Collection under the Standardised Agency System since 1970 was as shown below :

Year	No. of actual Agents	Collections in Pondicherry and Karaikal regions
		Rs.
1970–71	1	5,145
1971–72	6	3,96,300
1972–73	9	4,52,240
1973–74	7	4,45,070
1974–75	4	9,69,090

The Mahila Pradhan Kshatriya Bachat Yazna agency to canvass for the 10-Year Cumulative Time Deposit and Five-Year Post Office Recurring Deposit accounts by ladies on commission basis has also been introduced in Pondicherry region.

The National Service Scheme for college students is operated with the help of student volunteers of Tagore Arts College, Pondicherry in coordination with the National Service Scheme. The Sanchayika or School Savings Bank Scheme has been introduced in some selected schools in Pondicherry region.

The Postal Coordination Committee with the Superintendent of Post Offices, Pondicherry as chairman, maintains close liaison and coordination at the Divisional level to solve problems which crop up.

VI. Chit Funds

The chit fund locally known as *ceetu* serves both as a profitable avenue of investment and a convenient method of small savings. Two types of *ceetu* are popular in the Territory viz. the *kulukkal ceetu* (chit awarded through lots) and *elacheetu* (that which is open to auction). A specified number of people join together and agree to subscribe a certain sum of money by instalments at fixed intervals for a definite period. The total collection at each interval would be put to auction and the subscriber who offers the highest discount would be entitled to receive the amount. The discount would be shared equally among all the subscribers after deducting the overhead charges which are only nominal. Thus, small savings in instalments grow into big amounts which help subscribers make investment in business or meet large commitments. While subscribers could earn a better return by way of discount for their subscriptions, this works out from 16 per cent to 21 per cent. Sometimes they could also bid for the money to meet their own credit requirements in times of need. The terms are informal and the success of such schemes depend chiefly on the confidence the subscribers repose on the sponsors. Mobilisation of capital being the prime objective of such ventures, profit motive is relegated to the background. Hence, there are few cases of breach of trust calling for any kind of government interference.

Although prior to merger, the subject was dealt with by the **Bureau des Affaires Politiques,** the **décret** of 22 January 1943, which regulated the functioning of chit fund companies in the former French establishments was not effectively enforced.[15] At the time of merger, a few chit fund companies were already in operation in the town of Pondicherry on the pattern of similar companies elsewhere in India. What came to be started for the purpose of mobilising liquid capital for the promotion of agricultural and trade interests of the subscribers, slowly came to be dominated by commercial institutions whose prime objective was the advancement of trade interests of the foremen who organised and conducted the chits. The interests of the subscribers, who were mostly poor people, were not sufficiently safe. The result was that poor subscribers had to lose their hard earned savings. Thus, commercialisation with all its attendant evils crept into the scheme which naturally attracted government's attention. In order, therefore, to have effective control over the functioning of the chit fund companies and to safeguard the interests of the subscribers, the Pondicherry Chit Funds Act, 1966 modelled after the Tamil Nadu Chit Funds Act, 1961 was passed. This Act, which provided for measures to regulate chit funds, was brought into force on 1 August 1977. Under the Act, the foreman is entitled to a commission not exceeding 5 per cent of the chit amount. Under section 3 (1) of the Act, no persons shall start or conduct a chit without registering the proposed bye-laws of the chit with the Registrar of Chits. However, the companies did not come forward to file their bye-laws, It became necessary to initiate action against defaulting foremen. Some of the chit fund companies filed a writ petition in the High Court of Madras and obtained an interim stay on the enforcement of the Act. In January 1971 the writ petition was disposed of.

The same year a Registrar of Chit Funds was posted to be in full charge of the enforcement of the Act. The same year as many as 61 bye-laws were registered and certificates of commencement of business were issued to 45.[16] Even after the enforcement of the Act, there have been instances of liquidation of chit fund companies resulting in loss of amount to subscribers.

In addition to the chit fund companies mentioned above, there are also some vessel, furniture and other merchants who run chits. The difference is that the prize winner gets the prize in kind in terms of the agreement and once having won the prize, the subscriber is not required to pay his subscription any further. The Chit Funds Act does not cover this kind of chits.

Chit fund institutions are mostly located in urban areas where there is a concentration of the salaried classes. A study in 1973 showed that there were eleven registered chit fund institutions located in Pondicherry town.[17] Most of the Chit Fund Companies operating in the town are only branches of companies with headquarters outside the Territory. Some local firms have also entered the field recently.

VII. Coins and Currency

The establishment of trading centres in India and the consequent necessity to enter into exchange transactions with the local people prompted the French Company to consider the issue of coins. In order to meet the exigency the Company is known to have resorted to fiduciary issues to effect payment to its suppliers and creditors on the one hand and attempted to issue coins on the other based on the value of the metal in direct link with the local currencies for local financial operations.

A mint seems to have been established in Pondicherry as early as 1700 for the purpose. The Pondicherry mint is known to have resorted to the manufacture of two types of coins, viz. the French type and the local type. The manufacture of French type of coins was started in 1700, while the native type began only in 1736.

In 1705, François Martin wanted to make use of the gold coins seized from the hold of the Dutch ship **'Phoenix d'or'** which was captured by the French in the battle of 13 January 1705 by Baron de Pallières. As French 'panams' were then not in circulation beyond the limits of Pondicherry territory, François Martin wanted to mint pagodas of the same type as were then current all along the Coromandel Coast under the name of 'Varahan'. Ten thousand pagodas bearing the *varaha mudra* (Avatar of Lord Vishnu) were coined.[18]

The minting of rupee coins, the most popular currency in India, also engaged the company's attention. Negotiations undertaken in this regard did not succeed for many years. On 26 February 1715, the High Command in Pondicherry wrote to the **Directeurs Généraux de la Compagnie des Indes** in Paris that thanks to the efforts of a Frenchman employed as a surgeon to a relative of the Nawab of Carnatic, permission for the minting of rupees in Pondicherry would be obtained soon. The Directors of the company in Paris directed the High Command in Pondicherry to start direct negotiations with the Nawab himself. The High Command wrote on 18 February 1721 that a Brahmin messenger had been sent to the Arcot Prince on such a mission.[19] But it was several years later i.e., on 12 October 1736 that Pierre Benoit Dumas the Governor of Pondicherry, announced with legitimate pride the fact of his having secured the right of minting rupees in Pondicherry forever.[20] Anandarangapillai mentions that the receipt of the news was celebrated as a festival with gun salute and other festivities. Anandarangapillai further remarks that it cost a sum of Rs. 1,20,000 plus 8,000 pagodas by way of miscellaneous expenses to obtain this privilege. Out of the first mentioned amount it is said that Rs. 80,000, Rs. 25,000 and Rs. 15,000 were paid to the Nawab, his entourage and the treasurer Imam Saheb respectively.

The privilege of minting rupees in Pondicherry accorded by Emperor Mohamed Shah was communicated to Dost Ali Khan, the Nawab of Arcot. This was made possible through the good offices of one Goulam Imam Houssen Khar Bador alias Imam Saheb, the Treasurer and a relative of the Nawab of Arcot. The Imam had further helped the French by supplying them with the dies of Arcot Rupees. In recognition of his services and by way of ratification of the agreement entered into between the Imam Saheb and the French Government, the High Command accorded him a royalty of one piece