

Municipalities and Commune Panchayats are to be converted into fair-weather roads in order to link all the villages with the main roads. The Fifth Plan outlay was of the order of Rs. 2 crores.

According to the Directorate of Pilot Research Project, "problems relating to land acquisition and constructing roads in Tamil Nadu territory falling in-between Pondicherry areas affect the implementation of road development programmes." Lack of adequate data and the absence of inventory on roads, culverts and bridges are also said to affect the formulation of schemes for road development.³⁵

II. Public Transport

Vehicles and conveyance :

In the days of Anandarangapillai, the citizens of Pondicherry used such modes of conveyance as the *dholi*, palanquin (*pallakku*), horse, elephant, camel, besides horse drawn and bullock drawn carts known as '*garis*'. The *dholis* were preferred to carry the old, the sick and the wounded. The *pallakku* was the conveyance of the privileged rich as the traveller inside the palanquin could even sleep without being disturbed by jerks. Horses were used for quick travel. They were much in use for purposes of war. Members of the royal family made their journey on elephants, camels or in palanquins. Some of the very rich citizens of Pondicherry had elephants with them. For long distance travel and for carrying heavy loads and *dak*, camels were used.

A journey in palanquin from Madras to Pondicherry was accomplished in about three days.³⁶ The distance from Pondicherry to Villianur was covered in two and a half hours.³⁷ Journey by '*garis*' might continue for even sixty days at a stretch covering 12 to 18 '*lieues*' per day.³⁸ Horses from various countries like Australia, Arabia etc., were brought to Pondicherry. These horses were put to carriages in which the ladies of rich families went on rides along the beach in the evenings. In course of time, the palanquins and the horse drawn vehicles were abandoned and the light vehicles called '*pousse-pousse*' became popular at the beginning of the twentieth century. These, known also as Malabar vehicles, were used mostly by the middle class.³⁹ This coach was pushed by two persons at the rear and pulled by one person in front.⁴⁰ The hand-pulled rickshaw also made its appearance in due course and its popularity could be ascribed to Pondicherry's close association with Indo-China. The very poor men pledged themselves as rickshaw pullers for a small consideration. The hand-pulled rickshaws are found only in towns.

The cycle rickshaws made its appearance after World War II and are now the most popular mode of conveyance for short distance travel. A large number of people who flocked to Pondicherry after merger in search of employment had finally settled down to rickshaw pulling. Their families in due course found shelter on the pavements. The women folk very often sought employment as house-maids. Some thrived on bootlegging of illicit arrack, especially for the large number of rickshaw pullers in the town. Recently some ex-service-men have been assisted by the Soldiers', Sailors' and Airmen's Board, Pondicherry to introduce a few autorickshaws in the town.

Public transport :

With the onset of automobiles at the end of XIX century, the old modes of transport slowly went off the roads and the motor-cars gradually took the roads. The circulation of automobiles in the establishment came to be regulated for the first time by the *arrêté* of 24 June 1912.⁴¹ There were then only 16 automobiles of which one was a lorry. Only 12 persons held driving licences.⁴² Between January 1924 and 31 December 1939 as many as 1674* motor-cars were registered in the Territory.⁴³ The number of vehicles in circulation in January 1941 is given below :⁴⁴

Type of vehicles		Pondicherry	Karaikal	Chander-nagore	Mahe	Total
Automobiles	..	210	19	87	—	316
Mini automobiles	..	56	29	6	6	97
Lorries	..	40	2	44	3	89
Motor-cycles	..	4	—	6	—	10

The *pousse-pousse* disappeared yielding place to the three wheeled cycle rickshaws. As for the carts, they are still seen in the streets. They are mostly used in villages for agricultural purposes (transport of crop, manure, etc.) and to bring firewood to the town. In Pondicherry, cycle rickshaws

* Pondicherry—874, Karaikal—381 and Chandernagore—419.

occupy a prominent place as conveyance next only to town buses to carry persons from one place to another. While motor-cycles and scooters are used by the well-to-do, cycles are used by others. As for the horse drawn vehicles, except a few used by the vendors to bring their produce to the market from the surrounding areas and especially from Ariyankuppam, there is no circulation of such vehicles in the town.

At the time of merger, there were regular transport facilities connecting Pondicherry to various towns in Tamil Nadu and Karnataka. There were regular bus services from Pondicherry to Cuddalore, Panruti Chidambaram, Tiruvannamalai, Tindivanam and Bangalore, and also from Karaikal to Nagore, Poraiyar and Kumbakonam. Apart from these inter-state routes, buses also plied between Pondicherry and Villianur and between Karaikal and Nallattur. Mahe region was served by buses plying between Tellicherry—Badagara and Tellicherry—Kuttiady, both of which touched Mahe en route. Yanam region was connected to Kakinada town by a bus service plying four times a day in each direction.⁴⁵

After merger:

With merger, the Territory could no longer remain isolated from the rest of the country. The growth of its traffic was no more inhibited by strict customs regulations and border restrictions. The town soon established contacts with other commercial centres of the country. As a cumulative effect of all these changes, the traffic of goods and vehicles underwent a sea-change with the volume of traffic showing steady increase.

