

Samathuvapuram – Symbol of Equity

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Abstract

Villupuram district is the dwelling area of Scheduled Caste and Tribes, Most Backward and Backward community people. Making a social equity among those groups, the concept like Samathuvapuram (residential area constructed by the government for all community people) is must. The Samathuvapuram housing scheme was introduced in 1997 to create model villages in rural areas with free housing with all facilities. This scheme was named Periyar Memorial Samathuvapuram after E.V.Ramasamy, a crusader of social equity to eradicate caste discrimination and to live with social dignity and equity.

I. TITLE OF THE ARTICLE

This article entitled “**Samathuvapuram – Symbol of Equity**” discusses locations and infrastructures of six Samathuvapuram settlements in Villupuram district and how the concept of Samathuvapuram paves the way for communal harmony, social integration and symbol of equity.

II. STATEMENT OF THE RESEARCH PROBLEM

Historically, social inequalities are commonly visible in the society. Caste discrimination has existed not only in the form of social hierarchy but also in the location of habitations. Sheltering patterns of the so-called untouchables were such as to keep them separated from the mainstream society denying them civic amenities and other services available to the others. In fact, the settlements itself was evidence of these inequalities. For instance, the dalit settlements are located invariably in the downstream of the villages, which is insanitary in all possible manner.

The then government initiated housing policies whereby all communities could live together in the village and share all civic and other infrastructure facilities. Lower castes, higher castes and those ‘in between’ were to live together in equal comfort, self-respect and dignity with mutual respect and interaction. Thus ‘social equality’ which is a fundamental need to establish equality in a caste-ridden society, could be attempted through the housing schemes.

The samathuvapuram housing scheme was introduced in 1997 with Rs.35 crore to establish 100 samathuvapurams in different parts of Tamilnadu. The plan was to create model villages in rural areas with free housing and other facilities wherein people of different castes and religions could live together and share civic amenities and services without caste discrimination or differential treatment. This scheme was named Periyar ‘Ninaivu samathuvapuram’ after Periyar E V Ramasamy Naicker, a social revolutionary of the Dravidian movement of the early 20th century. In fact, Periyar opposed the existence and creation of ‘cherries’ and introduced the concept of samathuvapuram. In order to eradicate caste discrimination and untouchability, he proposed several action plans, like inter-caste marriage, inter-dining and common dwelling. He also suggested that all communities should live together to fight against exploitation.

III. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The study aims at the following objectives:

1. To know the Samathuvapuram settlements and infrastructure
2. To analyze the concept of Samathuvapuram
3. To realize the importance of Samathuvapuram
4. To suggest some opinions for surviving the Samathuvapuram settlements

IV. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The four different methods of historical research such as exposition, explanation, narration and critical analysis have been applied wherever applicable.

V. PERIYAR MEMORIAL SAMATHUVAPURAM IN VILLUPURAM DISTRICT

A. District wise allotment

In 1998, out of 29 districts in Tamilnadu, only 27 districts are selected for constructing Samathuvapuram except Nilgiri and Chennai districts because of non-availability of land in these districts.

The allotment of the constructing the houses is varied from districts to district. For example, Coimbatore has construction of total

houses 800 is it has 8 blocks (each block – 100 construction). Like wise Madurai and Thiruvapur has 100 construction of 702 houses as it has 7 blocks 6 block has 100 and one block 102 constructions. The districts Vellore, Tiruvannamalai, Trichy, Pudukottai, Dindigul, Ramanathapuram, Virudhunagar, Sivagangai, Tirunelveli and Villupuram have 600 houses as they have six blocks.¹

The districts Kanchipuram, Salem, Thanjavur, Karur, Perambalur has 500 houses as they have 5 blocks. The district Cuddalore, Namakkal, Dharmapuri, Erode, Nagapattinam, Theni have 400 houses as they have 4 blocks. The districts Thiruvallur, Krishnagiri have 300 houses as they have 3 blocks. Kanniyakumari is the only district having only 200 houses as it has 2 blocks. Totally through this scheme 14502 houses were constructed.

