

Details of town bus routes as on 31 March 1974 in Pondicherry and Karaikal regions are given below :

Sl. No.	Routes	No. of buses
Pondicherry region		
1.	Pondicherry to Pondicherry (circular)	2
2.	Pondicherry to Villiyannur	2
3.	Dhanwantarinagar to Dhanwantarinagar (circular)	2
4.	Purnankuppam to Dhanwantarinagar	1
5.	Ariyur to Dhanwantarinagar	2
6.	Muttialupettai to Villiyannur	2
Karaikal region		
1.	Karaikal to Karaikal	2
2.	Ambagarattur to Vanjiyur	1
3.	Nallattur to Vanjiyur	1
4.	Ambagarattur to Vilidiyur	1

III. Railways

The Union Territory of Pondicherry is served by two metre gauge lines of Southern Railway, one connecting Pondicherry with Villupuram and the other connecting Karaikal with Peralam in Tamil Nadu.*

* The total length of these two lines traversing the Union Territory is 27.11 km. according to the Southern Railway. French records however show the length of Karaikal—Peralam line as 15.577 km. and that of Pondicherry—Villupuram line as 12.633 km. within the limits of the Territory, making the total 28.210 km. This shows a difference of 1,100m. But it must be noted that the railway line along the beach and over the old pier was dismantled after merger.

Pondicherry—Villupuram line :

The origin of the Pondicherry—Villupuram railway line may be traced back to 1869, when its construction was entrusted to the Pondicherry Railway Company, a limited concern constituted in 1869 by virtue of the British Parliament Acts of 1862 and 1867 on the formation of companies. The French Government in Paris reached an agreement with the Pondicherry Railway Company on 8 May 1878. Under this agreement the Pondicherry administration had to pay to the Company a subsidy of 1,264,375 francs to meet the construction cost of the line and place the lands required for the purpose free of cost. The period of concession was for 99 years. The proposed railway line which was to start from Pondicherry had to be laid upto the eastern bank of river Gingee and join the British railway line at Belpur. The Company, for its part, agreed to remit to the French Government during the period of concession half of the net profit arrived at after deducting the expenditure on maintenance, taxes, etc. The French Administration enjoyed the right to transport its mail and was entitled to all such benefits enjoyed by the British Government. According to the same agreement, the railway would become the property of the States on the expiry of the period of concession (viz. June 18, 1978). The first passenger train steamed in at Pondicherry on 14 October 1879. The official inauguration ceremony was however performed by the British Governor, the Duke of Buckingham, on 15 December 1879. The line which passed through the communes of Mudaliyarpettai, Ozhukarai, Villianur and Tirubhuvanai (now Mannadipattu) covered a distance of 37.62 km. out of which 12.633 km. ran within this Territory.⁴⁹ Four trains ran between Pondicherry and Villupuram. Two trains left Pondicherry for Villupuram at 06.10 hrs. and 13.00 hrs. Similarly two trains left Villupuram for Pondicherry at 08.50 hrs. and at 15.35 hrs.⁵⁰ The trains touched Villianur, Kandamangalam and Valavanur before reaching Villupuram. Facilities were available for straight journey to Madras and Karaikal by through compartments.

The goods service was also introduced simultaneously along with passenger traffic. A wide variety of goods was exported from Pondicherry and brought into the town by rail. Coal, mazout, petrol, bones, cement, rice, pulses and ground-nut were among the chief items imported. Cotton, yarn, hides and skin, areca and scrap-iron formed the chief items of export. The movement of goods

and traffic which was hampered by the Second World War, revived with the removal of customs barriers with effect from 15 February 1941. The details of passenger and goods traffic between 1936 and 1942 are furnished below: 51

Year ending on 31 March	Receipts			Total
	Passengers	Goods	Miscellaneous	
	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.
1936	55,160	67,029	1,058	1,23,247
1937	59,285	98,387	1,965	1,59,637
1938	53,623	70,923	1,620	1,26,166
1939	44,269	52,876	1,607	98,752
1940	38,678	44,739	1,454	84,871
1941	36,701	20,249	1,142	58,092
1942	39,852	40,184	1,265	81,301

In 1935 the number of trains plying between Pondicherry and Villupuram was increased to six in each direction. In November 1941, however, the number of trains was reduced to four, and subsequently to three in March 1942, then to two in April 1942 and finally to one in September 1942. Simultaneously, the goods train plying once a day in each direction began to run once in two days in each direction from February 1942 upto September 1942. 52

Karaikal—Peralam line:

The construction of a branch railway line branching off from the main Mayuram—Mottupet line and connecting Peralam with Karaikal was authorised by the French Government in December 1895. 53 This railway line owned by the French Government was operated by the South Indian Railway in accordance with the terms of an agreement reached in 1902. The agreement was subject to termination at a year's notice. The Company had

to remit to the French Government the net profit arrived at after deducting the maintenance cost. Built at a cost of 1,201,840 francs the line was opened to traffic on 14 March 1898. It covered a distance of 23.537 km. out of which eight kilometres fell within the limits of Tamil Nadu. The distance was covered in one hour. There are four intermediate stations at Ambagarattur, Paruttikudi, Tirunallar and Karaikovilpattu within the region.

