

Brief History

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, Bazaar street, Thirumalai Street. There is a daily market available in this town.

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 was named after that commodity, for instance, the place where cotton was specially transacted was called "Cottenpet" so also, Pakkupet, warnapet, 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 Sowarashtra 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 Sowrashtra, 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 disigns 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 Sre 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.