

# **A BRIEF SURVEY OF SOCIO HISTORICAL STUDY OF PIZHALA ISLAND**

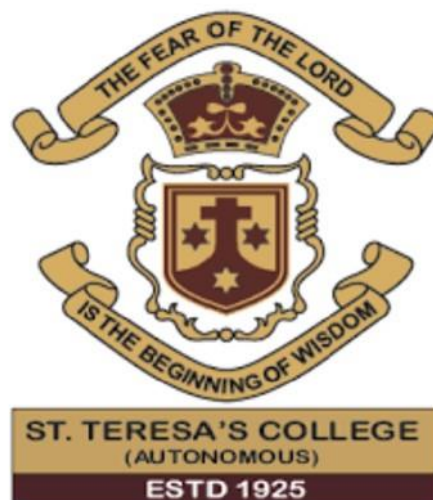
**Dissertation submitted to the  
Post-Graduation Department of History, St. Teresa's College Ernakulam  
(Autonomous) in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of  
MASTER OF ARTS IN HISTORY**

**By**

**ALNA MARIA E.J**

**M.A. HISTORY (2021-2023)**

**REG. NO. SM21HIS001**



**DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY  
ST. TERESA'S COLLEGE (AUTONOMOUS)  
ERNAKULAM  
March 2023**

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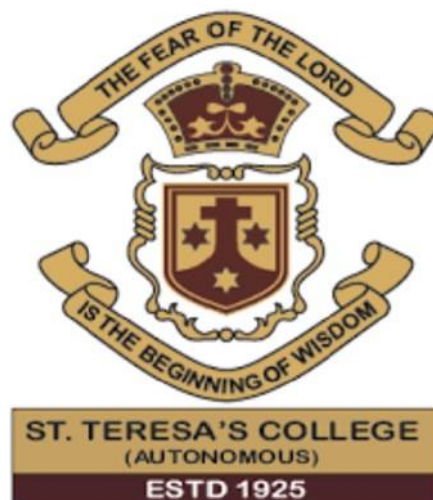
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# **CERTIFICATE**

This is to certify that the dissertation entitled “**A BRIEF SURVEY OF SOCIO-HISTORICAL STUDY OF PIZHALA ISLAND**” submitted in the partial fulfilment of the requirements for M.A Degree in History, Mahatma Gandhi University, Kottayam is a bonafide work done by      under my supervision and guidance. In addition, it is certified that this project or any part of this has not been previously submitted elsewhere to adjudge any degree, diploma or other title or acknowledgement.

**Head of the Department**

**Supervising Teacher**

Submitted to viva- voice Examination held on ..... At the  
Department of History, St. Teresa’s College, Ernakulam.

Name and signature of Examiners

- 1.
- 2.

# **DECLARATION**

I hereby declare that this dissertation work entitled “**A BRIEF SURVEY OF SOCIO -HISTORICAL STUDY OF PIZHALA ISLAND** ” is an original work done by me under the supervision and guidance of Ms. Rose mol Xavier, Lecturer of Department of History, St. Teresa’s College, Ernakulam and I have not submitted this project to any other universities for the award of any degree or diploma.

**Place: Ernakulam**

**Alna Maria E.J**

**Date:**

**St. Teresa’s College Ernakulam**

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The success and final outcome of the project required a lot of guidance from many people. So, I take this opportunity to extend my sincere gratitude to all of them. Firstly, I thank God Almighty for being with me throughout and helping me for completing the project successfully. I thank each and every person who gave me the encouragement to do this dissertation on the **“A BRIEF SURVEY OF SOCIO-HISTORICAL STUDY OF PIZHALA ISLAND”** which helped me in doing a lot of research and broadening my knowledge about the topic.

I thank my project guide Ms. Rose Mol Xavier, Lecturer of the Department of History at St. Teresa’s College for the guidance in completing the project. I acknowledge the support which I received from my course coordinators.

