

## Historical moments

### **COMMERCE:**

Walajapet was once under the rule of Britishian. It was used for business purpose and one of the biggest trade centres on that time .

Walajapet is one of the oldest town in North Arcot Region. It is famous for Silk Weaving and has a nick name as "Walajapet-The Silk City". It is situated in the belt of the Ranipet SIPCOT Industrial Complex as a public limited company wholly owned by the Government.

Walajapet is one of the noted centre for the production of silk weaving and bamboo furniture making centre. The commercial activities is concentrated at Thoppai street, Annaicut Road, Bazzar street, Thirumalai Street. There is a daily market available in this town.

### **HISTORY OF MOMENTS:**

It is indispensable to speak a few words here about the circumstances which tended to secure this town the historic denomination " Walajah". At the beginning of the second half of 18th century, while English and the French invaders, who challenged themselves each other to conquer Southern India and while in such circumstances the former ( the English) in collaboration with the Nawab of Arcot succeeded in wiping out the suzerainty of the latter. The Nawab of Arcot was return, granted the then great title of Honour "Walajah" meaning the most dignified gentlemen.

The Nawab of Arcot styled this town as "Walajah" in his memory besides, having Arcot as his residential centre and Ranipet as the military headquarters. The Nawab of Arcot with a view to vindicate the great name of "Walajah" as quite suitable to the town in its true and literal sense, desired to develop this town economically. Walajapet its Jurisdiction covers an area of 2.64 squares kilometers. The town had a population of 16,401 in 1971 and the same was increased to 21,200 in 1987-88.

### Trade Centre

Walajapet was once the trade centre of the District, and its decline is due to the opening of the Madras and South Indian Railways, neither of which touches it.

Naturally, Walajapet became a great inter-state commercial market dealing in all commodities of human interest like cotton, silk, beatlenuts and leaves, pottery etc., The business in every commodity was so dominating had transacted was named after that commodity, for instance, the place where cotton was specially transacted was called "Cottenpet" so also, Pakkupet, Swarnapet, Kosapet, etc.,

The above trades where dealt by different classes of people and generally located in the Northern half of the town which bifurcated by the Trunk Road, the National Highway.

In the Southern half of the town, handloom cloth business was singular by itself and was uniquely specialized by and centred with the Sowarastra Community who were regarded as the best weavers.

Sowrastras who were the immigrants from North India settled in Tamil Nadu at the very outset. They were orthodox Hindus, God fearing and highly educated. Their gentle behavior, commendable manners, proficiency in literacy and the art of weaving allured the Nawab of Arcot and they were asked to settle themselves at Walajapet so that they might be of great help to him particularly in matters of administration.

Consequently Mr.Royajee a Sowrastra, became Prime Minister of the Nawab of Arcot and under his able guidance Walajapet attained rapid economic development. It is in memory of Royajee a street was named as Royajee Street, a choultry as Royajee choultry, a big tank as Royajee Tank.

It was Mr.Royajee who had constructed Sri Varadaraja Perumal Temple which is located in Royajee street now called Venkataramana Bhagavathar Street.

Sowrastras, who have been expert silk weavers, were weaving cloths meant for Royal family of the Nawab. They were producing clothes like Susis, Gulbandans, Kallidar, etc., the fancy fashionable designs of the Muslim nobility. These were clothes worn by the women folk of the palace.

Sowrastras were weaving Lunghis of the highest order and supplied the textile requirements of male members of the family. Naturally the demand for such clothes sprang from their sections of Muslims and it became a wide-spread trade throughout the Tamil Nadu in those days. Thus the economy of the town greatly improved.

Walajapet is really proud of the fact that the great Musician, Sree Venkataramana Bhagavathar, the first and foremost disciple of Sree Thiyagaraja Swami, was a citizen of this town and his descendents are still living here in Venkataramana Bhagavathar Street. The sacred idol of Sree Rama, presented to Sree Venkataramana Bhagavathar by Sree Thiyagaraja, Venkataramana Mandir. This is quite evident that the public at large were lovers of Karnatic Music.

