

The next year procurement amounted to 21,000 tonnes, besides 20 per cent from the Pondicherry *mandi*. During 1970-71, only 9,830 tonnes of rice was procured. An additional quantity of 500 tonnes of rice was imported to meet the Territory's overall requirements. Supplementary procurement at the rate of 20 per cent was also effected in the Pondicherry *mandi* on the marketable surplus brought by the ryots and merchants for sale. Procurement was given up in April 1971 on account of the satisfactory food position. However as a result of the emergency, following the Pakistani aggression, procurement was reintroduced on 26 November 1971. To boost procurement, 20 per cent of the open market paddy arrivals in Pondicherry *mandi* were also collected from the dealers. Fourteen check posts in Pondicherry region and seven in Karaikal were established to prevent illicit movement of food grains from the Territory.

The Food Corporation of India has several godowns to store its food grains and fertilizers. Most of its stocks are stored in godowns taken on rent. Four godowns are of 1,500 metric tonnes capacity each, two of 1,100 metric tonnes capacity, one of 400 metric tonnes and another of 225 metric tonnes. All these eight godowns are located close to the port. Another godown of 1,500 metric tonnes capacity is located in Nellitoppu. The godown at Tiruvandarkovil of 2,800 metric tonnes capacity belongs to the Food Corporation of India. Apart from these, one godown of 5,000 metric tonnes capacity is under construction within the campus of the Pondicherry Railway station. The Corporation's branch in Karaikal has one godown at its disposal.

XIII. Weights and Measures

The question of standardising weights and measures used by the public in the Territory received attention even before merger because of Pondicherry's special relation with France, the chief exponent of the metric system. It may be recalled that the metric system was introduced in France soon after the Revolution in 1789, and was declared compulsory since 1840. The then Pondicherry Administration also decided to follow suit and appointed a commission by an order dated 30 March 1840 to study the problem and to examine the relation between the metric system and the local systems of weights and measures and suggest ways and means for the final replacement of the local weights and measures with metric equivalents.

After considerable deliberation, the commission suggested that the prevailing *marakkals* be rounded off into litres. On the basis of the recommendation of the commission, the order of 12 September 1842 was issued making compulsory the use of litres in Karaikal region. The public were required to use the following capacity measures in Pondicherry and Karaikal regions :

Pondicherry :

Bare marecal	10 measures	=	10 litres
Bare marecal	6 measures	=	6 litres
Bare marecal	4 measures	=	4 litres
Bare marecal	3 measures	=	3 litres
Bare rettapady	2 measures	=	2 litres
Bare pady	1 measure	=	1 litre
Bare arepady	1/2 measure	=	500 millilitres
Bare kappady	1/4 measure	=	250 millilitres
Bare arecalpady	1/8 measure	=	125 millilitres
Aremagani	1/16 measure	=	62.5 millilitres
Kalmagani	1/32 measure	=	31.25 millilitres

Karaikal :

Bare marecal	4 measures	=	4 litres
Bare rettapady	2 measures	=	2 litres
Bare chinnapady	1 measure	=	1 litre
Bare calpady	1/2 measure	=	500 millilitres
Bare arecalpady	1/4 measure	=	250 millilitres
Bare visampady	1/8 measure	=	125 millilitres
Bare arevisampady	1/16 measure	=	62.5 millilitres
Bare calvisampady	1/32 measure	=	31.25 millilitres

In transactions involving weighing operations, *rathals* and *kundus* equivalent to 1/2 kg. and 25 kg. respectively were used. All the various **Bureaux** under the former French Administration were directed to follow the metric system in all their dealings. In course of time land survey records and cadastral maps were also maintained in metric units. Measurements of length and area were expressed in terms of metric hectares, ares and centiares,

Even medical prescriptions were indicated in metric units. Children in all primary and secondary schools were taught to use the metric system of measurements.

