

DISTRICT HAND BOOK

ALLEPPEY



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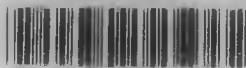
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC RELATIONS

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DISTRICT HAND BOOKS OF KERALA

ALLEPPEY

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Alleppey

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PREFACE

This is the revised edition of the District Handbook on Alleppey. Also, this is part of a series of revised editions of district handbooks of Kerala to be brought out by the Department of Public Relations. An attempt is made here to collect and present as much information as possible, all up dated. It has been designed to satisfy the needs of the average reader as well the tourist, who may look for a handy volume containing essential information about the District.

We hope that the book will serve this purpose. Suggestions for improvements are most welcome.

I. N. JAYDEVAN

Director of Public Relations.

Trivandrum.

April, 1986.

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Alleppey is a vertiable maze of bridges and canals, the presence of which has given it the appellation the "Venice of the East". Alleppey district stands foremost among the districts of Kerala in regard to the density of population. It also stands first among other districts of Kerala in respect of its literacy rate. The entire area of the district lies in the low land and the midland divisions, and is the only district in Kerala having no area under the high lands. Kuttanad, the rice bowl of Kerala is in Alleppey district. The total production of rice here is almost ten per cent of the total production of the State. Alleppey is the most important centre in the State for coir industry. Almost 80 per cent of the coir factories in the State are in this district.

SHORT HISTORY OF THE DISTRICT

Alleppey, came into being as a district, in the political map of Kerala on the 27th of August, 1957. Before the formation of the district, a major part of this area was of Quilon district and the rest, of Kottayam district. Though Alleppey is of recent origin as a revenue district, the port at Alleppey, with its past glory has a historic tradition of its own, with its abundant trade activity. Alleppey is famous for the first labour upsurge against autocratic regime which is known as Punnapra-Vayalar agitation.

Alleppey town has earned for itself the fame of being styled as the Venice of the East. The port at this place owes its origin to the ingenuity and imagination of a great administrator of the erstwhile Travancore, Raja Kesavadas, the Dewan of His Highness the Maharaja Rama Varma. He constructed the two main canals, running parallel to each other through the heart of the town, linking the backwaters with the seashore. He brought here the Gujaratis, Kutchimemons and Parsis to start trade in hill-produce, copra and coconut oil. The port was open for foreign trade in 1792 and it remained the commercial metropolis of Travancore for over a century. The lighthouse in the western coast was put up in 1862

under the supervision of a European engineer, Mr. Crawford, Alleppey market was once the solitary supplier of coir yarn, mats and mattings, coconuts, coconut oil, pepper, ginger, tea, rubber, cashew and cardamom to the world markets before the establishment of the Cochin Port. The development of Cochin harbour during the second quarter of the century marks the beginning of the decline of Alleppey market and port. The business community found better prospects in Cochin and a large number of them moved to Cochin.

Alleppey District consists of two revenue divisions, six taluks and 84 revenue villages. There are 69 panchayats and five municipalities in the district.

TOPOGRAPHY AND CLIMATE

Bounded on the north-east by Ernakulam and Kottayam districts, on the east by Pathanamthitta, on the south-east by Quilon district and on the west by the Arabian Sea, this district lies between north latitude 90.05° and 90.52° and east longitude $76^{\circ}.17'$ and $76^{\circ}.48'$.

The climate is moist and hot in the coast, and it is slightly cooler and drier in the interior of the district. The average monthly temperature of this district is approximately 18° C. As in the case of other parts of the State, this district also gets the benefit of two outstanding monsoons.

The soil of this district may be classified as sandy, peaty, alluvial and laterite. Sandy soil covers the western portion of Shertallai, Ambalapuzha and Karthikappally taluks. Coconut is mostly grown in this area. Peaty and kari soil occur as a small belt on the eastern regions of Shertallai and Ambalapuzha and on the western portions of Kuttanad. This soil is of poor fertility and of low yields. To the east of the peaty soil lies the belt of alluvial soil which covers the residuary portions of Kuttanad, northern portions of Karthikappally, Chengannur and the north-western sector of Mavelikkara. The alluvial soil is heavy in texture, consists mostly of fine silt and is generally well supplied with organic matter, nitrogen and potash. Major portions of Chengannur and Mavelikkara taluks are covered by laterite soil which is formed by weathering mainly of acidic rocks under alternate wet and dry tropical conditions.