It may be recalled here that the subject of 'motor transport' including the work of registration of motor vehicles, issue of licences for drivers and conductors, permits for transport vehicles, etc., was originally attended to by the Public Works Department. With effect from 12 February 1955, the subject was transferred to the Police Department with the Superintendent of Police taking over as Secretary of the State Transport Authority and Registering and Licensing Authority. The Motor Vehicles Act, 1939 and the Delhi Motor Vehicles Rules, 1940 were extended to this Territory in 1959.

The number of all types of motor vehicles registered in the Territory increased from 241 in 1956 to 1,106 in 1961. The number of buses registered in the Territory increased from 25 to 86 between 1956 and 1962 i.e. an increase of 244 per cent in six years. The number of lorries increased from 28 to 141 recording an increase of nearly 403 per cent. In inter-state traffic, the ratio of the number of buses and lorries of Pondicherry to those coming in from outside was then of the order of 1 to 3. 46

The steady increase in the number of motor vehicles in the Territory however, made it necessary to set-up a separate Transport Branch on the pattern in vogue in Tamil Nadu. A Regional Transport Officer was therefore appointed on 14 September 1966, taking over charge from the Superintendent of Police. The State Transport Authority was reconstituted with the Chief Secretary as Chairman and the Regional Transport Officer as its Secretary. The Regional Transport Officer, Pondicherry became the Registering and Licensing Authority under the Motor Vehicles Act and the Delhi Motor Vehicles Rules for Pondicherry, Mahe and Yanam regions. The Superintendent of Police, Karaikal, became the Registering and Licensing Authority for Karaikal region. The Principal District and Sessions Judge constituted the State Transport Appellate Tribunal. The Office of the Regional Transport Officer started functioning independently with effect from 1 April 1967. 47

The Pondicherry Motor Vehicles Taxation Act, 1966 (4 of 1966) which came into force on 1 July 1966 sought to rationalise the rates of tax till then in force in the Territory. The Motor Vehicles (Pondicherry Amendment) Act, 1966 (Act 16 of 1966) was passed to amend section 48 of the Motor Vehicles Act, 1939 so as to empower the State Transport Authority to make alterations in routes. The Pondicherry Motor Vehicles Taxation Act, 1966 extending the Madras Motor Vehicles Taxation Act was challenged in the High Court by a batch of bus operators of the Territory. Following the writ filed by the bus operators, the collection of tax under the Pondicherry Motor Vehicles Taxation Act, 1966 was stayed by the Madras High Court. Subsequently a self-contained Act known as the Pondicherry Motor Vehicles Taxation Act, 1967 (5 of 1967) was introduced repealing the Pondicherry Motor Vehicles Taxation Act, 1966. The provisions of this Act which received the assent of the President on 16 October 1967 came into force with retrospective effect from 1 July 1966. The writ petition filed by the bus operators was,

however, dismissed subsequently. The saving clause of the Pondicherry (Application of Motor Vehicles Act) Order, 1959 was removed with the passing of the Pondicherry (Application of Motor Vehicles Act) Order (Amendment) Act, 1968 with effect from 16 May 1968 which brought in an additional revenue of Rs. 95,000 to the Territory. The rates of taxes for motor-cars and stage carriages were marginally increased with effect from 1 April 1970 in accordance with the provisions of the Pondicherry Motor Vehicles Taxation (Amendment) Act, 1970. A proposal was mooted in 1970 to levy a surcharge on passengers and goods for which purpose the Pondicherry Motor Vehicles (Taxation on Passengers and Goods) Bill was proposed to be introduced. Instead of levying two distinct types of taxes on motor vehicles it was subsequently decided to increase the rates of taxes on passengers and goods so as to realise the revenue anticipated under the original proposal. The proposed legislation was therefore abandoned and the rates of tax on passengers and goods were increased with effect from 1 July 1974. The Pondicherry Motor Vehicles Taxation (Amendment) Act, 1973 (1 of 1974) assented to by the President on 11 March 1974, raised the tax on certain categories of goods vehicles.