I extend my sincere gratitude to Mrs. Stancy S, Head of the department of history of St. Teresa’s College and Mrs. Vinitha T. Tharakan, Assistant Professor of the department of history of St. Teresa’s College for all the support and encouragement given.

I am very much thankful to the public library Ernakulam and Goshree islands development authority for their help in providing available reference material for the project.

I would like to express my sincere gratitude towards Job Edathil, M.X joseph and others for accommodating my request, co-operating and patiently providing all the information needed for the completion of this project. I would like to thank Sree. Daineesh Olippattil, the active member of Karamuttikkal Samara Samithi, Sachidhanandan P.M, Ramachandran P.M , Senior citizens of pizhala island. And

I would also like to express my sincere gratitude towards the residents of pizhala and Moolampilly islanders.

Finally, and most importantly, I would like to express my gratitude to my parents, friends and the faculty members for their encouragement and support.

**ALNA MARIA E.J**

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## **INTRODUCTION**

The main core of this project is Pizhala island. Pizhala is an isolated island. Pizhala is an area known as the pillar of kadamakudy grama panchayat. Which come under kochi kanayannoor thaluk. This island is easily accessible from kochi, this island is culturally and socially isolated. The outsiders recognize pizhala island as kuttanad of Ernakulam district. Pizhala is one of the rural island in the northern periyar hills in Ernakulam district. This island is different from other 14 islands under kadamakudy grama panchayat. Through this project, an attempt has been made to briefly describe the cultural and historical significance of pizhala. The changes in socio- economic areas, the favourable and unfavourable conditions faced by people as part of the developmental activities. And the progress made them as part of developmental activities. This project is divided into three different chapters. The first chapter describes the origin and historical significance of pizhala. And the second chapter covers socio-economical, cultural and geographical study of pizhala. The third chapter describes the development of took place in pizhala and there currents issues. Pizhala was an isolated island community in the early days but has been progressing day by day through many developmental activities. Today pizhala attracts many people. A group of people who initially earned their income through agriculture and fishing. Later progress to other areas and created many changes in their living condition and culture.

The term pizhala is derived from the Portuguese word Paz- Na- Ilha which meaning peace of island. The small village pizhala is entering into a new age. While the kochi city were expanding its border, the pizhala island was also at the threshold of development. Through this project we can understand the importance of pizhala island. Although we have seen the development of isolated communities in many ways. This is first that a group of people has come forward for their homeland. Apart from other areas the pizhala island is a quiet one. The conditions of early period in pizhala and the changes that have occurred in the conditions reached today is carried forward through this project. Pizhala is an agricultural land and its soil and climate conditions are favourable for agriculture. Also surrounded by water on all four sides. This island is very suitable for fishing farming. Today while exploring the island and its life, the people depended on the city of kochi for their livelihood. All basic facilities like schools, hospitals, panchayat office, village office, veterinary hospital, government library are included pizhala. This is why pizhala stands apart from other island and when taking religion



into consideration. It is religious friendly area. Also the contribution of the people in the field of education is notable one. This island is diverse in nature but the population is less here. However, there is a group of people who follow a unique and tradition in pizhala. Another feature of pizhala to be mentioned is that people can get to know each other. It is taken as the best example of unity and brotherhood. The main challenge faced by its people is the means of transportation. Which although there are many changes compared to the past is still to be developed. Pizhala is a small area in eranakulam district that can be reached quickly to spend time with the closest family and friends. Kerala is one of the fastest urbanizing state in india. According to the 2011 census most people live in urban areas. Only a small percentage of the remaining people live in coastal areas. Kochi is the commercial capital of kerala and pizhala is an region flourishing through periyar tributaries on the coast of kochi. Kadamakudy village is one of the island under goshree island development authority [GIDA] it is important to mention that the cultural and historical aspects of pizhala be passed on to the next generations. Pizhala is an island that was left untouched and piled up with plant barks has since grown and developed through years of effort is a thing to be written in history. This project focuses on the development of this area that lacked basic transportation facilities. Pizhala is a small village that is developing day by day with many developments. Pizhala is one of the few rural areas that has preserved its unique tradition. A few kilometres away from Ernakulam district, the historical, socio- economic journey of pizhala and the subsequent struggles are mainly explored through this project.