RIVERS

The following three important rivers flow through this district.

Manimala River

The villages of Manimala, Mallappally, Kaviyoor, Kalloppa, Thalavadi, Kozhimukku and Champakulam lies in the course of the river Manimala, which has a length of 91.73 kms. and drainage area of 802.90 sq. kms.

Pamba River

The river Pamba, which has its origin at Peermedu, after traversing a distance of 177.08 kms. empties itself in the Vembanad lake. The catchment area of this river is 1987.17 sq. kms. and has a marginable length of 74.02 kms.

Achancovil River

The Achancovil river on entering this district at about three miles from the west of Kaipattoor adopts a westerly course till it reaches Chennithala. After that it takes a south-westerly course and joins Pamba at Veeyapuram. The catchment area of this river is 1155.14 sq. kms. and has a marginable length of 32.19 kms.

LAKES

Vembanad Lake

The Vembanad lake stretching from Alleppey to Cochin borders Shertallai, Ambalapuzha and Kuttanad taluks of this district.

Kayamkulam lake

Kayamkulam lake lies in both Alleppey and Quilon districts.

The lakes are used for inland water transport of passengers and cargo.

POPULATION

According to 1981 census (bifurcated) Alleppey district has got a population of 19.86 lakhs. During the 1971-81 decade this district showed the lowest growth rate i.e., 10.56 per cent. But as far as density of population is concerned, Alleppey district stands foremost among the districts, with 1248 persons per sq. km. while that of the State is only 655. The sex ratio recorded in this district is 1050 females to 1000 males.

The following chart shows population in rural and urban areas:

District	Total-rural Urban	Area Sq. km.	Population 1981 Census		
			Persons	Males	Females
Alleppey	Total	1536.5	1986417	970916	1015501
	Rural	1420.1	1642130	801585	840545
	Urban	116.4	344287	169331	174956

SOCIO-ECONOMIC CONDITIONS

Alleppey is a backward district in terms of the standard of living of the people. The majority of population of the district comprises, agricultural labourers and coir workers. Most of these people live in huts which, by any standard, are not worth living. Though literacy rate in Alleppey district is in the second rank as compared to other districts, employment rate is not proportionate to the literacy rate. The awareness of democratic equality and the land reform measures offered a feeling to the individual that each is equal to anybody else. The high literacy level coupled with the achievements of the labour class has speeded up the breakdown of the coterie of casteism and landlordism in the district.

Majority of the population of the district is constituted by Hindus. Next come Christians and Muslims respectively.

The caste system of the Hindu religion is the same as elsewhere in the state. Hindus worship all Gods and Goddesses of Hindu pantheon: Vishnu, Shiva, Ayyappa, Ganapathy, Subramonia and Bhagavati are the principal dieties in the temples of Alleppey district. In most of the temples there may be one principal diety and three or four minor dieties. A very important centre of serpent worship is there at Mannarasala near Haripad in this district.

Alleppey district comes second in Christian population, the first being Kottayam. From the very beginning Christianity found its followers in Alleppey district. The very old churches at Edathua, Arthumkal, etc., stand testimony to this. Catholics are in majority among Christians in Alleppey district.

Muslims come third in respect of majority in Alleppey district. The Muslims observe the five tenets of their religion. The prayers are in Arabic. On Fridays congregation prayers are offered in the mosques.

Marriage alliances are usually contracted only among members of the same caste and community. But inter-caste or inter-communal marriages are not rare.

ART AND CULTURE

The art, culture and customs of the people of Alleppey district are mostly the same as those of the people in other districts of central Kerala. The folk songs in the fields during sowing and harvesting, the awakening songs by the *Panans*, and a few other dance forms of the traditional style associated with festivals like Onam can still be seen. A large number of art forms including folk dances, dramas, folk-songs, etc., have gone into oblivion. We find the reasons for this decline in the society's march towards social transition brought about by the spread of communism and a social consciousness of the downtrodden and the labour class who constitute the majority. It is believed that *Thullal* propounded by Kunchan Nambiar had found its stage in the famous Ambalapuzha temple.

