

GAZETTEER OF INDIA



सत्यमेव जयते

UNION TERRITORY OF PONDICHERRY

Volume—I.



FRANCIS CYRIL ANTONY

1982

ADMINISTRATION OF THE UNION TERRITORY OF PONDICHERRY

November 1982

GAZETTEER OF INDIA

(C) Administration of the Union Territory of Pondicherry



Price Rs. 183-25 (Vol. I & II)

Rs. 250-00

Printed at

The Government Press
Directorate of Stationery & Printing
Pondicherry : 605009

INTRODUCTION

The Gazetteer of the Union Territory of Pondicherry, the first ever to be written, is the outcome of the hard work put in by the Gazetteer Unit which was formed in the Directorate of Education. We in the Gazetteer Unit had no previous Gazetteer to fall back upon and draw the basic material required for writing the present one. This was in itself a challenge worth facing. A 14-member Advisory Board was set up on 10 April 1971 to advise the Unit and to offer some guide-lines for writing the Gazetteer. I took up this assignment on a full-time basis on 3 February 1972. Since then, it had been for us one continuous saga of adventure probing into the unknown of Pondicherry—the millennial meeting place of the East and the West.

This project was taken up as a Centrally Sponsored Scheme and was financed by the Government of India upto 1978-79. The work was carried out in two phases, the first confined to the collection of background material from different sources and the second, that of writing. As for the process of collecting the source material for the various chapters, we had to adopt different methodologies to meet the different exigencies as they arose. Although most of the chapters were written by us, the task of writing some of the chapters or portions thereof was entrusted to scholars in the respective field at the suggestion of the Advisory Board. However, some of the topics so decided to be entrusted to scholars, such as 'Social life' in Chapter III, 'Coins and Currency' in Chapter VI, as well as Chapter XIX on 'Places of Interest' ultimately fell on our shoulders as no suitable scholar could be identified to entrust the assignment. We have elsewhere duly acknowledged the various scholars who have contributed write-ups for the Gazetteer.

It may be mentioned that for the purposes of the Pondicherry Gazetteer, the whole Union Territory comprising Pondicherry, Karaikal, Mahe and Yanam has been treated as one 'district' although each region has been dealt with separately wherever possible. At the beginning of every chapter, is given a brief historical background especially from the time of the arrival of the French in Pondicherry in 1674 by way of introduction. This would not have been necessary had our job been merely to revise an earlier Gazetteer. The Pondicherry Gazetteer carries an additional chapter on 'Sri Aurobindo Ashram' which makes it unique among the District Gazetteers. This was also done at the suggestion of the Advisory Board.

I owe a word of explanation with regard to the spellings of village names adopted for this Gazetteer. On the advice of the Government of India we had to adhere to the spellings followed by the Survey of India which, it must be pointed out, are in some cases different from those followed by the Revenue Department as well as those in vogue in the area. In respect of those villages and places for which the spellings of the Survey of India are not available, we have been constrained to adopt those followed by the Revenue Department.

I wish to place on record our debt of gratitude to Dr. P. N. Chopra, Editor (Gazetteers Unit, Department of Culture, Govt. of India) whose understanding and advice was a source of great strength to all of us engaged in this project. I must also thank the Gazetteers Unit for the very valuable suggestions and corrections offered on the draft sent to them for approval. I value so much the discussions I had with Dr. Emmanuel Divien who helped me get a clearer perspective of the different aspects of Pondicherry's unique history and culture. I must also thank him for furnishing me lists of source material and other bibliographical data whenever I needed them. I would also like to express my gratitude to Dr. David Annoussamy for offering me some insight into the cultural background of Pondicherry; to Thiru N. Sethuraman and Thiru P.L. Sami, I.A.S. for offering me very useful hints from time to time; to Dr. Joseph Minattur for making available some valuable reference material; to Dr. G. Thanikaimani for assisting me in editing the drafts on 'Flora' and 'Fauna'; to Dr. Jean Racine for seeing through the draft on 'Geology'; to Dr. François Gros for making available the books and records of the French Institute and Ecole Française D'Extrême Orient, Pondicherry for purposes of reference and consultation, whenever they were required by me or my staff; to Pulavar Kuppusamy for making available to me the findings of his own studies and personal explorations of temples and inscriptions in the Territory and to the several others who helped me in one way or other in the task of writing the Gazetteer under uncongenial circumstances.