## **OBJECTIVES**

- Understand the historical importance of pizhala island
- To find out the importance of pizhala and other islands who share border with pizhala
- To trace the culture, population, economy of pizhala island and also focus on the problems
- Facing by the people of pizhala the measure put forward by the government for the Development of pizhala.
- Trace the change and evolution of transportation and suggest the solutions.
- To find out the drastic changes from underdevelopment to developing state of pizhala island Due to effort put forward by its people and the changes in their life.

## **METHODOLOGY**

Methodology adopted in this study is historical method. The study is depended on primary and secondary data. The project is a descriptive study. The study is adopted to the work of reading, oral study interview with church authorities and goshree island development authority members. The study relies much on books, articles, newspaper reports. Online sources that related to pizhala island and its development. And also followed media report about bridge constructions and approach road issues related articles. And also adopted village and panchayat records.

## **ORGANIZATION OF THE STUDY**

The study is proposed to be organized under 5 chapters below.

- 1 . Chapter I - introduction
- 2 . Chapter II - The origin and historical background of pizhala.
- 3 . Chapter III - The descriptive study of life, culture socio- economy of pizhala island
- 4 . Chapter IV- The present condition and propositions for the development of pizhala
- 5 . Chapter V- conclusion

# **CHAPTER – 1**

## **ORIGIN AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF PIZHALA**

Among the historical features of pizhala , the introduction of kochi itself is worth mentioning. Ernakulam is described as the urban face of kochi . Kochi is the queen of Arabian sea in the middle of kerala . Ernakulam is facing development everyday . In 1958 , Ernakulam district was formed by during Thrissur and Kottayam . The word Ernakulam is derived from the the word ‘Hrishinagakulam’. Earlier Travancore , Malabar and Kochi come under Ernakulam district . Idukki district was formed in January 26<sup>th</sup> 1997 . Muvatupuzha taluk were separated and Kothamangalam taluk was formed on 26<sup>th</sup> January . Today’s Ernakulam district includes Paravoor, Aluva , Kochi , Kanayanoor , Muvatupuzha . Kochi , which is a part of Ernakulam district is known as the commercial capital of kochi . Kochi has a vast port that boost exports and imports . Kochi is situated on the coast of the arabian sea in the south western part of india, Its nearby areas includes Fortkochi , Mattancherry and Willington island . All these areas were part of kochi kingdom before independance . The two revenue divisions of Ernakulam are divided into seven taluks . The location of these revenue divisions are Fortkochi and Muvatupuzha .Other taluks are Kochi , Paravur , Kunnathunadu , Kothamangalam, Aluva , Kanayannur etc <sup>1</sup>

Pizhala is an island under the jurisdiction of Kanayannur taluk. Kochi , the mainstay of Ernakulam district became a princely state in 1102 CE with link to the Kulashekara empire . The 14<sup>th</sup> century , kochi was an important spice centre on the coast of the Arabian sea . Similarly, kochi was the first European colonial settlement captured by Portuguese in 1503 . Kochi is a princely state that voluntarily joins the Indian union in 1947 . Two thousand years after india’s independence , kochi entered a period of economic growth . It is one of the fastest urbanizing states in india with half of its 3.34 crore population living in urban areas as per last census . Along with the development , kochi city is facing many problems . We can see many kinds of migrations here. Kochi is the commercial centre of kerala’s fastest growing capital including IT , Tourism , International trade etc . After the fall of Kulashekara empire in 1102 , kochi gained attention as a region of kerala with the establishment of kochi state . This caused

