



A SOCIO-ECONOMIC AND EDUCATIONAL STATUS OF KULASEKARAPATTINAM: AN OLDEST COSTAL VILLAGE

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Abstract

“Kulasekarapattinam” is the oldest harbor village in the Tuticorin district of Tamil Nadu. The oldest harbor and Railway station in Kulasekarapattinam have got a vital role in post independent period in India. Peoples of this village worked in the sugar factory as daily wages to manage the financial requirement of the family. This sugar factory is one of the important factors for the improvement of the economic condition of the people. In fact, the life style and cultural status have been changed from the income of this factory. This paper gives a detailed study of the socio, economical, educational development of Kulasekarapattinam village.

Keywords: *Kulasekarapattinam, Social Development, Cultural, Educational Status, Tuticorin.*

Introduction

Kulasekarapattinam is a town in the Tuticorin district of Tamil Nadu, India. Kulasekarapattinam is referred in Marco Polo's travel diaries dating to 1250AD. This village is located about 60 Kms North from Tuticorin, 80 Km East From Nagercoil, 95 Kms North from Tirunelveli and Tiruchendur. There are 1,495 houses and two famous churches situated in Kulasekarapattinam. The name Kulasekarapattinam is derived from Pandya ruler Maravarman Kulasekara Pandyan-I. Kulasekarapattinam was an ancient port dating to the 1st centuries of the Christian era and was check to the existence of Kollam, Cheran Port, and Pandyan port. Kollam was served the Pandyas on the west coast while Kulasekarapattinam served them on the east coast connecting them to Ceylon and the pearl fisheries in the Gulf of Mannar facing the Tirunelveli Coast. A long time before, Kulasekarapattinam has Muslim settlements. The other ports on the Coromandel Coast were Kaveripumpattinam Poompuhar and Arikamedu near Pondicherry. On the west coast, the ancient ports were Kollam and Kodungallur and Barugachha Broach in Gujarat. This ancient port had connections with Sri Lanka. This place had a lost significance once Tuticorin became a big port.

Socio-Economic Status of Kulasekarapattinam

This village is well known for Palmyra business and now, it is successful in agriculture, ornaments and other small scale business. Agriculture was not improvised because of the scarcity of water. Hence, all the peoples are depended on Palmyra-based business. Mostly Nadar community took in charge of this business. Because the city was totally filled with palm trees and it is easy for the people to develop their status by this business. And Kulasekarapattinam was not the perfect place for the people to do any other business and there are no facilities to do as well.

Sea Trade

Being in sea shore areas, most people of Kulasekarapattinam were involved in brewing salt. More than 700 people were involved in a rewing salt business. The salt is manufactured here were exported to other parts of Tamil Nadu and other nearby countries. Knowing about the resources of Kulasekarapattinam, British made a salt industry in Manappadu of Kulasekarapattinam. In 1943, H.A. Krishnapillai, the author of “Ratchaniyathrigam” and “Yesukaviyam”, worked as the manager of this factory. They exported salt from the factory to other places such as Kallikottai and Kochi through boats and ships. Salt industry was very much affected during monsoon. There was no archival facility for preserving the salt that was manufactured in other seasons.

Fishing

Though it is a sea shore, fishing is the main source of business. So, that they had the good profit in this business. At the time of British rule, they exported fishes to Singapore, Burma Srilanka and other neighboring countries. More than 1000 people were involved in this business. They used go for fishing at and they used to stay until 6 a.m. to 10 p.m. They mostly used Boats and ships for shipping. On this days, they exported things through waterways by ships and boats. This business made the profit up to 5000, sometimes they don't even get money in it. At the month of Adi, they don't go for fishing. Instead, they used to do their business such as Palmyra juice, sugar Palmyra jaggery, palm leaves made things, onion, vathal, thread dry fish etc. In 2004 Tsunami people from that side lost their houses and other things. So, the government gave some fund to survive. Some people shifted to kallamozhi village to lead their life. Still, their main business is fishing.