The customs, behaviour and practice of the people of different parts of the district are almost the same. Alleppey has only a small number of tribal population. Their way of life and attire are far from the same of those of their counterparts in Manantoddy, Nilambur etc., of Wynad and Malappuram districts. The small number of *Ulladas* settled in the district do not maintain their traditional tribal way of life, but they have become one with the rest of the society.

Alleppey has contributed its might to the development of Malayalam language and literature. Two stalwarts of Malayalam literature namely *Sahitya Panchananan* P. K. Narayana Pillai and Thakazhi Sivasankara Pillai hailed from this district. The great linguist and grammarian, I. C. Chacko, was also born and brought up in this district. It is also worth mentioning that the first cinema studio in Kerala was started in Alleppey district.

Alleppey district can be proud of being the centre of snake boat races. All the important boat races, namely the Nehru Trophy Boat Race at Punnamada, the Payippad boat race at Payippad near Haripad, the Thiruvananthapuram, Neerettupuram, Karuvatta and Thakkootam boat races are held on or around the Onam holidays at different parts of the district. Thousands of people from all parts of the world come and witness these races.

LITERACY

In regard to literacy, Alleppey district stands second (1981 Census) in Kerala. According to 1981 Census, the percentage of literacy here is 78.52 while that of the State as a whole is 70.42.

	<i>Literate</i>	<i>Percentage of literacy</i>
Male	941412	82.12
Female	904023	75.10
District percentage		78.52

WORKERS

The working force of this district is 7,50,418. Alleppey is predominantly an agricultural district. Other fields where people are engaged are coir industry, copra industry, fisheries etc. The working force is divided into two groups. They are main workers and marginal workers.

The distribution of workers in respect of their work is given below:—

1. Main workers.

Agricultural labourers	..	1,62,464
Cultivators	..	66,606
Household industrial workers	..	53,203
Other workers	..	3,33,378
		<hr/>
	Total	.. 6,15,651
		<hr/>

2. Marginal workers 1,34,767

DEVELOPMENTAL ACTIVITIES

Land Reforms

Alleppey which has the highest number of *Kudikidappukars* has derived the maximum benefit due to the implementation of Kerala Land Reforms Act. It has made fundamental changes in the social set up which was once ridden with the evils of feudalism.

Of around 1,92,300 cases under various provisions of K. L. R. Act received, 1,10,494 cases were allowed by the Land Tribunals and Certificates of purchase issued so far. The efforts made by the Kerala Land Development Corporation, a fully Government-owned company in the development of agriculture in the district, need special mention. Kerala Land Development Corporation has taken up its first project, the Kuttanad Development Project, with an estimated expenditure of about Rs. 25 crores envisaging construction of 2000 kms. permanent submersible bunds and ancillary works around groups of paddy fields. The main aim of the project is to make the single crop fields into double crop fields and stabilise paddy cultivation in Kuttanad. The project covers 1,25,000 acres of rice and coconut fields.

Community Development

There are 12 community development blocks in Alleppey district dealing with the overall development of rural areas in the field of agriculture, animal husbandry, co-operation, education, social education, health and rural sanitation, communication and rural arts and craft. Special programmes like Rural Manpower, Applied Nutrition, Food for Work Project, L. D. Work for constructing rural roads, Village Housing Scheme and construction of houses for Scheduled Castes engaged in unclean occupations are also implemented.

Following is the list of the development blocks in the district:—

Pattanakkad, Kanjikuzhi, Ambalapuzha, Veliyanad, Haripad, Mavelikara, Thycattusseri, Aryad, Champakulam, Bharanicavu, Chengannur, Muthukulam.