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<sup>1</sup> ERNAKULAM – Department of town and country planning – government of kerala | <http://townplanning.kerala.gov.in>

the Muziris to disappear and created natural harbour of kochi . Soon , it became a crowded residential area . Kochi's geographical features are a mixture of hilly areas , backwaters , estuaries , small islands , coastal cities and plains . Geographical features of kochi includes the small islands that deserve attention . Centuries ago , Vembanad lake was isolated , which is a part of kochi . Later , migrants entered into the island from other regions and island became resident area . Among them , the important island include Vallarpadam . Vypin, Gundu , Mulavukad , Varapuzha and Kadamakudy located in the heart of bustling city of kochi . These islands are quite sight to behold in terms of basic infrastructure . These are many island centred on inland waterways . Till now, pizhala is an isolated island which doesn't get much attention from the outsiders<sup>2</sup>

## **PIZHALA**

An island called pizhala is located about 6 km away from the city of kochi , the queen of arabian sea . This island comes under kadamakudi village panchayat in kanayannoor taluk . There are a few things that comes to mind while thinking about pizhala . Untill June 2020 , the small island pizhala was unknown to the people. The importance of being surrounded by water on four sides has been recognized among the people for a while now . Pizhala is one of the rural island in the periyar backwaters that are today north of Ernakulam city . One of the 14 islands in kadamakudy, pizhala lies in the centre of dips . So , all the major government institutions are located in pizhala <sup>3</sup>. Therefore pizhala island can be described as the headquarters of the island comes under kadamakudi island , which is known as the kuttanad of Ernakulam district. For taking pizhala into consideration , there are several components to be noted . The most convenient way to get to get there by boat and raft . It is a small village , there are no wide roads and bridges years before . So , the people of pizhala could not find cars , lorries and busses , cycles , motor bykes . And sometimes autorikshaws also come in the raft . So , there is no hustle and bustle and no heaps of waste as that of Ernakulam city.

There were no factories , colleges , or supermarkets or theatres. On the east side of the island , coconut trees , mango trees and courgettes can be seen . On the west side of the island , wide fields and paddy fields can be seen . The important thing to mention about pizhala is that there is only community consisting of hindus and Christians is presented . No muslim community

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<sup>2</sup> Urban agglomerations/cities having population 1million ... <http://censusindia.gov.in/2011-prov-result/paper2/data-files/india2/million-plus-UAs-cities-2011.pdf>

<sup>3</sup> Joseph, M.X , "Shadhabthi rajatha jubilee Smaranika", 1892-2017 , St. francis Xavier church

is active in pizhala . Not only in pizhala , the islands including the chennoor , kothadu , chariyamthuruthu , moolampilly which comes under the kadamakudi grama panchayat . Also muslim community is not present .

The people of pizhala are a group of people who found their livelihood through agriculture and fishing . Today many changes have come from the past . Pizhala island and its residents now passing through the stage of development . Today , the island is moving towards the development everyday , maintaining its old peace and serenity , with all the basic facilities needed by its people . The pizhala island is agriculturally rich island . About 80 percentage of the land is cultivated . The pokkali cultivation , and shrimp farming made pizhala profitable . Seasonal pokkali cultivation and summer shrimp cultivation were the major cultivations of pizhala . Shrimp farming is still active in pizhala . These are the other areas that comes under kadakamakudi grama panchayath and shares border with pizhala :

- 1.Veliyakadamakudi
2. Cheriyaadamakudi
3. Chennoor
4. Kothadu
5. Moolampilly
- 6 . Paliyamthuruthu
- 7 . Karikattthuruthu
- 8 . Pulikkapuram
- 9 . Murikkal
- 10 . Korampadam
- 11 . Chariyamthuruthu
- 12 . Puthusserry
- 13 . Kandanadu
- 14 . Pizhala<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> Kurishingal, Issac, “ pizhalayude charithram”, win offset printers Chittoor road,2007

## **NEAREST PLACES OF PIZHALA**

Pizhala , surrounded by water on four sides , and the neighbouring areas of pizhala must be mentioned . On the southern side of the pizhala , there is an island called moolampilly On the east side of the island of the kothad , chennoor , to the north is the island of the chariyamthuruth and to the west is the island of cheriyakadamakudi . Periyar tributaries stretch around these island . These islands have bridges to the areas of kothad , chennoor , chariyamthuruthu . So that vehicles can pass through the bridges . But the arrival of the container terminal road connecting Ernakulam to mulavukad , the arrival of moolampilly – pizhala new bridge , removed the difficulties of transportation .

