

## HISOTORICAL MONUMENTS IN SIVAGANGAI DISTRICT

**Dr. P. Saravanan**

*Assistant Professor, Research Department of History*

*N.M.S.S. Vellaichamy Nadar College, Nagamalai, Madurai*

Sivagangai District was called in past times as SivagangaiSeemai and it was described during the region of Marudhu Brothers as Marudhu Seemai with good reason Sivgangai district has its own history. It has also some historical monuments like palaces forts and Manimandapams. They give the historical importance to this district. Sivagangai palace the old royal palace having a great architectural splendor with a rich history beginning from 1730s is in utter ruins totally uncared now only the dilapidated portions of the palace remain. This waste he residence of the Zamindar of Sivagangai. The palace of the exrulers of Sivagangai is one of the biggest and oldest mansions called Gowri Vilasam the palace is situated in the heart of Sivaganagi. It was her that in 1789 -1799 China Marudhu gave asylum to Virapandyakattabomman of Panchalankurichi while defying the authority of the East Indian Company. The palace was constructed according to rules containing apartments courtyard chamber etc built in the architectural style of Thirumalai nayaks period and infused with Raja putana arts, which the remains are mute witness to the palace is said to have been ignored during the period of Rajah Duraisingh Thevar (1898-1941) Citing bad luck as the reason, he abandoned this palace to occupy another palace called European Bungalow on the Madurai Road. This led to the neglect of the palace and its plundering mainly by the British. The worst deamage4 is said to have been done during the period of late Vijay raja Karthik who sold most of the properties antiques and wooden carving. Even the window frames, teak beams supporting the ceiling and other antiques were plunswews. The European bungalow on the Madurai Road was also plundered. Now the land along with the remains of the palace has been sold to the local contractor.

### **Aranmanai Siruvail Palace**

AranmanaiSiruvail is situated 18km south west of Karaikudi and 27 kms south west of Thiruppathur in Sivagnagai district. This place is distinguished by the prefix Aranmanai because the palace of Marudhubrother (1780-1801) was located here. Siruvayal is said to be a corruption of servayal meaning battle field. The palace of Marudhu was dismantled but the remains are still seen. Colonel James welsh in his military reminiscences states that the places of Marudhu brothers were extremely solid and well built. This streets one of which had an avnue in it were broad and regular and the whole town claimed and superiority over any be had ever seen in India.

### **Kollangudi Palace**

Kollangudi is situated 10 km from east of Sivagangai on the midway between Sivagangai and Kalayarkoil in Sivagangai district. The ruins of the old palace of Muthuvaduganathar the king of Sivagangai is found here. The palace was dismantled but remains are still seen. Fighting between the forces of East Indian company and the ruler of

Sivagangai took place here in May 1789 Marudhu constructed a reservoir in this village and is still called Marudhu Urani. It is said that one Harijan was supplying drinking water to the carriers of brick who were transporting brick from Manamadurai to Kalayarkil for the construction of the temple tower at Kalayakoil. Marudhu who became aware of this constructed a drinking water reservoir at the spot and gifted lands to the Harijan for this charitable act.

### **Piranmalai Fort**

Piranmalai is a historical center located 24 km North West of Tiruppattur and 58 km north of Sivagangai in Sivagangai district. This place is situated at the bottom of the high mountain 2500 feet in height. The King pari known as parivallai of the Sangam age a contemporary of Avvaiyar is said to have lived in this place and ruled over the country around when this area was known as parmbu Nadu. Kappilar's sixteen varses of puranam speak of the glory. In one of his poems he says that sometimes rains fail but generosity of pari never failed. The reputation of pari provoked the jealousy of the three crowned monarchs who jointly besieged his fort for year together which ended in fiasco. They disguised like Banas and killed him. The fort is constructed under a projecting precipice of the hill. It has two walls the out wall is about one or two feet in thickness and 15 to 16 feet high. The inner wall is about 40 feet high cut out of the rock with a parapet added above the rock portion. Inside the walls reservoirs have been constructed for storage of water. The building inside are strong enough to be used during war times from the upper portion of the building one can see Kundrakudi, Kalayarkoil, Thirukoshtiyur, Melur hills and Anamalai and country 30 miles around. The east Indian company's forces captured this fort on 18<sup>th</sup> september 1801, but no harm was done to the fort probably because the natives employed by the company considered it as dreadful sacrilege to do harm to the temple. The top of the hill was a military post. On the top of the hill is to be found the ruins of forts in most inaccessible palaces nearly surrounded by hills 2 sides. It is one of the specimens of native masonry. It is very nearly circular. It is built entirely of stone with ramparts surrounded with blocks of granite cut out from the parapet and firmly resigns on their own bases as not to require any kind of fastening. There are two strong buildings which probably were used as strong room for ammunitions. An old cannon are still seen on the top of the hill by the side of three bluff rocks.