Table – 1 - Samathuvapuram Houses – District Wise Abstract

S l. N o.	Name of the District	Name of the Block	Name of the village in which Samathuvapuram constructed	Total houses constructed
1	Kancheepuram	Kancheepuram	Chitherimedu	100
		Walajabad	Ennathur	100
		Kundrathur	Thundalkazhani	100
		Madurantakam	Bukkadurai	100
		Thiruporur	Mambakkam	100
			Total	500
2	Thiruvallur	Kadambathur	Mappedu	100
		R.K.Pet	SVG Puram	100
		Poonamallee	Kuthampakkam	100
			Total	300
3	Cuddalore	Panruti	Thiruvamur	100
		Vridhachalam	Pallipattu	100
		Nallur	Ivathagudi	100
		Mangalore	Kazhuthur	100
			Total	400
4	Villupuram	Kolliyanur	Mathirimgalam	100
		T.V.Nallur	Arumpattu	100

		Sankarapuram	Kattuvannanjur	100
		Tirunavalur	Thirunavalur	100
		Kanai	Panamalaipettai	100
		Chinnasalem	Ammaigararam	100
			Total	600
5	Vellore	Walaja	Ammoor	100
		Kaveripakkam	Goodalore	100
		Nemili	Perumpulipakkam	100
		Katpadi	Sembarayanallur	100
		Kandhili	Udhayamuthur	100
		Anaicut	Poigai	100
			Total	600
6	Tiruvannamalai	Kilpennathur	Mekkalur	100
		West Arni	Thatchur	100
		Pudupalayam	Ammapalayam	100
		Peranamalur	Gengapuram	100
		Cheyyar	Puliyarampakkam	100
		Polur	Kasthampadi	100
	Total	600		
7	Salem	Nangavalli	Chinnagonur	100
		Sangagiri	Katheri	100
		Panamarat hupatti	Neikkarapatti	100
		Gengavalli	Naduvallur	100
		Veerapandi	Periyaseeragapadi	100
			Total	500
8	Namakkal	Erumapatti	M.Mettupatti	100
		Paramathi	Kunnamalai	100
		Tiruchengode	Sirumolasi	100
		Vennanthur	Attanur	100
			Total	400
9	Dharmapuri	Pappireddipatti	Alamelupuram	100
		Karimangala	Periyampatti	100
		Nallampalli	Palayam	100
		Morappur	Senkuttai	100
	Total	400		