### **KOTHAD**

Kothad is a region that shares the border with pizhala . Kothad is a land surrounded by water . This region mainly has three parts . The north west part upto the river bank is known as kothad, the south – east part is called korampadam and the north – east part is called kandanadu . The main source of income for the people of kothadu in early days was paddy cultivation and manufacturing of threshed and dried ropes . In the areas of kothad , the Christians is more and that too the latin and the small percentage of anglo Indians . Anglo Indians mainly lived in the north coast side . No muslims are presented here . Pizhala and kothad had a close relationship. pizhala’s tradition is associated with varapuzha church which is also within the boundaries of kothad parish for sometime<sup>5</sup>.

### **MOOLAMPILLY**

Moolampilly is an island in kochi surrounded by the periyar river . Moolampilly resident theruviparambil kochosepp suggests that the Portuguese community lived in moolampilly in the past and they created Christian community in moolampilly . Moolampilly and pizhala are being closely linked with the arrival of the moolampilly – pizhala bridge connecting the container the container road reduced the difficulties faced by the resident of pizhala<sup>6</sup>.Four bridges including moolampilly – pizhala bridge connectes the residents to the main land.

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<sup>5</sup> T.J Molly,Elizhebeth , “ ormakurippukal”,winoffset printers, 2016

<sup>6</sup> kochosepp , Personal interview,age 65, Moolampilly,Time:4.30 pm,16<sup>th</sup> October 2022.

## **VALIYAKADAMAKUDY**

Although, there are many ways to reach pizhala from varapuzha, depending on the travel convenience of the people, it is possible to reach pizhala easily by raft service via the valiyakadamakudi, chariyamthuruthu and puthusserry. Today valiyakadamakudi has become a favourite destination of tourists. A large percentage of childrens of pizhala today, study in kadamakudy government vocational higher secondary school.

## **CHENNOOR**

Chennoor or karikkattthuruth is another border area of pizhala. It is an area with shrimp nets and rice paddies. Until the arrival of the pizhala – moolampilly bridge, the main mode of travel for the pizhala islanders was through the chennoor – pizhala ferry boats and via raft. The bus facility for the residents of pizhala island to easily reach varapuzha, chettibagham, Paravoor starts from chennoor. Therefore, chennoor has a big role in the unique development of pizhala island<sup>7</sup>

## **MEANING OF THE WORD PIZHALA**

There are many opinions about the island's name pizhala. The first one says that this name came into existence because a person who lived on this land committed a mortal sin. It must be said that no, these natives have no idea that any one has committed major sins like adultery, murder etc. The general opinion is that such a word came from the combination of two words "pizha" and "illa". But others suggest that the term pizhala is derived from a portuguese word "paz-na-ilha" but others are of the opinion that it is a suitable place for cultivation and it doesn't fail in cultivation and hence, the term pizhala is derived. There is no failure in pizhala is a common saying among the farmers and also suggests that pizhala means the island without fault. Paz-na-ilha – piece of island, being a land of position and wealth and people moving forward with harmony with each other sets this island apart from other regions<sup>8</sup>.

## **ORIGIN OF ISLAND**

It is possible to say without doubt about the region of pizhala island. When talking about the origin of kerala which we read about in Dhronaparvatham in mahabharatha "Prashurama travelled all over the earth 18 times and he killed the kshatriya kings and performed

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<sup>7</sup> Sudharshanan, Personal interview, age 52, Pizhala, Time: 6.00 pm, 14<sup>th</sup> October 2022.

