

British Forts And Urbanisation On The Coromandel Coast

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Abstract

Europeans came to India for trade, especially goods like spices, cotton, made business great. For the successful journey, they dominated India one by one. Earlier they got the permission to found trading post, then to build forts, later fortification. Their defensive architecture on the Coromandel Coast in two places namely Fort. St.David (Cuddalore), Fort.St.George(Madras). The Coromandel Coast was naturally helps the British for their trade activities which has two three major ports. Before British, the places like madras and Cuddalore position was a village. After their establishment they became headquarters and capitals. Moreover, this activity helps dramatic changes in the three fields like population, industry and trade, which formally named urbanization. Urbanization is a long time process, but impact of British made easier in Indian subcontinent. This study focused on how the British defensive architecture like forts helps the village's growth and to change into city, on Coromandel Coast.

Keywords: Trade, Urbanization, defensive architecture, Coromandel Coast, growth

Introduction

In mid-fifteenth century, European countries had urge to discover the alternate route to India by struggling to use land route. Subsequently, some of few Europe countries prepared for advent to India by sea route. Indeed, Portuguese were the forerunner of this herculean task, Vasco da Cama who had reached India by cape route. On this consequences, Dutch, Danish, British and French successfully reached India for trade and commerce. However, British dominated the other Europeans in India by their warfare, tactics and schemes. Soon after the British territorial possessions, they made the foundation on three important places like Madras (1644), Bombay (1661) and Calcutta (1690). Urbanization is a continuous process which succeeded step by step like village, city, town and capital. British primarily selected the area for habitat and built the defensive architecture like forts. Further, the Forts were strongly fortified and controlled around the region; often it was called "civil lines".¹

The Eastern coast of India is known as Coromandel Coast. On this coast British established the two capitals in Chennai (earlier known as Madras) and Cuddalore. Chennai was

ranked 79th place in the annual 'JLL Global 300' ranking exercise after Mumbai (24th), Delhi (26th) and Bangalore (69th) and followed by Calcutta (90th) in 2017. Moreover, on the Asia Pacific region, the Chennai city placed 29th position in the world.ⁱⁱ Among the five cities three were founded and developed by the British. Chennai is a small village before British came to Coromandel Coast. After, British build Fort. St. George, this city was emerged rapidly and around the region would urbanize. After the fort and fortification in Chennai, trade, population was developed. This study mainly focused on how the forts were the reason for urbanization in Tamil Coast, particularly British period. This article has mainly focused on how the Defense architecture helps villages growth into cities and towns in British period on Coromandel coast.

Process of Urbanisation

Urbanization is a long time process which depends on the Government policy from ancient to modern period. Earlier, people settled near the religious centers and migrated from rural like temples. Urbanisation scaled by three fields namely population, industrial development and trade. Before British period, India was a land of villages and will continue to remain spar decades to come. The arrival of British made several changes to growth of cities and towns. The influence of the British in urban landscape became permanent. In 1800, India had about 16 cities with one lakh or more population. The British colonial and economic interests ran company to the interest of the tradition business groups and economic activities. The urban centers became a big market for the manufactured product from England. By reflection British impact of programmes, India reach the high esteem which had 49 cities in 1941. The village economy enhanced into the urban economy in British era.

Features of the Coromandel Coast

The Coromandel Coast is a term applied to the coast of the Peninsula of India. The word "*Chozhamandalam*" first appeared in the inscriptions of Thanjavurⁱⁱⁱ. Moreover, Portuguese maps showed 'coromandel word' reveals the length and breadth of the region.^{iv} The Coromandel Coast carries through an important commercial center from the ancient period. It became more predominant with the coming of the Europeans. The trade Coromandel was carried out from a number of ports along the coast. Nevertheless, the major ports of outlet trade from the north-south direction were; Masulipatnam, petapuli, krishnapatinam, Armagon, Pulicot, Madras, San Thome, Pondicherry, Devanampatnam, Cuddalore, Porto Nova, Tranqubar, Karaikal and Nagapatitinam. Among them British established the two forts on this region named Fort.St.Geogre and Fort.St.David. These two forts were created the sophistication, safeness to the common peoples and traders, lead forts into city, town and capitals.

Arrival of British on the Coromandel Coast

Some after the successful voyage to India, British East India Company was established first factory at Surat in a large Indian house, with warehouses and offices below

and chambers and refecton-rooms. Later, they desire to start their trade activities in eastern coast of India. The first ship of British arrived on the Tamil Coast (otherwise known as Coromandel Coast) was "The Globe" under captain Hippon, to endeavor to open a trade on the Coromandel Coast. He sailed to Pulicot but Dutch refused to let him trade there. So he went on to Masulipatnam and a factory was established there. ^vThe company's trade in the Coromandel Coast was first established at Masulipatnam in 1611. On the consequences, British founded another factory at Masulipatnam, on the eastern side of India. This port was part of Golconda, an independent Muslim kingdom that succumbed to Mughal pressure in 1687 after years of conflict. The Golconda Mughal wars encouraged the company to transfer the base of its operations on the Coromandel from Masulipatnam to a settlement further south, outside the conflict zone. Madras became a company's chief settlement, Masulipatnam declined his valuable position.

Establishment of the fort in Coromandel Coast

All Europeans were come to India for trade and commerce, particularly textile, tea and spices. Moreover they establish their settlement on the Coastal region or near streams. Also their inhabitants or forts were built near the ports, for its trading advantages. Perhaps, British founded their three major capitals in British period; also these are located near costal and ports areas. In Coromandel Coast, British selected three places namely Masulipatnam, Madras and Cuddalore for trade and settlement.