Some measure of control on the weights and measures used in the territory came to be exercised only after the deliberation of **Conseil Général** of 4 October 1913 given effect to by the **arrêté** of 10 April 1916.⁵³ For carrying out the purposes of this order, the whole territory was divided into seven 'areas', each area being placed under the charge of a '**Contrôleur de Contributions**' or Revenue Delegate who had with them standard weights and measures, besides weighing and measuring instruments. The standard weights and measures in the custody of the above said officials were required to be verified and stamped once every three years by a Commission appointed by the Governor.

The periodical verification of weights and measures used by the trading community was carried out once in twelve months. Fees chargeable for such verification ranged from four annas to one and a half rupees. Wherever the transport of weights and measures posed some difficulty, the verification was carried out on the spot itself. The Revenue Officials were empowered to carry out surprise checks at all reasonable times and to seize all time-barred weights and measures and weighing or measuring instruments which did not carry the annual verification stamps. Those who did not comply with the orders were fined.

Some of the important units of weights and measures which were in use in Pondicherry and Karaikal regions before merger are given below :

Weights :		Kg.	G.	Mg.
1 Kundu	..	25	—	—
1 Maund (French)	..	12	—	—
1 Thooku	..	1	860	—
1 Veesai	..	1	500	—
1 Rathal	..	—	453	41
1 Thola	..	0	11	662
1 Varaganedai	..	0	—	540
1 Kundumani	..	0	0	111.6

Capacity measures (Solids) :

8 mahani	— 1 pady
4 pady	— 1 marakkal
12 marakkal	— 1 kalam

Capacity measures (Liquids) :

1 seer	— 500 ml.
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Area measures :

1 manai	— 2,400 sq. ft.
24 manai	— 1 Kani
484 manai	— 1 Sq. mile

Measurement of time :

60 vinadies	= 1 nazhigai (24 minutes)
$3\frac{3}{4}$ nazhigai	= 1 muhurtham
2 muhurtham	= 1 jamam
8 jamam	= 1 day

The measure used for salt was different . One salt *marakkal* was equivalent to three ordinary *padys*. Liquids like milk and curd, etc. were also measured in terms of *pady*. In measuring oils, the prevalent unit was *sembu* and its fractions equivalent to *pady*.

In transactions involving the sale of toddy, Roora (4.1) and Kattai (1.1) were used as measures. *Darahma* was the unit of measurement for country liquor. In liquor shops, the British measure of ounce was also used. Petroleum products were measured in terms of gallons. In textile transactions, *yard* and *muzham* were the main units of measurement in use. In measuring area, metric units like 'hectares' and 'ares' were used in Government records while in local practice *kuzhi*, *ma* and *veli* were used.

In Mahe the following weights were used for weighing sugar, vegetables and grains.

16 dram	= 1 ounce	= $2\frac{1}{2}$ rupees weight locally known as palam
4 ounces	= 1 palam	= 10 rupee weight
4 palams	= 1 rathal (pound)	= 40 rupee weight
32 rathal (pound)	= 1 tulam	
$3\frac{1}{2}$ tulam	= 1 shatathookam	= 112 rathals (pound)
20 shatathookam	= 1 ton	= 2240 pounds

The following were the weights used for weighing gold :

1 veesham	= 1 nenmani thookam (weight of a paddy grain)
4 veesham	= 1 kunnikuru
2 kunnikuru	= 1 manchadi
4 manchadi	= 1 panam = 16 veesham
20 panam	= 1 pavan (weight of one sovereign)
30 panam	= 1 rupee weight

The following were the measurements of length used by carpenters :

8 thovara	= 1 viral
12 viral	= 1 chaan
24 viral	= 1 kol usually used by carpenters
4 chaan	= 1 muzham
4 muzham	= 1 maar
1,000 maar	= 1 mazhika

The following units were used for measuring cloth :

12 inches	= 1 feet
3 feet	= 1 yard (vara)

The following units were used for measuring wood :

Cubic measurement of wood	= cubic kol
1 kandy	= 13 cubic feet = 1 cubic kol

The following units were used for measuring grains :