<sup>8</sup> Kurishungal, Issac, "pizhalayude charithram", win offset printers Chittoor road, 2007.

ashvamedha and gave the whole earth to the brahmins . And the sage kasyapa took over the land as the representatives of the brahmins and sage kasyapa told parasurama tht after getting all the land , he should give it away from the land . After this , Parasurama took a decision . The sea receded and a new land appeared in such a position . he took a bow and shot an arrow and threw it looking at the west of the sea . At that place ocean retreated . A range is formed with lots of hills and valleys . That land is called Gods's own country kerala . But in that land created by parasurama , pizhala is not found . It has been only seven centuries since pizhala was created.

Rainy season in kerala is from the month of may to the end of October. At present , there are dams to store rain water to generate electricity and irrigate crops. But there were no dams before. The kodungallur muziris section is the most important in kerala due to the heavy rains that lasted for months and a lot of soil along with the rain water flowing down from the hilly areas was washed down the periyar river . Arabs and romans who came to trade goods were in a port where their ships were docked . But the port was destroyed by the silt and soil that flowed down the periyar during the monsoon floods. They become small and large thuruthu. They are gothuruthu,thuruthipuram, chariyamthuruthu, moolampilly , mulavukad , vallarpadam and pizhala island<sup>9</sup>

## **THE FIRST SETTLERS**

Who were the first settlers of the pizhala island is still in doubt . According to M.X Joseph ,a resident of pizhala , pizhala is a village that was born on the shores of the arabian sea centuries ago from the bridges that flowed into periyar during the flood from the eastern hills . He also suggests that the first settlers were the captain and his family of the foriegners ships that hit the gravel sandbars formed by the veerampuzha river part of the periyar , which falls into the sea and gradually the Christian expatriate families were first settlers . Some people suggests that among the Christians there are more house names such as Eerathara, idathil , pandaraparambil. But it suggests that some of their ancestors may have been the first settlers. It is also suggested that among the hindus , like the Christians , the ancestors of those with family names such as Arissheri parambil , theruvi parambil , devaswam parambil etc . According to statistics taken on may 1<sup>st</sup> 2007 ,the total population of this island is 3048. Of these, 1529 are latin catholics , 17

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<sup>9</sup> Kurishingal, Issac, “ pizhalayude charithram” ,win offset printers Chittoor road,2007.



are Syrian catholics , 20 pentecostals and 1480 are hindus . As of today , many changes can be seen from this<sup>10</sup>.

## **HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF PIZHALA ISLAND**

Pizhala is an island cut off by the rains in periyar . Ramachandran P.M and his brother Sachidhanandan P.M lives in paliyamthuruthu claims that most of the land in pizhala is filled with silt and sand and most of the land has been made habitable by filling it . According to them , Paliyamthuruthu , which is a part of pizhala , was the land of Paliyathachans and the land was assigned to varapuzha devassi valooran to oversee the land . Since , Paliyathachan was the prime minister of kochi , most of the areas were under them . Under the leadership of valooran, paliyam , a part of pizhala had only seven houses in the early stages . But now around 250 houses can be seen here and the brothers suggested that the houses were originally located in the areas which comes under paliyamthuruthu including therivilparambu , devaswam parambu in the early years . There are different opinions about educational system in pizhala during the early period . From the words of P.M Sachidhanandan and his brother Ramachandran , it can be understood that a group of pizhala were well educated and gave importance to education . But at the same time many people were not interested in education . Starvation and poverty forced people to stop study and shifted to harvesting , fishing , tailoring, rope making and gravel hauling as a means of livelihood . In early years , the highest level of education in pizhala was tenth standard and if a person studied upto seventh standard could get a job as a teacher in pizhala school<sup>11</sup>.