#### Walajapet Street

The beauty of the town lied with streets-being broad running parallel and perpendicular and in conformity with the rules covered under the Town planning scheme and the town planning itself is understood to have been made of French Engineer named. Ferdinand-de-Lasudj. The sanitary condition of the town has all along been quite commendable.

## Religious Monuments

Walajapet Taluk has been the capital of Hindus rulers. As it was ruled by the rulers who professed Hinduism, many temples, which were broadly known as monuments, are found here.

The Hindu monuments are mostly temples. The temples played a vital role in the religious activities of the Hindus or walajapet taluk.

The rulers of the Sangam Aged period, Cholas, Marathas, Samburayas and Nawabs have all evinced great interest in building the temples and mosques. The prominent temples among them are:

1. Tirthankara -- Walajapet
2. Tirthankara -- Kizhminnal
3. Rishis -- Nandiyalam
4. Ozughur Temple -- Ozughur
5. Melveeranam Temple -- Melveeranam
6. Gudimullar Temple -- Gudimallur
7. Sholingur Temple -- Sholingur
8. Vangur Temple -- Vangur.
9. Maratha Temple -- Walajapet
10. Arcot Nawabs Mosques -- Walajapet
11. Tiruparkadal Temple -- Tiruparkadal

### **1. Tirthankara.**

Tirthankara exist at Walajapet Taluk Office. It is seated in dyana pose keeping his palms upwards on the lap. It was built in 9th century A.D. And its height is 105 cm. The head of this image has curly hair. The face is almost square and the nose is dilated. Neck of this figure has two thick lines of muscles.

This kind of character is discernable in two Jain Sculptures of this museum collections. However this trait is not in such high relief as this image. However this two rounds of muscular bulgings is mere pairs of lines in south corners sculptures which are displayed in the government museum, Madras and the Victoria and Albert Museum, London. Chest of this image is broad. Features of face are influence of western Gange style on this image. This Jain Sculptures was carved in a different granite which has white components in the composition.

### **2. Kizhminnal Tirthankara**

Kizhminnal Tirthankara monuments exist at Walajapet taluk. It dates 10th century A.D. and its height is 93 cm. Jainism is one of the oldest religions which had arisen in India. Jainism got its revival during the time of Vardhamana Mahavira (B.C. 599-527) one of the 24 Tirthankaras, constitute the principal object of worship.

### **3. Nandiyalam Rishis.**

Nandiyalam rishis exist at Walajapet taluk. It is related to later chola period and its height is 38 cm. This is a pedestal of Dakshinamurthi sculpture. The waist part of Dakshinamurthi and two rishis in the front of the pedestal are in a mutilated sculpture. Rishis are listening to the teachings of their Guru, Dakshinamurthi is also carved.

In the chola art, many of the fine sculptures of siva in various forms on the vimana and of the parivara devatas, lying loose are excavated, deserve special notice include Ardhanari, Vindhra Dakshinamurthi, mohni and others.

### **4. Ozughur Monuments**

Ozughur village is 10 km away from Walajapet. Ozughur was called as "Ozukaiyar" during sangam age and chola period. It was also the capital of the Ozukaiyir nadu.

This village has many old monuments. It is helpful to identify the antiquity of ozughur. This village was a part of Thondamandalam in Sangam Age. "Thondai" is a thorny herb plant.

This plant was found in abundance in this area. Hence the land was called as

"Thondamandalam". The Chola King Karikala invaded Thondamandalam and conquered it. In his period, Thondamandalam was divided into 79 Nadus and 1900 villages. Ozughur village is one among the 79 Nadus. In the ozughur village chola kings build many temples are engraved. Noteworthy among them are Sri Thirukaleswara Temple.

The Thirukaleswara Temple is situated in the south-west of Ozughur village. Here god siva is named as "Thirukaleswara". In the chola period he was called as "Thirukarapurathalvar".

The great Chola king Adithya chola I captured the thondamandalam in 891 A.D. from the Pallava king Kanchi was the Thondamandalam. During his period he built siva temples all over his region, including thondamandalam. It is said that 48 temples were built by him.

The temple consists the Vimana, Karuvarai, Sri Sivagami Amman temples and sub temples.

