

Distribution of sewing machines : The scheme for free distribution of sewing machines to women faring well in the training programme organised by the Department was introduced in 1961. All such trainees admitted to the course were paid a stipend of Rs. 25 per mensem. Until the scheme was wound up in 1974, about 470 women had undergone training in the centres and as many as 318 sewing machines were distributed free of cost. The centres trained the candidates in needle work, dress-making and embroidery and prepared them for the technical examinations conducted by the Board of Technical Education, Tamil Nadu.

II. Prohibition

Prohibition had never been in force in the Territory. In the days of Anandarangapillai, no doubt, some sort of restriction was imposed, during certain periods every year, when drinking as well as the manufacture and sale of alcoholic drinks were prohibited. During elections, the sale of liquor in public used to be prohibited for one or two days. But otherwise the manufacture and sale of alcoholic drinks had not come under any ban. The administration itself established a distillery more than 100 years ago in Ariyankuppam, which was subsequently shifted to Pondicherry. A few other small sized distilleries were also in operation. All kinds of spirits whether manufactured from palm-juice, sugar-cane or rice were the monopoly of the administration. The wholesale and retail sale of these items was permitted only under licence. The manufacture and sale of toddy and sweet toddy and the import and sale of tobacco were also government monopolies.³⁰ The Territory's economy depended to a large extent on the income accruing from excise duties on alcoholic beverages (for more details on 'Excise' please see Chapter XI, pp. 990-992). Nevertheless, with the announcement of a 12-point minimum programme on prohibition, the administration decided to implement it with vigour in the Territory. The Pondicherry Prohibition Regulation, 1979 was introduced in Pondicherry and Karaikal regions of this Union Territory with effect from 1 June 1979, to the exclusion of Mahe and Yanam. Following the resolution passed unanimously on 30 January 1980 by the Pondicherry Legislative Assembly to the effect that steps should be taken for lifting prohibition in Pondicherry and Karaikal regions, the Pondicherry Excise (Extension) Act, 1980 was passed by the Legislative Assembly and assented to by the President on 3 April 1980. The provisions of the said Act came into force on 25 April, 1980.

