



Evolution and growth of inland navigation in travancore

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Transport plays a vital role in the economic development by providing access to jobs, education, leisure travel and other amenities essential for quality of life. Once the steam power was applied for purposes of transport, it brought about significant changes first in the political and social spheres of the western world and their colonies around the world. Transportation industry merely undertakes the movement of people and goods from one place to another but in doing so it has been one of the most important activities of man in every stage of human civilization. Transport generates growth by facilitating trade both nationally internationally and by increasing access to livelihoods education facilities as well as local and national amenities.

Anantha Victoria Marthanda varman Canal is popularly known as AVM Canal. It was running from Kochi in Kerala to Mandaikadu in Tamil Nadu. In This canal got this name from the Highness Maharaja of Travancore Sri Utram Tirunal Marthandavarma and his most respected British Queen Victoria of England. The etymological meaning of the term 'Anantha' simply indicates snake which always used by Padmanabha, the family deity of the Travancore kings. Even though, Padmanabha alias Lord Vishnu used the snake as his sleeping bed (Menon, 1994). It is popularly known as "Anantha Sayanam". Thus the name of AVM Canal coined from the names of Lord Vishnu's favorite reptile

Anantha, Queen Victoria of England the then Maharaja of Travancore Sri Utram Tirunal Marthandavarma. The Travancore government under Sri Utram Tirunal Marthandavarma had various aims and objectives behind the construction of AVM Canal. His government should much emphasis to the material prosperity and welfare of the people (Report on the Administration of Travancore 1038). It had played a significant role in the socio-economic, political and marine history of Travancore.

In that period Kanyakimari district was under the control of Travancore Kingdom. The Travancore Government inaugurated its construction work in 1860 with the help of the British Resident and Engineers, intended to connect two prominent places namely Trivandrum and Kanyakumari. Unfortunately in 1860 itself Utram Tirunal Marthandavarma died and so in his place Ayilyam Tirunal ascended the throne of Travancore. He continued the construction works of his predecessor. So the construction of AVM Canal also continued systematically. In 1863 he appointed Barton as the chief engineer of the PWD in Travancore. It marked the beginning of a new chapter in the history of PWD in Travancore (Directorate of Archives, TVM Cover File No. 16136).

In 1867 the construction work of the AVM Canal, in the beach between Poovar and Manavalakurichi, south east of Colachel, was partly finished of this, the portion