### **Kalayarkoil Fort**

Kalayarkoil is situated about 15 km east of sivagangai in Sivagangai district. Kalayarkoil is a historic site. It was the seat of the kings from very early days. King Vengai Marban ruled over this area during sangam period. It was the stronghold of rulers of Sivagangai with a well built extensive fort. It was also the seat of the freedom fighters like Muthu Vaduganatha Thevar and Marudhu brothers. On the 25<sup>th</sup> June 1772 the company forces under col. Josephsmitt and Cap Bonjor marched towards Kalayarkoil. The second king of Sivagangai Muthu Vaduga Natha Thevar (1750-1772) defeated it bravely. Rajah Muthu Vaduga Natha Thevar in anticipation of the English invasion made every possible preparation for defence. But the brave Rajah Muthu Vaduganath Thevar with many of the

soldiers fell dead in the Kalayarkpoil battle. In vading English forces phunderedkalayarkoil and collected worth 50 000 pagodas. The tomb of Marudhu can be seen to the east of the temple facing the old entrance. In 1780 Marudhu Brothers became the rulers of Sivagangai including Kalayarkoil. On the dawn of the 1 october 1801 the company's force advanced on kalayarkoil by three district routes captures it and dismantled the fort. The company forces found 21 guns mostly mounted a great quantity of stores and many articles of European furniture and amongst them 2 clocks and serval field glasses. Now only the dilapidated portions of the fort remain.

### **Thiruppathur Fort**

Thiruppathur is situated at Sivagangai district 27 kms from Sivagnagai 22 kms away from karaikudi. Thiru Udaya Thevar alias Vijayaragunatha Sethupathi (1711-1725 A.D) built a fort at Thiruppathur perhaps on account of this fort Thiruppathur taluk was also known as Mallakkottai taluk. ChokkanathaNayajs (1659 -1682) who ruled over Madurai captured this fort for the reason that Thirumalai Sethupathi refused to come to his aid against 'Vanamian'abijapur General but when he returned to Madurai to perform a religious festival the Sethupathi defeated the Madurai Generals and recovered the fort. After the separation of Sivagangai Thiruppathur fort came under the Sivagangai domain. In 1801 the Maradhu forces attacked the East India company's forces which were on their way to Kaliyarkoil against Marudhus. Thiruppathur fort fell and the company's forces encamped in this fort an August 27, 1801. Later the British dismantled the fort remnants of the fort are still seen here.

### **Sholapuram Fort**

Sholapuram is situated 7 km from Sivagangai on the midway between Sivagangai and Thiruppathur in Sivagangai district. There was a square mud fort now all in ruins.

### **Marudhupandiyar Memorial Thiruppathur**

Marudhupandiyar Memorial is located on the Sweedish Mission Hospital Campus Thiruppathur at the area of 414.80sqm periyaMarudhu was born on 1748 a china Marudhy was on 1753. The Marudhu Brothers are the descendants of Sivagangaivelu Nachiar who ruled efficiently. They were not afraid of Britisher's bullets and fought for the independence of our beloved country. Fore the sake of their citizen they surrendered to the Britishers during 1801 and then hanged. Both were hanged the date of 8.10.1801, as a mark of respect their memorial was opened to visit public on 21.10.1992.

### **Kaviarasarknnadhasan Mani Mandapam Karaikudi**

Kaviarasar Kannadhasan Mani Mandapam is located opposite to the new bus statnd of Karaikudi in Sivagangai district. It is built for the honour of late poet laureate Kannadhasan. He was born in Thirumukkuddalpatti in karaikudi. He was a great lyricist he raised the level of Tamil film songs to Himalayan hights. The area of Mandabam is 5089.26 sqkm and it was open on 21.10.1992. It has two entrance and in between the two is the statue of kaviarasarkannadhasan. It has a library art gallery and photo gallery.

### **Kamban Mani Mandapam Karaikudi**

Kamaban Mani Mandapam is located at Karaikudi. It was believed that the great tamil poet kavi Chakravarthy Kamban sent most of life her at Nattarasankottai. Nattarasankottai is a charming town situated midway between Sivagnagai and Kalayarkoil in Sivgangaidistrict This place is widely famous for the tomb of Tamil poet kambar. To honour him Kamban Mani Mandapam was built by Nagarathars at karaaikudi. Kambar festival is celebrated here every year for three days during pangundi on a grand scale when Tamil scholars meet and discuss Kamba Ramayanam

### **Conclusion**

Sivagangai district it describe the major places of worship and festivals in this district. This district is not considered as a tourist destination in tamilnadu state but the district has some places with cultural value. In this district the government does not preserve historical monuments. As per the national Archaeological act any monument of national importance is taken up by the government and preserved for posterity. But the sivagangai palace a great architectural splendor with a rich history beginning from 1730 is in utter ruins and it totally uncared for piranmalai fort is also in a pathetic condition.

### **References**

1. Ramasamy, R. Tamilnadu District Gazetters, Ramanathapuram, Madras, 1972.
2. Saminathan.A, History of Tamilnadu, Madras, 2001.
3. Subbramanian N, History of Tamilnadu 1565-1965 A.D, Madras, 1977.
4. [www.tamilnadu tourism .com](http://www.tamilnadu tourism .com)
5. Thiagarajan J. ThamilagaVaralaru, Madurai, 2002.