Madras

Madras is located on the middle point of the Coromandel Coast above 25 miles of south of Pulicat, on 13°5' N long 80°18' E. Madras does not have a natural harbor, but it have an advantage, capable of taking ships up to 50 tons burden and 127 tons and a shallow lagoon running parallel to the coast about a mile inland providing defensive values. ^{vi}The measurement of the fort is from south 1110 feet; east to west 1200 feet. The breath of its outer wall was 20 feet around it there was a moat 30 feet breath. Besides this outer one there was an inner fort and a palace. ^{vii}Fort St. George was the chief English settlement on the Coromandel Coast. At present, this fort is located in Chennai (earlier it was known as Madras), capital city of Tamil Nadu. Madras was the first territory acquired by the British East India Company in India. In 1639, a British merchant named Day bought a strip of territory of the Coromandel Coast 300 miles to the south of Masulipatnam. This place was under the dominions of a Hindu Raja, and was about six miles long and one mile inland. It included a small island, which faced the sea and was defended on the land side by river. Mr. Day agreed to pay the Raj a rent of 500 pagodas. ^{viii} A factory of brick was built upon the island and mounted with cannon and called St. George. The Raja was perfectly content. He was too glad to get a rent of 500 pagodas, a year to raise any difficulty as regards fortification or cannon. Indeed, this factory was the crown jewel of the city of Madras,

On the coast of Coromandel, Weavers, washers, painters and hosts of other Hindu artisans, flocked to the spot and eagerly entered the service of the British, and began to setup

their looms and to wash, weave and paint on cotton goods in the open air beneath the trees. The company built Fort.St.George for protection and divided the burgeoning population into black and white towns. Because Madras does not have a natural labour, ships anchored off the coast in what was known as the roads.Madras was became a center for the export of textiles and spices. Also, is population was growing quickly, so that by about 10,000 people lived in the city proved how the British forts helped the urbanization process and emergence of trade on this region. The English company has a great craze for the Coromandel textile and they concentrated on textile trade in the Coromandel Coast. As the coast textiles were in great demand in the markets of Europe and South East Asia^{ix}.

Cuddalore

Cuddalore is a town situated on the coromandel coast, once served as the Capital of British. After Madras, Cuddalore was the important place for the British. Geographically, Cuddalore district consisted two ports namely Cuddalore and Porto nova. A fort was built on the bay region, near UppanarRiver On 1693. Cuddalore was divided into three portions; namely Cuddalore port town, Manjakuppam and Fort. St. David^x. This place was originally known as Devipatnam. Fort St. David was named was Elithu Yale, the Governor ofSt.Geroge. From 1725 this place was developed by the Britishand improved the place. St. David became the capital and British head quarters in the coast.^{xi}The population of the Cuddalore district consisted 32,429 in Old town, 3672 in New town, 585 in the Fort St. David, total of 36,686proved the significance of Cuddalore district.^{xii} The population of Cuddalore in 1871 was 40,290; in 1881 43,545 in 1891, 47,355 and in 1901, 52,216. This fort had increased steadily in size and is now the eleventh largest town.^{xiii}In 1911, Cuddalore town was developed and population was increased around 56,594.^{xiv}

Trade on the Coromandel Coast

Coromonadel coast was the important place for trade, British exports and imports the commodity there. Earlier, they exported indigo ad saltpeter from India to England. Later, they desire to export textiles and indigo to European countries.Rice and paddy was an important commodity in the Coromandel Coast. Moreover they exported Persian silk, calicoes, sugar, cotton, wool. Animal skins also exported from the coromandel in the seventeenth century. The most important type mentioned isrock skins, being skins of rockfish exported form devanampattinam. Also, theMysore sandalwoods exports through devanampattinam. From fort St. George, one bale of aurora, some flint wares, spectacles, toys fit for presents. The prices of certain commodities as recorded in 1697 clearly. ^{xv}The sugar in bales priced 26 pounds, indigo in long bales 14 pounds, Indio in churis 16 pounds, cardamom 7 pounds, saltpeter in single bag 4 pounds, saltpeter in double bags 6 pounds. Thus it may seen that a large variety of commodities like cotton, yarn , turmeric , sugar-candy, tamarind, pepper, ginger, cardamom, cloves, mace , pearls exported from Coromandel to England.

The import trade into Coromandel took a great variety. The English East Indian Company was in return for their exports, carried nutmeg, cloves and other spices, which were

more vendible in North Coromandel. Besides spices, the company procured gold, ivory, camphor from Indo-China, Amboyna, Banda islands and Bantam, In addition the company imported natural products like sandalwood, ebony, soolambalke, sweet wood, Chinese dishes and silk form china.^{xvi} Elephants and ivory from Achin, Bantam, Johore, Tenasserim, Syriam, Pegu, and Arakan were traded with high profits. The major import market for elephants was Bengal; south Asian coins of silver and gold were transported to India to be melted down and sold as bullion.^{xvii}

Conclusion

India was once ruled by the British almost all over India by utilizing their schemes and warfare techniques. For the purpose, they came to India by trading between Indian and England without any distraction. After their establishment of the trading post in the Eastern and western coast of India, to getting permission to found their territory on particular area. Earlier, some places were occupied the British by rental, later got to own. By the long process, they established the defense architecture on the trading areas, particularly coastal region. On the consequences, British had developed two prominent capitals namely Madras and Cuddalore. These two places were popularly known his British forts like Fort. St. David and Fort. St. George. few years later, they enhance the defense values on the forts for defense against other Europeans and Native rulers. Fortunately, their capitals were grown predominantly in India and became one of the important metropolitan city in the country. Thus the British was the only reason Chennai, Mumbai, Calcutta were transform into village, city, capital and metropolitan city in colonial era to modern era.

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