Dr. Daisy was the first person to receive a higher education in pizhala . On the north east side of pizhala there was wharf , called school wharf, were there was an ancient school – house in the shape of English letter ‘L’ is presented . This school is made of stone and wood . The teacher who taught the children is called Ashan . So , the final ashan was Thaiparambil Devassi. Devvassi ashan’s work is indispensable in pizhalas developmental works . He was a favourite of the varapuzha missionaries and the varappuzha Christian missionaries saw devassi ashan as the leader of pizhala .

It is said that first school of pizhala fell into disappear around 1890s . Varghese Tharakan leased some land acquired by the king of cochin as a fine for cultivation at parayil ezhupunna

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<sup>10</sup> M.X Joseph , Personal interview, age 44 , Pizhala, Time:5.00pm, 16<sup>th</sup> October 2022.

<sup>11</sup> Ramachandran P.M and Sachidhanandan P.M, Personal interview, age 62 and 64, Pizhala, Time:11.00am, 16<sup>th</sup> October 2022.

tharakan's land in pizhala was looked after by the native of pizhala named Vasyan Manik . Manik also gave ashan help to build a temporary study room before the church in pizhala due to the old one being destroyed . In this school during the day time ,the childrens were taught and the evenings the prayers and vanakkavasam is performed . A Native of kottar , Tamilnadu gave a picture of St. Francis Xavier to devassi ashan and he installed this picture in the school.History says that today pizhala school and pizhala church were known by the name of St.Xavier. This is how easily education in pizhala began<sup>12</sup>.

## **HISTORY OF EARLY SUBSISTENCE AND DIFFICULTIES**

### **ON TRAVEL**

Peoples livelihood in pizhala is agriculture and fishing. It remains the same today . At one time, food was found by reaping the harvest of paddy and turning it into rice .There is a time when people of pizhala sold dried tapioca for the subsistence . People who got food once in a day were considered rich . According to the previously mentioned brother's opinion about the means of transportation is leading to water . The only means of transportation was the canal connecting the places of pizhala - Chathanad and pizhala-narakkal . People from pizhala was mostly educated from narakkal school and St. Alberts school , Ernakulam and later , Chathanad – Ernakulam boat service started .Also , another way to reach Ernakulam was to reach Ernakulam via Chittoor from boat jetty located on the eastern side of pizhala church . Roads did not exist in the beginning instead the pavements were made by avoiding soil and preparing a path like a road . Later by the effort of Edathil family , E.M Sebastian , the facilities of road came into existence. As a part of this , Paliyamthuruthu has cut and filled the road upto pizhala street and made it possible . it is said that pizhala got some financial assistance from pizhala panchayat in connection with the construction of the road . The native of pizhala – paliyamthuruthu , Sachithanandan and Ramachandran suggested that the roads get widened due to the efforts of this brothers and a group of youngsters . Pizhala got the facilities of drinking water during the time period of the panchayat member Raghavan. Within six months, he brings drinking water facility in pizhala island other islands of kadamakudy . According to Divakaran C.K , native of pizhala , 'Greatest wealth is education.Sachidhananthan and Ramachandran has different opinion about the term pizhala . Ramachanthran says that, pizhala doesn't has a good transport facility . Thus the passengers got stuck and hence the name derived . And Sachidhananthan says that namboodiris lived in

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<sup>12</sup> M.X Joseph , Personal interview, age 44, Pizhala, Time:5.00pm, 16<sup>th</sup> October 2022.

pizhala years ago and the concept of pollution was presented in the society . Namboodiri saw a pulaya on the roas , as the result namboodiri throw an image on the north fort and cursed , he says that this term was obtained as the part of this<sup>1314</sup>.