10	Krishnagiri	Hosur	Nallur	100			Needamangalam	Aathanur	100		
		Mathur	Gendigampatti	100			Kottur	Nochiyur	100		
		Krishnagiri	Kattinayanpalli	100			Kodavasal	52 Pudukudi	100		
			Total	300			Mannarkudi	Maravakadu	100		
11	Erode				16	Tiruchirappalli		Total	700		
		Anthiyur		100			Manapparai	Pannapatti	100		
		Erode		100			Pullampadi	Kallakudi	100		
		Kundadam		100			Thuraiyur	Vadakkuvelli	100		
		Gobichetti palayam		100			Thottiyam	Tholupatti	100		
12	Coimbatore		Total	400	17	Karur					
		Avinasi	Thekkalur	100			Karur	Manamangalam	100		
		Anaimalai	Thensangampalayam	100			Thanthoni	Velliyanai	100		
		Tiruppur	Neruperuchal	100			Thanthoni	Puthampur	100		
		Kinathukadavu	Vadasithur	100			Krishnara yapuram	Manavasi	100		
		Udumalai pettai	Kannamma naickanur	100			Thogaimalai	Chinnapanaiyur	100		
		Spl.Village Panchayat	Sankaramanallur	100				Total	500		
		Spl.Village Panchayat	Vellakinar	100			Perambalur	Elambalur	100		
		Spl.Village Panchayat	Chettipalayam	100			Perambalur	Alambadi	100		
			Total	800			Veppur	Paravai	100		
13	Thanjavur	Thanjavur	Kurunkulam East	100	18	Perambalur	Sendurai	Sendurai	100		
		Orathanadu	Neivasal Thenapathi	100			Thirumanur	Varanavasi	100		
		Budalur	Pudukudi Thenapathi	100				Total	500		
		Pattukottai	Sukiranpatti	100			19	Pudukottai	Pudukottai	Narimedu	100
		Kumbakonam	Muzhivur	100					Annavasali	Narthamala	100
			Total	500					Thirumayam	Thulalyanur	100
14	Nagapattinam	Nagapattinam	Pappakoil	100	Thiruvankulam	Keelathur			100		
		Keelaiyur	Thirukuvalai	100	Aranthangi	Pallithivayal Allarimelavayal			100		
		Thirumargal	Panangudi	100	Viralimalai	Vadukapatti			100		
		Sembanarkoil	Kuttuchery	100		Total	600				
			Total	400	20	Madurai	Madurai East		100		
		Thiruvarur	Alivalam	100			Thiruparankundram		100		
Nannilam	Mudikondan	100	Melur				100				
Koradacheri	Aaikudi	100	Vadipatti				100				

		Chellampatti		102			hur	atti	
		Sedapatti		100			Sakkottai	Amaravathi puthur	100
		Thiruman galam		100			Devakotta i	Vijayapura m	100
			Total	702				Total	600
2	Theni	Chinnama nur	Rasingapur am	100	2	Tirunelv eli	Palayamk ottai	Ponnakudi	100
1		Bodinaya kanur	Odaipatti	100			Manur	Azhagiyap andipuram	100
		Periyakula m	Silvarpatti	100			Manur	Seethaparp anallur	100
		Aandipatti	Venkatacha lapuram	100			Ambasam udram	Ayansinga mpatti	100
			Total	400					
2	Dindigul	Dindigul	Odukkam Nadupatti	100			Kadayanal lur	Nainagara m	100
2		Athoor	Seevaisara gu	100			Vallioor	Vadaku Vallioor	100
		Reddiyarc hatram	Bankarupur am	100				Total	600
		Battagundu	Kunnava ryanakottai	100	2	Thoothu kudi	Thoothuk udi	Thimmaraj apuram	100
		Palani	Pethanayak ampatti	100			Karunkula m	Vasavappa puram	100
		Ottanchatr am	Virupatch i	100			Udankudi	Paramanku richi	100
			Total	600			Sathankul am	Pidaneri	100
2	Ramanat hapuram	Ramanath apuram	Chitharakot tai	100			Kovilpatti	Lingampatt i	100
3		Mandapa m	Vedhalai	100			Pudur	Nagalapura m	100
		Thiruvada nai	Thiruvadan ai	100				Total	600
		Paramakk udi	Pampoor	100	2	Kanyaku mari	Munchirai	Kalingaraja puram	100
		Mudhukul athur	Kakoor	100			Thovalai	Chenbagar amanpudur	100
		Kadaladi	Karungula m	100				Total	200
			Total	600				Grand Total	14502
2	Viruduna gar	Rajapalay am	Sammandh apuram	100					
4		Srivilluput hur	Pattakulam Sallipatti	100					
		Sivakasi	Anaiyur	100					
		Sathur	Mulliseval	100					
		Virudunag ar	Sengottai	100					
		Kariyapatt i	Kalkurichi	100					
			Total	600					
2	Sivagang ai	Sivaganga i	Arasanur	100					
5		Sivaganga i	Paiyur	100					
		Manamad urai	Seikalathur	100					
		Thiruppat	Sirukudalp	100					

Source : Department of Rural Development, Government of Tamilnadu, 2009.