Inter-state agreements :

The Government entered into arrangements with the neighbouring States of Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh, Kerala and Karnataka to exempt the public service vehicles of this Territory covered by special permits from the payment of tax due to those States.⁴⁸ In accordance with an agreement reached between the Government of Kerala and the Pondicherry Administration, stage carriage services came to be operated in the following three inter-state routes :

1. Pallur—Mahe (Via) Kuttiyadi.
2. Pandakkal—Mahe—Tellicherry (via) Pallur.
3. East Pallur—Tellicherry (via) Mahe.

Under the agreement, the State Transport Authority of Pondicherry was permitted to issue permit for one stage carriage in each of the three routes. These permits were, however, to be countersigned by the State Transport Authority of Kerala for purposes of single point tax.

In continuation of the previous agreements, a new agreement was reached with the Government of Tamil Nadu in 1966 on the question of payment of single point tax in respect of stage carriages, goods vehicles and contract carriages. A reciprocal agreement was entered into between the Governments

of Andhra Pradesh and Pondicherry under which stage carriages of both the states came to enjoy the single point tax benefit. Following this inter-state agreement on single point tax between the Governments of Tamil Nadu and Pondicherry, the operators of Pondicherry were required to pay tax only in this Territory. As a result of another agreement reached with the Government of Kerala on 1 July 1968, all Kerala bound buses, lorries and taxis were allowed to ply through Mahe area without paying any tax to this administration and *vice versa*. Negotiations were initiated in 1969 with the Government of Andhra Pradesh for the suspension of tax levied for inter-state vehicular movement.

An agreement was reached on the South Zone Permit Scheme between the Governments of Andhra Pradesh, Kerala, Maharashtra, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, Pondicherry and Goa on 1 July 1975. In deference to the suggestion made by the Ministry for Transport and Communication, this administration put forth the claim to be a member in the South Zone Permit Scheme. At the meeting of the Inter-State Transport Commissioners held at Cochin in April 1972, the matter regarding the issue of composite permit for public carrier to ply in the South Zone (i.e. Kerala, Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, Pondicherry, Andhra Pradesh, Maharashtra and Gujarat) was discussed, and Pondicherry came to be admitted into the South Zone Permit Scheme and was allotted 50 permits. A number of buses are plying between Pondicherry and various towns of the neighbouring state of Tamil Nadu, some buses plying in a direct way and some others plying in an indirect way so as to touch a number of enclaves of this Territory en route. The details of permits issued for buses plying in different routes either from or through this Territory are given below :

Sl. No.	Route	No. of buses
Pondicherry region		
1.	Pondicherry to Cuddalore	9
2.	Pondicherry to Tindivanam	3
3.	Pondicherry to Villupuram	9
4.	Pondicherry to Panruti	4
5.	Pondicherry to Tiruvennainallur	2
6.	Pondicherry to Kadampuliyur	1
7.	Pondicherry to Madras	2
8.	Pondicherry to Kappur	1
9.	Pondicherry to Neyveli	1

Sl. No.	Route	No. of buses
10.	Pondicherry to Vridhachalam	1
11.	Kanakachettikulam to Cuddalore.. ..	1
12.	Sedarappattu to Cuddalore	1
13.	Tirukkanur to Cuddalore	2
14.	Muttialupettai to Cuddalore	1
15.	Villiyannur to Sanjeevirayanpet	1
16.	T. N. Palayam to Villupuram	1
17.	Ariyankuppam to Villupuram	1
18.	Villupuram to Pondicherry	1
19.	Kattumannargudi to Pondicherry	1
20.	Marakkanam to Tirukkanur	1
21.	Cuddalore to Tindivanam	3
22.	Villupuram to Cuddalore	3
23.	Cuddalore to Villupuram	1
24.	Chidambaram to Tindivanam	2
25.	Cuddalore to Avanipur	1

Karaikal region

1.	Karaikal to Nagore	1
2.	Karaikal to Poraiyar	1
3.	Ambagarattur to Nannilam	1
4.	Nannilam to Vanjiyur	1
5.	Tarangambadi to Nedungadu	1
6.	Mayuram to Vanjiyur	1
7.	Nagappattinam to Pondicherry	1
8.	Nagappattinam to Mayuram	1
9.	Nagappattinam to Kumbakonam	1
10.	Kumbakonam to Tiruvarur	1

Mahe region

1.	Pandakkal to Badagara	1
2.	East Pallur to Mahe	1

Yanam region

1.	Kuyyeru to Kakinada	1
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A certain number of buses plying between towns in Tamil Nadu halt in the Territory en route to pick up passengers.