The draft Gazetteer, sent to the Government of India was received back on 7 October 1978 with their comments, suggestions for corrections, etc. These were attended to and the final draft, running to about 1800 typed pages, was sent to the Government Press on 16 May 1979. They have done a nice job of it—a fact redounding to their own credit.

The following staff worked in the Gazetteer Unit since its inception :

Research Officers :

1. Thiru S. Shanmugharaj (8-7-1970 to 1-1-1971)
(3-10-1972 to 17-4-1974)
2. Thiru S. Sivamani (2-1-1971 to 2-10-1972)

Research Assistants :

1. Thiru V. Soupramanien (8-9-1971 to 27-9-1973)
2. Thiru M. Ramassamy (7-2-1973 to 4-5-1980)

Compilers :

1. Thiru C. Mohambaram (20-9-1971 to 20-10-1976)
2. Thiru P. Venugopal (3-10-1972 to 14-5-1974)

Stenographer :

1. Tmt. P. Prasanna Sivaramachandran (13-5-1970 to 19-6-1978)

Typist :

1. Tmt. K.P. Shobana Rajan (27-4-1970 to 30-4-1980)

It would be difficult for me to spell out the specific tasks performed by each and everyone of those who worked in the Gazetteer Unit as it was essentially a team work. I must say that all of them evinced great enthusiasm and worked to the best of their ability and shared with me the excitement that was inherent in an endeavour such as this. I must, however, add that Thiru K. Rajaram, Selvi S. Nirmala Devi, both Museum Assistants, Selvi A. Micheline, Assistant Librarian (Grade III) and Thiru K. Manoharan, Junior Assistant, helped me in preparing the 'Index' and in proof-reading. Thiru M. Ramassamy, who left me on promotion, was kind enough to check the French spellings as and when the page proofs came in.

I have, at the same time, the satisfaction of having accomplished something enduring through this Gazetteer.

Dated : 1st December 1982,

FRANCIS CYRIL ANTONY,

Place : Pondicherry.

Editor.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

This Administration is indebted to the persons and institutions mentioned below for contributing the material on the topic indicated against each for inclusion in this Gazetteer:

Chapter I

Flora	..	Institut Français, Section Scientifique, Pondicherry
Fauna	..	Zoological Survey of India
Invertebrates	..	Dr. A. Daniel & Thiru B. P. Halder
Fishes	..	Dr. K. C. Jayaramakrishnan
Birds and mammals	..	Thiru G. U. Kurup
Amphibians and reptiles	..	Thiru T. S. N. Murthy
Climate	..	Meteorological Survey of India

Chapter II

Prehistoric, proto-historic and archaeological periods	..	Thiru M. Soundararajan
Early period	..	Dr. T. V. Mahalingam
Modern period	..	Prof. M. P. Sridharan
History of the freedom movement	..	Dr. Emmanuel Divien

Chapter XII

Administration of Justice	..	Indian Law Institute, New Delhi
---------------------------	----	---------------------------------

Chapter XX

Sri Aurobindo Ashram	..	Prof. Manoj Das
----------------------	----	-----------------

Photographs

..	Institut Français, Pondicherry
..	Sri Aurobindo Ashram Trust, Pondicherry
..	Sri Aurobindo Society, Pondicherry and
..	The Directorate of Information Publicity & Tourism
..	The Survey of India
..	The Directorate of Planning and Research, Pondicherry

Maps

..	The Survey of India
..	The Directorate of Planning and Research, Pondicherry

ABBREVIATIONS

A.A.	..	Archives Administratives
A.R.	..	Administration Report
B.O.	..	Bulletin Officiel des Etablissements Français de l'Inde
Diary	..	Diary of Anandarangapillai
J.O.	..	Journal Officiel de l'Inde Française Journal Officiel des Etablissements Français de l'Inde
km.	..	kilometres
m.	..	metres
Mal.	..	Malayalam
P.V.	..	Procès Verbaux
R.H.	..	Revue Historique del'Inde Française Revue Historique de Pondichéry
Tam.	..	Tamil
Tel.	..	Telugu