Samathuvapuram houses in Villupuram district such as Arumbattu in Tiruvennainallur block, having constructed 100 houses, Ammaiaaram in Chinnasalem block having constructed 100 houses, Thirunavalur in Tiruvennainallur block having constructed 100 houses, Madhirimangalam in Koliyanur block having constructed 100 houses, Panamalaipettai in Kanai block having constructed 100 houses and Kattuvannanjur in Sankarapuram block having constructed 100 houses.²

The expenditure for constructing 100 houses in Arumpattu is 88.29 lakhs, in Ammaiaaram is 86.80 lakhs, in Thirunavalur 149.67 lakhs, in Madhirimangalam is 79.63 lakhs,

in Panamalaipettai is 72.08 lakhs and in Kattuvannanjur is 89.57 lakhs. The total expenditure for constructing 600 houses is 566.04 lakhs.

In Arumpattu Samathuvapuram 100 houses are constructed and 95 houses are being domiscatted 5 houses are damaged and unsuitable for living. Drinking water facilities and electricity facilities are 100% available. There is one play ground for public utility but it is poorly maintained. All the 100 house holders are properly maintaining ration cards and civil supplies. Maximum of the family are in join family system. Sanitary facilities and drainage facilities are poorly maintained. There is no separate hospital and transportation. All the house holders are living with communal harmony and they have no communal riots.³

In Ammaigaram Samathuvapuram 100 houses are constructed and 95 houses are being domiscatted 5 houses are damaged and unsuitable for living. Drinking water facilities and electricity facilities are 100% available. There is one play ground for public utility but it is poorly maintained. All the 100 house holders are properly maintaining ration cards and civil supplies. Maximum of the family are in join family system. Sanitary facilities and drainage facilities are poorly maintained. There is no separate hospital and transportation. All the house holders are living with communal harmony and they have no communal riots.⁴

In Thirunavalur Samathuvapuram there are 100 houses. Only 80 houses are being domiscatted. Water facilities and electricity are perfectly maintained. Sanitary facility is poorly maintained. 80% of the families are in join family system. Maximum of the people are depend upon factorial work, daily wages in agriculture and building construction work. They are living with social fraternity and there is no any communal clash among them.⁵

In Madhirimangalam Samathuvapuram 100 houses are there. Out of 100 only 85 houses are being domiscatted. Water and electric facilities are being properly maintained. Sanitary facility is poor. The houses which are deserted are surrounded by thorns and bushes. All the family having ration cards and they have to walk more than 3 kms for getting rations. All the house holders are depend upon agriculture, factory work, construction work and 100 days work (NRGEA). Most of the families are in join family system. A few families are in nuclear family system. They are

living with communal harmony and social fraternity without any communal problem.⁶

In Panamalaipettai Samthuvapuram there are 100 houses. Electricity and water facilities are properly maintained. There is no sanitary facility. Maximum of the families are in join family system. They are depending upon agriculture, construction work and NRGEA. They are living with social fraternity without any communal riots.⁷

In Kattuvannanjur Samathuvapuram there are 100 houses. All the houses are well-equipped. Maximum of the families are in join family system. A few families are in nuclear family system. Water facilities and electricity are being properly maintained. All the house holders having ration card and benefitted with the grants and aids of the government. Maximum of the people are depending upon agriculture, construction work and NRGEA. Sanitary facilities and drainage system are poorly maintained. They have to walk along for hospitals, and transportation. All the communities are living together without any communal problems.⁸

V. CONCLUSION

Samathuvapuram concept is the brain child of M.Karunanithi, the then Chief Minister of Tamilnadu in 1997 for making social equilibrium, the government has launched such a scheme. In Villupuram district six places were chosen and houses were constructed. Many of the developmental policies and schemes are implemented by the government in view of economic poise. But the concept of Samathuvapuram is certainly pioneering scheme, not only promoting rural housing but also establishing communal harmony and social equity.

REFERENCES

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