Women and Children's Programme

The Department of Community Development is administering two nutrition schemes also in the district. The Applied Nutrition Programme—a centrally sponsored scheme—is designed to make the community conscious of nutrition, impart nutrition education to mothers and bring about a change in the food and dietary habits through local production, demonstration, cooking and feeding. The second scheme, the composite programme for women and pre-school children, is intended to impart nutrition education through Mahila Mandals, strengthen supervisory machinery for women's programmes, demonstrate feeding and train women workers.

A number of welfare schemes for the uplift of Harijans, the down-trodden, are being implemented in the district by helping them with educational concessions, housing grant, colonisation and providing employment opportunities.

Schemes for the rehabilitation of the handicapped, the waifs and strays, the destitute and those who were forced to lead immoral life are being implemented under the auspices of the Social Welfare Department.

AGRICULTURE

Agriculture is the main occupation of majority of the people in the district. Rice is the main crop. More than ten per cent of the total rice production of the State is from Alleppey district. Apart from rice, tapioca, coconut, cashewnut, arecanut, sugarcane etc. are also cultivated in the district.

Area of total cultivation and Production 1984-85

<i>Item</i>	<i>Area in hectares</i>	<i>Production in Metric tonnes</i>
1. Virippu	12,433	15,656
2. Additional crop	21,583	70,144
3. Mundakan	13,412	17,435
4. Kuttanadan Puncta	34,129	110,919
5. Karinilam Puncta	3,600	270
6. Oaru Mundakan	451	563
7. Koottu Mundakan	3929	982
8. Thokkali	3701	6476
Total	93,238	222,445
Sugarcane	1,700	144,500
Pulse	1,576	256
Sesamam	4,081	1,224
Coconut	63,835	34.7 Crore nuts
	1,64,430	

TRADE AND INDUSTRY

Though very much declined in importance because of various reasons, Alleppey still remains a central market in Kerala for copra, coconut oil, oil cakes and coir. The trade in copra was started in 1875 in Alleppey. The centre of activity is Chungom. There are at present more than 62 oil mills in the municipal area. The number of workers engaged in coconut oil milling industry is about 1200. The total production of coconut oil in this area is approximately 3500 tonnes.

Alleppey is the major production centre of coir and coir products in the State. There are about four thousand production units including a few big factories for coir in the district. There are at present 15 mechanised looms too. Attempts are being made for the revival and revitalisation of the industry through co-operative societies. There are 41 co-operative societies in the coir sector. There is a central coir marketing society for the export of the produce of primary societies. The Hindustan Coir Ltd., a centrally sponsored factory, has introduced on an experimental basis, production of coir mats and mattings using powerlooms.

There are three major industrial estates in the district. They are located at Kollakadavu, Mayithara, and Aroor. Under the massive new industries programme eight mini industrial estates have been started in this district with necessary infrastructural facilities.

In addition to the industrial estates, there are development areas at Aroor and Kollakadavu. Common facility service centres, for carpentry at Aroor, for blacksmithy at Eramalloor and for pottery at Mithrakary for giving training in the respective trades has also been established. An extension centre of SSI is working at Koomadi for giving tool room and workshop training in different trades.

The Kerala Spinners, situated at Komalapuram near Alleppey is the solitary industrial enterprise of the type in the district. Pallathara Bricks Factory near Pallippuram in Shertallai taluk is unique in so far as the raw material used for production is the white sand available in abundance in the taluk.

Following is the list of large and medium scale industries of the district.

<i>Name</i>	<i>Product</i>
Bristol Boats (India) Ltd.	Fibre glass yacht
Scooters Kerala Ltd.	Scooter
Excel Glass Ltd.	Glass bottles
Highrange Breweries	Beer
Kerala Spinners	Synthetic
Pallathara Bricks and Tiles Ltd.	Lime bricks
Kerala Drugs and Pharmaceuticals	Allopaethic medicines
Premier Morarji Chemicals	Sulphate of Alukina
Kerala Chlorates and Chemicals	Pottasium Chlorate

*Name**Products*

Phosphorus and chemicals	White phosphorus and Calcium Silicate
Palmer Lawrie and Co.	Marine freight containers
Smithy Extractions	Solvent extraction
Aluminium Industries Ltd.	H.P. Circuit
Mc Dowell Co.	Liquors
Pearlite Wire Products	Steel wire ropes
Foam Mattings (India) Ltd.	Foam backed coir mattings
Aspinwall and Co., Travancore Ltd.	Coir Mattings
Formalin Products (P) Ltd.	Derivates of Formal dehydrate
Seltron Controls	Electronic items
Steel Industries Kerala Ltd.	Fabricated steel items.
Cattle Feed Unit	Cattle feed

Besides, there are 2843 SSI units in the district.