### **5. Gudimallur Temple**

Gudimallur is a beautiful small village. It is located just 5 km south of Walajapet. This village is a part of Walajapet taluk. As the village is on the banks of the river Palar there is no wonder that it is fertile and populated. Gudimallur is also known as kudamallika.

Bhumiswarar Temple is an important place in the village. The temple is helpful to identify the antiquity of Gudimallur. The Bhumiswarar temple is a siva temple in the village. This is an

old temple in the village. This village temple is related to the cholas period.

One can have glimpse of the temple when enters Gudimallur village from the south. Here God siva is named as Bhumiswarar. It means ESwarar(God Siva) of earth. It is in the shape of the earth. So the deity is named as Bhumiswarar. This temple is noted for its sculpture and architectural style.

### **Sholingur Mouments**

Narasimha Swami Temple is an important centre of Vaishnava worship in walajapet and adjoining villages. There is a mountain at the highest peak of which there is a temple of Lord Narasimma, one of the ten incarnations of Mahavishnu. It is recorded in the dourness that the temple was orginally built for lord siva by the Chola prince, Rajadity under the rule of the Vijayanagar emperors.The temple was coverted into a Vaishnavashetra. The temple 's gopura is situated in north side. The temple was constructed on a 750 feet high hillock in the chola period. It is with 5 tires and 7 kalasas. The gopura height is 50 feet, and base is 22. The lingam was carved into the of a lion Narasimma. A large number of people mainly women and children go over here seeking cure for their physical and mental ailments. Archanas and poojas are regularly performed in the morning of the day, attended by a crowed of devotees who stay at the peak of the hill with courage and faith, with standing the climatic discomforts. People who are demented or suffer from some incurable diseases or barren women stay here for on mandela or 45 days performing penance. Incredible tales about the supernatural curing power of the lord of sholinghu temple are named by the people. Many have confessed that they have been blessed with their desires or other good resultless owing to their penance here.

### **Anjaneya temple**

Anjaneya temple is a small hill, located in the ease of the main shrine. The gopura situated in the northern side. It is with 3 tires and 5 kalasas. It height is 31 feet and base is 14 feet. This god is also credited with great powers of curing othe insane and exorcising evil spirits of possessed women.

### **Walajapet Maratha Temple**

Walajapet Sri Kanadapa Swamy temple is one of the oldest one. Another name of is this temple Sri Mallesware. It is one of the Indian monuments in walajapet.

The Kandapa Swamy temple is the oldest only maratha temple in Walajapet. It is in the northside of Walajapet. This temple is situated in Madras to Bangalore Trunk Road. In this temple we find no inscriptions. but Maratha prince Satrabathi Shivaji worshiped the Sri Kandapa Swamy here.

Maratha temple is the oldest temple of this kind, in Walajapet. There are two Maratha temples in India, one of the Maratha temple is situated in Walajapet. And second Maratha temple is situated in Jammal Madakku. The Asharee Sri Maligaswar or Sri Kandopa Swamy was discovered by Bhavashara Satriyar in a well. This swamy is made by five metals. The tower of temple Rajagopura is recently built. The temple height is very small size.

The poojas of this temple is very famous in Walajapet. Particularly Dasara, Sivarthiri, Karthigai and Vijayadhasami poojas are important poojas of the Sri Kandopa Swamy Temple. During the function time Sri Maligaswar Swamy is built with Bamboo with a height of 35 feet. It was decorated with 9 kalasa, silk and flowers, it is called Katti. The katti was taken by Bhavasha satrayas Namdev Maratha peoples. In the function time, the katti was taken by one person. Because the katti was very small in height. This function was one of the most important functions in this town.

During the function time people from Andhra Pradesh are coming to Walajapet. At that time they wore cape made upon deer hair. And they wore black carpet also and made flood sounds. It is called Oakappa.

### **Big Mosque**

Walajapet Mosques are ancient mosques. There are four mosques in this town. The big Mosque is one of the oldest one. It is situated in big mosque street. The mosque was built by Walaja Nawab Mohammed ali. Royajee, a Sowrastra, became Prime Minister of Nawab of Walaja, who also helping the nawab in building the mosque. It was built without iron and wood materials. It was built with lime.