Prior to 1939, four trains were operated in each direction. But in 1941 the number was reduced by one in each direction.⁵⁴ The number of trains in each direction was further reduced to two and then to one in 1942 in order to mitigate the loss reflecting a progressive decline in the goods handled and the number of passengers carried during this period.⁵⁵ The table below which gives the receipts for the years 1938-43 will illustrate this point :

Year	Receipts			Total
	Passengers	Goods	Miscellaneous	
	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.
1938	39,561	25,942	32	65,535
1939	37,340	26,243	409	63,992
1940	36,389	23,628	326	60,343
1941	37,666	24,507	290	62,463
1942	23,556	24,310	424	48,290
1943	24,537	20,760	1,438	46,735

After merger :

After merger, the ownership and administration of the line came to vest with the Government of India and its operation came to rest with the Southern Railway which was formed on 14 April 1951 by the integration of the erstwhile Madras and Southern Mahratta Railway, the South Indian Railway and the Mysore State Railway.

Pondicherry and Villianur are the two stations lying within the Territory in the Villupuram—Pondicherry section. Villianur is a 'D' class flag station. Pondicherry is provided with standard 'I Lower Quadrant Signalling'. Neals' Ball token instrument is in use. The Pondicherry—Villupuram section being a controlled area, Pondicherry is provided with a control telephone to be in contact with the Divisional Headquarters at Tiruchchirapalli. It is connected with Villupuram by a Railway Telegraph Circuit.

Four up and four down passenger trains run on Pondicherry—Villupuram line at convenient intervals and they are so timed as to connect important trains on the main line running via Villupuram. Through carriage service with one composite I and II class bogie and one II class bogie connecting Pondicherry with Madras is made available for passengers bound for Madras. Express day service connecting Pondicherry with Madras introduced on 1 November 1972 was later withdrawn for want of patronage. Reservation facilities are also available at Pondicherry to all sections in India.

The Pondicherry railway station with a singularly different architectural facade is provided with a spacious waiting hall and two first class waiting rooms, one for men and another for ladies. Recently four retiring rooms (two double-bed and two single-bed) were provided as a further amenity for long distance passengers.

The Peralam—Karaikal line too is operated by the Southern Railway under the immediate supervision of the Divisional Superintendent at Tiruchchirapalli and under the overall control of the General Manager at Madras. A magneto telephone circuit connects Karaikal with Peralam junction. 'One Engine only System' is used for working trains in this section. Two trains in each direction run between Mayuram and Karaikal and one in each direction between Peralam and Karaikal.

All the stations in the Peralam—Karaikal line are open for parcel service. Tirunallar is open for goods traffic in smalls and Karaikal for goods traffic in wagon loads and in smalls. While cement, tiles, timber and kerosene oil are among the items of inward traffic, rice and paddy are the main items of outward traffic. Nowadays paddy and rice are moved through lorries by the Food Corporation of India. From 1 November 1970 a mixed train service was re-introduced on the Peralam—Karaikal line to effect quick delivery of goods.

Prospects :

The raw materials viz., full pressed cotton and coal for the three textile mills in the region and iron billets for the Pondicherry Rolling Mill are brought in by rail. Similarly the finished products of these mills are sent to other parts of the country. Cement, grains, pulses are among the other items moved into the town. The goods traffic by rail is also inter-connected with the activities of the port which feeds the goods movement by rail. Fertilisers and wheat handled by the Pondicherry port are sent out to various parts of the country.

According to the railway authorities, the facilities made available to the public in the Pondicherry—Villupuram line and Peralam—Karaikal line are under-utilised resulting in loss. This may also be attributed to the fast growth of road transport in the Territory and the inability of the railways to compete with road transport in terms of speed and other amenities.

According to a British Foreign Office Publication put out in 1918 proposals seem to have been put forward quite frequently to develop the railway system in French India. A favourite project was to build a railway line along the coast from Pondicherry to Cuddalore (via) Bahur. The matter was under consideration for almost a quarter of a century. The idea was abandoned in 1897 only to be revived in 1904. The next year it was sanctioned by the Senate and the funds were voted. In fact an amount of three million francs, out of a loan of 4,380,000 francs raised by the administration was earmarked for the project.⁵⁶ The amount, it appears, was subsequently diverted for some irrigation projects.⁵⁷

The National Council for Applied Economic Research which conducted a transport survey of Pondicherry in 1967 pointed out that the railway facilities in Pondicherry and Karaikal were adequate for meeting the needs then. In fact the utilisation of rail was very low. The charted capacity then available was 16 trains per day on the Villupuram—Pondicherry section while the expected utilisation at the end of the III Plan period (1966) was only five trains each day. On the Peralam—Karaikal line the charted capacity was eight trains per day as against the expected utilisation of two trains per day. The goods traffic density over the two branch lines was only about 203 and 63 freight tonnes kilometres per route km. per day respectively and