IRRIGATION AND FLOOD CONTROL PROJECTS

Pamba River Project is the major irrigation project in this district. It costs an estimated amount of about Rs. 20 crores and irrigates a total of 17,814 hectares of agricultural land spreading Chengannur, Mavelikara and Karthigappally taluks. Apart from this river project there are two other major projects which help cultivation in Alleppey district viz., the Thanneermukkom salt water barrier and the Thottappally spillway.

The Thanneermukkom Barrage is intended to prevent salt water from entering the Kuttanad area.

The Thottappally spillway saves Kuttanad area from inundation by closing the bund's opening to the sea with its shutters when the tide is high, and letting out excess rain water into the sea during nonsoon season.

The total area already under irrigation is:

Minor Irrigation	7,627 hectares
Major and Medium	748 "
Other sources	8,440 "

HEALTH

Alleppey is fortunate to have one of the four medical colleges in the State. At present the medical college is situated at Vandanam, ten kms. south of Alleppey town. The hospital attached to the medical college is functioning in Alleppey town. Steps are being taken to shift the hospital to Vandanam to function more closely with the college.

There are ten Government allopathic and nine Government ayurvedic hospitals in the district. In addition 18 primary health centres, 14 allopathic dispensaries, 23 rural dispensaries, 32 ayurvedic dispensaries, two T. B. clinics, one Leprosy clinic, three national filaria control centres, one district medical laboratory are also located in different parts of this district. There are also 14 Homoeo dispensaries and one Homoeo hospital in the district. The total bed strength of Homoeo institutions is 275. The total bed strength of Ayurvedic hospitals is 170.

The only one *Panchakarma* hospital in Kerala is situated at Kalarcode in Alleppey district.

EDUCATION

Alleppey is divided into two educational districts. They are Alleppey and Mavelikara.

There are ten arts and science colleges and one training college in the district. A Government I.T.I. is situated at Chengannur. There are more than half a dozen private I.T.Is. functioning in different parts of the district. The one polytechnic in the private sector is situated in Alleppey. Apart from this, there are the two junior technical schools at Shertallai and Krishnapuram. The Ravi Varma School of painting at Mavelikara offers certificate course in painting and clay modelling. There is also a tailoring trade school functioning at Haripad.

There are 179 high schools, 144 U. P. schools and 347 L. I. schools in the district. There are nine basic training schools also.

FISHERIES

Alleppey district occupies a very important position in the fisheries map of Kerala. Its western boundary is the Arabian sea having rich marine resources. More than 20 per cent of the total area of the district is water-logged, and the 20,000 acres of kari land and 42,736 acres of paddy fields in Kuttanad are suitable for pisciculture.

The total population of fishermen in the district is 136,300. The sea faring fishermen population is 87,027 and the inland fishermen population is 49,273. Of these not less than 40 per cent are active fishermen and of the remaining more than 60 per cent are either directly or indirectly engaged in fishing operation. The fishing season in the marine sector is from October to May and in the inland sector it is throughout the year.

The Fisheries Department has established a fishermen colony of 20 houses at Thevarvattom in Thycattussery panchayat. Feeder roads from sea coast to main roads are constructed to help fishing industry. The department also started two dispensaries at Thottappally and Pallithode. Another one is under construction at Pallana. The department has established an estuarine fish farm at Ayiramthengu, the southern most boundary of the district. Local varieties of fish are reared in this farm and sold to public at reasonable rates.

There is a Regional Fisheries Technical High School in Arthunkal. 'Chakara' is a rare marine phenomenon found in this district. It happens usually in the early days of June and May last upto the end of August.