Ornaments

Akgasalai was also known as “Gold Street” (Thagasalai). These people were called by this name. At the time of British period, they had a business of gold coin preparing. Mutharamman Kovil Street is a place where the Smith were living. Where



they made Gold coins. There they had Ganesha temple which was called as Akga Ganesha and Akgastreet. Even the gold coin makers were seemed very wealthy. Now, they had moved to other places from the street. People of Kulasekarapattinam were very rich in their economic status. They had offered the thing they needed. They were wealthy as they were able to fulfill their needs. For almost everyone in this place had the job so they were happy. This fact shows us the wealthy status of Kulasekarapattinam people.

Sugar Factory

On British rule, they thought to start up a factory called "Bai and Co" in Kulasekarapattinam. There was palm tree throughout Kulasekarapattinam. Nadar caste people had the business of Palmyra juice. From palm juice, British rulers thought to take sugar from it. So they decided to establish sugar factory in 1905 and the factory began to work on 1915. Hence, they began sugar factory in the places like, Nellikuppam, Tirunelveli, Vandipalayam, Thiruvannai Nallur. On the above-said place, they prepared sugar from the sugar cane. After, they thought to take sugar from palm juice from all the places and they began to make sugar out of palm juice. They brought palm juice from Kulasekarapattinam, Udankudi, kallamozhi, Sirunadarcology, Mathavangurchi etc. They collected from these places and made sugar out of it (By boiling). Then they transformed the palm juice to Thirunelveli, Nellikuppam, and Vandipalayam factories. They used lemon juice to safeguard the palm juice so that it may not get spoiled with the help of lemon juice. Though they used so many methods to secure palm juice it still spoiled. So they were lost money. It took many days to transfer juice to the factory places like Nellikuppam, Vaandipalayam etc. There was no transport facility to send palm juice as the road was muddy. So it took much time to transport juice to the factories. These caused them to lose money. So they decided to begin a factory in Kulasekarapattinam.

Educational Status of Kulasekarapattinam

There were many schools found in the Kulasekarapattinam in prior to the independence period. The first school has been established in this village in the year 1903 for improving the educational status of the people living in and around this village. Due to the lack of facility and inadequate building, the peoples from this villages started moving to nearby town for studying school education. Later period, many schools have been built in this village by the distinguished persons of this village. This chapter deals with the list of schools functioning in the Kulasekarapattinam village.

R.C.Ps., Primary School, Kulasekarapattinam

This school was established in 1903 in a small village, Kulasekarapattinam by a group of family members. At the early stage, only one teacher was appointed. This school was upgraded to middle school on 1947. In 1995 due to the effort is taken by Mr. P.K. Sindhukumar, this was gained primary school and High School status. Due to the support is given by the village people, a new building was constructed for primary school. Now, it is being provided with 5 teaching faculty Mrs. Cicili is acting as the Headmistress of this school. At present Sindhu Kumar is acting as the PTA president of this school.

T.N.D.T.A. Middle School, Kulasekarapattinam

This school was started in 1947 as a primary school. It was upgraded to Middle School in 1984. At first, the class rooms were under thatched roof. Later, concrete buildings were constructed for this school. Now, it is functioning to provide schooling education from 1st standard to 8th standard. The strength of the school is 230 students. Students are being encouraged to participate in several competition by Physical Director P. Chellamma, Mrs. P. Victoria is acting as the headmistress and P.K. Sindhu Kumar is the PTA president.

Valliamaiyar Government Girls Higher Secondary School, Kulasekarapattinam

Government Girls Higher Secondary School is one of the popular educational institutions. It is located at Udankudi Panchayat. It was established as a primary school on 01.06.1908. due to rapid growth, the position of primary school was uplifted to middle school on 01.06.1965. Subsequently, the middle school was upgraded to High school on 20.06.1971. Now the school is being provided with 19 teaching faculty members and 4 non-teaching staff. The school is administered by an efficient Head Master I. Muthu Selvi.

Conclusion

This paper gives the detailed view of the socio-economic and educational development in Kulasekarapattinam in Tuticorin district. The people of this village are the hard worker. They were involved in different works in and around the village. Though this village is a coastal region, most of the people are involved in the salt preparation and fishing. The educational status of this people has been improved after an opening of many educational institutions in this area. The students from this villages are studying well and competing with the major schools in the Tuticorin district.



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