Buses for which permits are issued by the Government of Tamil Nadu also run through this Territory. The details of the number of buses allocated to the Government of Tamil Nadu are furnished below :

Sl. No.	Route	Permits
1.	Pondicherry to Bangalore	3
2.	Pondicherry to Chetpet	1
3.	Pondicherry to Karaikal	1
4.	Pondicherry to Kundiamallur	1
5.	Pondicherry to Nagappattinam	1
6.	Pondicherry to Rettanai	1
7.	Pondicherry to Sirkali	1
8.	Madras to Nagappattinam	10
9.	Madras to Nagercoil	4
10.	Madras to Thiruchchirapalli	4
11.	Karaikal to Mannarkudi	1
12.	Andakudi to Karaikal	1
13.	Kumbakonam to Karaikal	1
14.	Avanipur to Pondicherry	1
15.	Chidambaram to Pondicherry	2
16.	Cuddalore to Pondicherry	6
17.	Kedar to Pondicherry	1
18.	Madras to Pondicherry	11
19.	Pankolathur to Pondicherry	1
20.	Perunagar to Pondicherry	1
21.	Tindivanam to Pondicherry	5

Sl. No.	Route	Permits
22.	Tiruvannamalai to Pondicherry	4
23.	Tiruchchirapalli to Pondicherry	1
24.	Villupuram to Pondicherry	2
25.	Vriddachalam to Pondicherry	1
26.	Cuddalore to Cuddalore	1
27.	Cuddalore to Kanchipuram	1
28.	Cuddalore to Marakkanam	1
29.	Cuddalore to Tindivanam	4
30.	Cuddalore to Thiruvannamalai	2
31.	Cuddalore to Velur	1
32.	Nagappattinam to Chidambaram	2
33.	Nagappattinam to Kumbakonam	1
34.	Nagappattinam to Mayuram	4
35.	Nagappattinam to Poompuhar	2
36.	Nagappattinam to Sankaranpandal	2
37.	Kumbakonam to Poraiyar	3
38.	Poraiyar to Nagappattinam	2
39.	Mayuram to Nagappattinam	1
40.	Chidambaram to Tindivanam	2
41.	Tindivanam to Chidambaram	1
42.	Tindivanam to Cuddalore	4
43.	Tindivanam to Tindivanam	1
44.	Panruti to Cheyyur	1
45.	Chetpet to Panruti	1
46.	Marakkanam to Tirukkoyilur	4
47.	Nannilam to Kumbakonam	2

The number of vehicles such as cars, buses, etc., increased in the Territory with the development of roads and the improvement in the income of some sections of the population. The need for a cheap and quick mode

of transport for the middle class consisting of traders, government servants, etc. increased the demand for scooters and motor-cycles. With the increase in the production of scooters and motor-cycles in the country, the number of these vehicles showed a steady increase. In the context of the growing popularity of tourism, contract carriages such as tourist taxis, luxury coaches and auto-rickshaws were also introduced so as to meet the varied requirements of the population. The increase in the number of vehicles in circulation in the Territory will be evident from the following statement :

Sl. No.	Type of vehicles	As on 31 December						
		1954	1959	1964	1969	1971	1973	1974
1. Car		50	426	666	944	1,110	1,482	1,677
2. Lorry		4	76	163	219	205	174	219
3. Bus including spare buses and contract carriages		—	60	118	113	219	225	226
4. Ambulance		—	1	7	11	9	10	10
5. Jeep		—	25	52	88	82	81	126
6. Tractor		1	7	61	91	145	263	245
7. Van		—	9	22	31	37	26	32
8. Scooter/Motor-cycle		7	65	411	1,121	1,710	2,383	3,082
9. Auto-rickshaw 6 seater 2 seater	} ..	—	—	—	13	2	2	18
10. Road roller		—	3	8	1	6	5	5
11. Trailer		—	10	97	95	148	165	218
12. Mobile tank		—	2	2	3	1	1	8
13. Trailer pump		—	1	1	1	—	—	2
14. 3-Wheeler auto van		—	—	25	4	15	13	18
15. Others		—	—	—	115	67	56	71

The public transport system in the Territory is entirely handled by private operators. The number of companies or individuals and the number of vehicles owned by them as on 31 March 1974 are given below :

Category of permits				No. of operators	No. of vehicles
Stage carriages	..	..	..	42	98
Contract carriages	..	..	..	78	86*
Public carriers	..	..	..	175	192
Private carriers	..	..	..	96	107

* Four wheelers 17; three wheelers 5; public taxis 41; tourist taxis 11 and auto-rickshaws 12.

While there was not even a single contract carriage till 1954, the number had increased to 21 by 31 December 1974. The number of public and tourist taxis stood at 149 as on 31 December 1974.

Town bus service :

Proposals were under consideration as early as 1961 to introduce town bus services in the Territory. The fast growth of the town and the springing up of residential colonies away from the town necessitated the introduction of town buses in Pondicherry. The introduction of town buses, it was considered, would discourage the use of hand pulled rickshaws which was then the most popular mode of local transport. To begin with, it was decided to introduce 13 town bus routes, seven in Pondicherry and three each in Karaikal and Mahe. As for Mahe, the Government of Kerala was approached to permit the vehicles registered in Mahe to run through Kerala territory for a few miles.