsequently upgraded as 2nd grade Municipality from 03.04.1970, 1st grade Municipality from 22.05.98 and Selection Grade from 02.12.2008. Tindivanam Municipality was covered area 22.33Sq.Kms. In 2011, Tindivanam Municipality has 72796 populations. It was divided into 33 electoral wards. Kottakupam Town Panchayat was upgraded as a second Grade Municipality in 2021. Kottakupam Municipality covered 9.59 Sq.Kms.

with 31726 populations according by 2011 census. Kottakuppam Municipality was divided into 24 wards. Each ward had one Councilor and he was directly elected by people and then all councilors jointly elect the Chairman and Vice Chairman. Commissioner is official head of Municipality.

i. Town Panchayat

Villupuram district had 7 Town Panchayat. They were Gingee, Ananthapuram, Marakanam, Vikiravandi, Valavanur, Arakandanallur and Tiruvennainallur. Gingee, Marakanam, Arakandanallur and Valavanur were constituted in 1951 in class I Village Panchayat. After 1958, it was changed to Town Panchayat. After 1984, Remain Ananthapuram, Vikiravandi and Tiruvennainallur were ungraded to Town Panchayat from Village Panchayat. Each Town Panchayat was divided into many electoral wards. Each ward had one Councilor. The Councilor was directly elected by people and then all councilors jointly elect the Chairman and Vice Chairman. Executive Officer is Official head of Town Panchayat.

S.No	Name of the Town Panchayat	Grade	No. of wards	2011 Census
1.	Gingee	Special Grade	18	27,045
2.	Marakanam	Selection Grade	18	22,034
3.	Valavanur	Selection Grade	15	16,745
4.	Vikiravandi	Selection Grade	15	12,022
5.	Tiruvonnainallur	First Grade	15	9,623
6.	Arakandanallur	First Grade	12	5,713
7.	Ananthapuram	Second grade	15	6,892

Conclusion

The local administration in Villupuram district exemplifies the dynamic interplay between historical evolution and modern administrative practices. The district's administrative framework, shaped by historical influences and constitutional reforms, highlights the significance of local self-governance in fostering democratic engagement and effective governance. As Villupuram continues to evolve, its local administration remains a vital link between the people and the state, ensuring that governance is both responsive and reflective of the local needs and aspirations.

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