The Walajapet big mosque is one of the biggest mosque in the vellore district. Nearly 1500 people are praying here. The prayer system is the unique example of equality because in times of prayer rich, poor, young, old, black and white are all praying with any distinction.

The main entrance is very small, facing south side which is built with brick and lime. The mosque is also had its own compound. There are two main domes in the mosque. One is facing left side and another is facing right side. And there are 8 more domes are there which are small in size.

### **Tiruparkadal temple.**

Tiruparkadal is one of the oldest village in Walajapet Taluk. Agriculture and weaving are the main occupation of the people. "Tirukaraipuram" is another name of Tiruparkadal. It is one of the 108 Thiruthalams. In this temple we seen Prasanna Venkatesa Perumal, Vishnu statues.

## **History of Walajapet Municipality**

Walajapet Municipality was started in 1866, by the effect of act passed by government. It was the first municipality in Tamil Nadu. It was one of the oldest municipalities organized in the Madras Presidency along with Adoni and Madurai. The Municipal council started function from November,12,1866. The municipal office is located in its own building at Nawab Devadi street. The town has electoral wards.

In the year 1869, the municipality office was shifted to a house situated at the trunk road for a monthly rent of Rs.6/-.At the time, it was a third grade municipality.

The municipal council stated functioning from 1866, after the formation of Walajapet Municipality the meeting was held on 12th November 1866 under the vice-president, 6 commissioners also attended the council meeting. In those days the councillors was called commissioners. The council passed a resolution to open a municipal office for the transaction of business and in accordance with it a building owned by Madhan Iyyar was taken for a monthly rent Rs.5/-. There were one manager on a pay of Rs.40 per month, two writers each Rs.20 per month, two bill collectors each for Rs.20 per month, two peons each for Rs.5 per month and one sweeper for Rs.3 and annas eight per month.

Thiru V.Lakshmi Naidu was the first Vice-President of this municipality. Thiru C.A.Varadharajan was the 25th Vice-President of this municipality. Mrs.S.Raja Rajeswari was the first women chairman and 26th chairman of this municipality.

The year 1966 was a very significant in the development of Walajapet Municipality. It was its centenary celebrations. At that time C.A.Varadharajan was Chairman in the Municipality.He published Walajapet Municipality Centenary Souvenir (1866-1966) Aringar Anna, Thanthi Periyar who participated the Centenary celebration. And Jakir Hussain, C.P.Aditanar, M.Karunanithi,Dr.S.Radhakrishnan,K.Kamaraj,Tamil thatha M.Varatharajan and many other send greeting to the function.

## **Walajapet Government boys Higher Second School**

Walajapet Government Higher Secondary School is one of the oldest school in Walajapet Taluk. The school was started in the year 1887 on Monday, 7th July. At that time the medium of instruction was English. Today the school is 114 years. Two great eminent political leaders and our father of nation Mahatma Gandhi visited the school. It was first school in the walajapet taluk and maintained by municipality.Later its responsibility were transfered to Tamil Nadu Education department.

The first Vice President of India , Dr.Radhakrishnan was studied in this school. He was born in Eadappalayam village.The Tamil Thatha, Dr.M.Varatharasan(Muva) also studied in this

school.

### **Walajah Railway Road Station**

Walajah Railway road station is one of the oldest and first railway station in Tamil Nadu. It is situated in Ammoor and about 5 Kilometers from Walajapet.

The first contract between the Madras Railway company and the government was held on 22nd December 1852 an agent for the Madras railway came to Madras in 1853. The first section of the line from Veysarpadi(Madras) to Walajah road was opened on 1<sup>st</sup> July 1856.

### **Deena Bandu Ashram**

Gandhi Mission Vidyalaya started in the year 2nd December 1952 in Ranipet. this mission was an horpen mission. In 1953 March 2 Gandhij Mission was transferred to the Deena Bandhu Ashram. It was in the west of the Walajapet Town. It is constructed with stone and lime. There are 16 teachers are working in this school and 500 students are studying in this school.