COMMUNICATIONS

Though there are no important newspapers published from Alleppey district, the various media of mass communication including newspapers, radio, film etc., are playing a very important role in the cultural and educational development of the people of this district.

There are two evening dailies published from Alleppey town, namely, the *Munnani* and *Keralasree*. There is also one morning newspaper called *Theepandam*. As far as periodicals are concerned, still Alleppey lags behind. The relay station of the All India Radio near Alleppey is the most powerful station in the State.

There is a film studio in Alleppey namely, the Udaya Studio. There is a large number of cinema exhibition houses also in the district. A notable incident in this field is the inauguration of the Chitranjali, the second theatre owned by the Kerala Film Development Corporation at Shertallai.

As regards exhibition of films in the rural areas, four Government film exhibition units including the field publicity unit of the Government of India, are functioning in this district.

All the important publishing houses in this district function in the private sector.

Roads

The credit for development of roads in this district goes back to the period of Ramayyan Dalwa, the Dewan of Travancore, who opened several roads chiefly for the convenience of militia and for traffic. With the appointment of Mr. Bartom as the Chief Engineer during the time of Dewan Madhava Rao, remarkable progress in the expansion of roads has been achieved. With the opening of the Alleppey-Changanacherry road in 1958 this district has a net work of good motorable roads.

Railway

The railway line opened on 17th October, 1958 traverses through Chongannur, Mavelikara and Karthigappally taluks of this district. On 15th April, 1979 the construction work of a coastal railway line connecting Alleppey and Ernakulam has been inaugurated. With the completion of this rail road, the fervent hope of Alleppey and suburbs becoming an industrial belt, would be fulfilled.

Water Transport

The commercial canals connecting the nook and corner of this district are its life line. Canals, rivers and backwaters afford an easy and cheap mode of transport of goods and men which was one of the main reasons for the importance of Alleppey town as the major commercial centre of older times.

PLACES OF INTEREST

With the fertile sandy expanses of Karappuram on the north, the placid sheets of water of the Vembanad lake on the east, a network of rivers and canals and the Arabian sea washing her on the west, Alleppey provides ample opportunities for the tourists to enjoy themselves the inestimable charm of Dame Nature.

Alleppey:

Alleppey is known as the Venice of the East. This ancient city is one of the most important centres of coir and copra industry in the State. The town is so designed with two canals running parallel

to each other that the country-boats plying from various parts of the State with coir and copra and hill produces and spices can conveniently touch the different industrial and commercial points of the town. The *Navarathri* festival of the Devi temple at Mullackal and Kidangamparambu Bhagavathi temple and of the S. D. V. School in October and the Mullackal *Chirappu* in December are the main festivals in the town which attract people of all religions. The Nehru Trophy Boat Race occurring on the second Saturday of every August is an important event in the town attracting lakhs of people from all over the country and the world at large.

Ambalapuzha.

Ambalapuzha Sreekrishna temple is called the *Dwaraka* of the south. The Ambalapuzha *Palpayasam* (pudding) is renowned for its unique taste and deliciousness. The annual festival of the temple falls in the month of April every year and *Ottamthullal*, *Chakkiyarkuthu*, *Krishnanattam* and *Velakali*—the ancient traditional visual arts of Kerala—are some of the special features on the occasion. The temple is situated very near to the national highway about ten kms. south of Alleppey town. At Karumady, three kms. east of Ambalapuzha, there is a statue of Buddha, called the *Karumady Kuttan* which attracts tourists from all parts of the world.

Arthumkal:

Arthumkal is famous for the St. Sebastian's Church which is situated south west of Shertallai town 22 kms. north of Alleppey. The famous Arthumkal *perunal* is held in January every year. Catholics from all parts of the State go over there to participate in the feast of St. Sebastian.

Chengannur:

Chengannur is an important Market centre of the district where the hill products are brought for disposal. The central hatchery—the biggest of its kind in the State, is functioning at Chengannur. There is a famous Mahadeva temple at Chengannur.

Chettikulangara:

Chittikulangara is famous for the temple there and for the *Kettukazcha* in connection with the annual festival. *Kettukazcha* is a procession of tall decorated structures in chariots, in which effigies of horses and bullocks and epic heroes like Pandavas and various scenes from the *puranas* like "Geethopadesam" are put up.