2 azhak	= 1 uzhake
2 uzhake	= 1 ury
2 ury	= 1 nazhy
4 nazhy	= 1 edangazhy
10 edangazhy	= 1 para
8 para	= 1 chak (one bag)

The units used for liquids were as follows :

2 azhak	= 1 uzhake
4 uzhake	= 1 nazhy
4 nazhy	= 1 edangazhy
5 nazhy	= 1 kutti
16 kutti	= 1 padam
$18\frac{3}{4}$ kutti	= 1 kandi

The units of measurement of grains and liquids prevalent in Yanam region were as under :

kuncham	= 4 seers
seru	= $\frac{1}{4}$ of kuncham
tava	= $\frac{1}{8}$ of kuncham
sola	= $\frac{1}{16}$ of kuncham
ara sola	= $\frac{1}{32}$ of kuncham
gidda	= $\frac{1}{64}$ of kuncham
ara gidda	= $\frac{1}{128}$ of kuncham

The units for measuring groceries were as follows :

manud	=	8 visa
visa	=	120 tholas
padalam	=	60 tholas
embulam	=	30 tholas
pampu	=	15 tholas
ara pampu	=	$7\frac{1}{2}$ tholas
patika pampu	=	$2\frac{3}{4}$ tholas

Land was measured as follows :

putty	=	8 acres
akaram	=	1 acre
kuncham	=	$1/10$ acre
seru	=	$1/4$ kuncham
tava	=	$1/8$ kuncham
sola	=	$1/16$ kuncham
ara sola	=	$1/32$ of kuncham
gidda	=	$1/64$ of kuncham
ara gidda	=	$1/128$ of kuncham

The unit of length in use was the yard.

After merger : As there was always commercial intercourse specially in regard to food-stuffs and other essential commodities between Pondicherry and the adjoining States, attempts to standardise weights and measures in this Territory did not always prove successful, and conditions were becoming worse. Weights and measures based on the metric system, the British system and those of local origin were in use side by side. Even the local system of measures and weights varied from region to region. Such state of affairs prompted the antisocial elements among traders to resort to fraud and malpractices.

The Madras Standards of Weights and Measures Act, 1956 was extended to this territory with effect from 13 August 1958. As a first step the metric units of weights were brought into force in the territory with effect from

1 October 1958 with a tolerance period of two years during which the old system of weights was allowed to continue. On the advice of the Standing Metric Committee, all administrative institutions in the territory were advised to adopt the metric system of weights. With effect from 1 October 1960 the use of metric weights became compulsory.

The metric capacity measures were introduced throughout the territory with effect from 1 April 1961 with a period of tolerance of one year and its usage became compulsory with effect from 1 April 1962. The Madras Weights and Measures (Enforcement) Act, 1958 and the rules made thereunder were extended to this territory with effect from 7 September 1961. After the introduction of the above Act, Inspectors were appointed to enforce the provisions of the said Act and Rules. Wholesale rice and paddy merchants were then required to transact sale only by metric weights. The metric measures of length were introduced from April 1962 with a period of tolerance of six months. The provisions of the Act relating to units of mass came into force with effect from 1 January 1962.

Timber however continued to be sold in non-standard units as suppliers from other States had not switched over to the metric system nor rationalised the sizes of timber. The textile industry which had adopted the metric system reverted back to the English system with effect from 1 February 1966 as this system continued to be prevalent all over the world especially in countries to which our textiles were exported. The metric system was enforced in the timber trade from 1 October 1967. The enforcement of capacity measures in the petroleum trade was completed by 31 March 1963 and the use of area measures for land was then brought into force with effect from 1 October 1965.

The Pondicherry Weights and Measures (Enforcement) Rules were brought into force with effect from 10 August 1968 replacing the Madras Weights and Measures Rules till then in force. All these steps, in turn, increased the demand for metric weights. In the circumstances, some of the local foundaries were encouraged to resort to the manufacture of the weights and measures. However scarcity of raw materials stood in the way and little progress was achieved. In the meanwhile the approved dealers in Pondicherry approached the manufacturers in Agra to supply the immediate requirements of the Territory.