Haripad:

Haripad situated nearly 32 kms. south of Alleppey town, on the National Highway is an ancient town as well as an important cultural centre of the district. The famous Mannarassala temple is very near to this. The Mannarassala temple is a temple devoted to the serpent deity. The Ayilyam festival of this temple, held in November is very famous. Subramonia Temple at Haripad is famous.

Kayamkulam:

Kayamkulam is the southern most municipal town of the district-nearly 45 kms. south of Alleppey-on the National Highway. It is an important trading centre of the district. The palace of the ancient Kayamkulam King, Krishnapuram palace, is preserved as an archaeological monument. The Central Coconut Research Station situated at Krishnapuram is an important institution under the Indian Council of Agricultural Research.

Mavelikara

Mavelikara is another cultural centre of the district. The temples at Kandiyoor and at Mavelikara are very famous.

Mannar

Mannar the small village is situated nearly eight kms north of Mavelikara. The famous churches at Parumala, and Edathua are situated very near to Mannar. The feast of St. George at Edathua and of Parumala Bishop at Parumala are held in April and November respectively. The Pamba Sugar Factory is very near to Mannar.

IMPORTANT FESTIVALS

The important festivals in the district are the *Chirappu* of the Mullackal Devi temple at Alleppey in December, Sivarathri festival

at Kanichukulangara Bhagavathi temple in March and also the festivals of the temples at Ambalapuzha (in March), Haripad (in April), Mavelikara (in April), Chengannur, Chettikulangara and Shertallai (Shertallai Pooram) and the churches at Edathua (April-May), and Arthumkal (December-January) and the Ayilyam festival of Mannarassala in November.

Chettikulangara is famous for the *Kettukazcha* conducted annually in March on the occasion of the festival at the ancient temple there.

The most important and interesting sporting events in the district are the *Vallamkali* at Champakulam in May and the Nehru Trophy Boat Race at Alleppey in August. The Nehru Trophy Boat Race is considered the most interesting water-regatta in the country which attracts people from different parts of the country and even abroad. It is conducted every year on the 2nd Saturday of August.

The Rest House at Alleppey, The Municipal Satram, Alleppey, T. B., Haripad, Rest House, Kayamkulam, Rest House, Mavelikara and the Kalpakavadi at Thottappally (in the private sector) provides amenities for comfortable stay in the district.

LOCAL BODIES

There are no city corporations in Alleppey District. The five municipalities in the district are Shertallai, Alleppey, Kayamkulam, Mavelikara and Chengannur.

Parliamentary and Assembly Constituencies

Alleppey District comprises of one Parliamentary constituency and part of another nine Assembly constituencies. The Parliamentary constituencies are Alleppey and part of Mavelikara and the assembly constituencies are Aroor, Shertallai, Mararikulam, Alleppey, Ambalapuzha, Haripad, Kayamkulam, Mavelikara Assembly segments of Pandalam, Kalloopara, Aranmula and Thiruvalla has become part of Pathanamthitta district.

DISTRICT AT A GLANCE

Basic Information

1. Total area	1536.5 Sq. kms.
2. Population (1981 Census)	1,986,417
3. Male	9,70,916
4. Female	1,015,501
5. Decimal growth rate of population 1971-81	10.56
6. Density of population per Sq. km.	1248
7. Sex-ratio (Number of females per 1000 males)	1050
8. Literacy rate per cent	78.52
Males	82.12
Females	75.10
9. C.D. Blocks	12
10. Panchayats	69
11. Municipalities	55



Kumarakodi at Pallana



Ambalapuzha Temple



Krishnapuram Palace at Kayamkulam



"Chakara" at Purakkadu beach



Arthunkal Church



Civil Station—Alleppey



"Chungom" an important trade centre



Subramania Temple at Haripphadu



"Karumadikuttan" (Budha) at Karumadi near Ambalapuzha



Kerala State Drugs and Pharmaceuticals



Padinjare Shaffi Jama--at (mosque) at Dutch Square , Alleppey