In early times , the wealthiest people in pizhala were the native of pizhala paliyamthuruthu valiyaveetil Raman and Madhavan . According to M.X Joseph , Madathi parambil,during the 70s , pizhala comprises of only Christians and the land of pizhala was very small . In that small land , some areas comprises of tamil brahmins – Govar. And rest of the Kudumbis of pizhala was considered as slave under this tamil brahmins . Later tamil brahmins govar shifted to mattancherry and the land under the control of tamil brahmins were distributed among the kudumbis for lease . These kudumbis used to live in the place where today's pizhala panchayat sits . The immigrants of pizhala are foriegners along with their shipping boats and the ownership of the land ,where the captain's house is located in the hands of the devassi . So that captain gave their power as hereditary tob those families . There was a concert there in the early days . They had big four yards and mansions . In those days ,it was these families who announced the punishments .The boat of that time used to come and go in canals in the courtyards of this family . People come and went through the water canals to find peace in pizhala and the border areas of pizhala to find means of agriculture and livelihood in this land

Father Issac Kurishinkal , who served from 2005 to 2007 , suggests that when flood occurs in periyar , pizhala was not as muddy as vypin island . After being sown in the soil here the pokkali flourished and grow ., This pokkali field and agriculture did not belong to pizhala people rather it belonged to a ruler called Kartha . The entire land was in the hands of kartha, who was an officer of the king of kochi . The prime minister of kochi , paliyathachan has power in pizhala island , vallarpadam and vypin<sup>15</sup>.

It is said that every house had boat because the way of travel of people was by boat . The boat of wealthy families were very luxury and comfortable to travel on . As for as , hospitals and diseases are concerned . The people of the past did not usually go to the hospital in those days. Maternity care was also carried out at home and the women who was in labour was called 'vayatatti' [midwife] . They don't have official medical certificate , medicine and diseases information . Instead , everything was done through their experiences . People depended on

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<sup>13</sup> Divakaran C.K . ,Personal interview, age 70, Pizhala, Time:6.00pm, 18<sup>th</sup> October 2022.

<sup>14</sup> Ramachandran P.M and Sachidhananthan P.M, Personal interview, age 62 and 64, Pizhala, Time:11.00am, 16<sup>th</sup> October 2022.

<sup>15</sup> Kurishinkal, Issac , "pizhalayude charithram",winoffset printers Chittoor,2007.

medical help in case of illness . The diseases of that time were scabies and sores . The first hospital facility to become operational was the Ernakulam general hospital followed by a hospital in Mattancherry . Only rich people sought treatment in hospital . But most of the people were common people and therefore , sought local treatment and medical help . Malnutrition and lack of maternal safety led to high infant mortality rate in Pizhala . In Pizhala , there was no electricity facility in the past , so there was lamp post on the roads and the people also used burning fire for light . At each part of the road , concrete was built and glass and wooden lights were placed on it . These lamps were lightened by K.P Saramma's father . Every evening , people used to talk each other so that they wouldn't hit each other because of the low light from the lantern .

M.X Joseph , native of Pizhala , suggested that due to the lack of electricity , people of Pizhala shifted to Changanassery . People of Pizhala were mostly engaged in farming for their subsistence. In the past , the farming is considered as a slave labour . Every one used to farm on the lease land . All the land was under the control of the Raman Kartha . He took up slave labour and paid meager wages . The land under pokkali cultivation was transformed by drying the land and rice cultivation was practiced . People of Pizhala were experts in pokkali farming . Because of extreme poverty , many people engaged in agricultural work . Other occupation was gravel hauling . Due to hunger , without considering day and night , sunlight and rain , the workers work in gravel and taken to Fort Kochi and found a means of subsistence. People came in families to reap the harvest . If they fill sixteen baskets , it is said that they got only one basket as food<sup>16</sup>.

Raphael Elisha Varuthkutti , the oldest person of Pizhala , witnessed the flood of 1909, which was 94 years ago . It is suggested that during the days of flood , this mother and children took shelter inside the house to escape from the flood. The place called Pizhala was an isolated gravel land which was not paid attention during the early time . People used to eat raw rice as their food . When boats pass through the channels of east , no one notices and gave attention to Pizhala island<sup>17</sup>.

After the cemetery in front of today's Pizhala church was the beginning of the shallow river . From the cemetery to the boat jetty seen today was the same river . Beyond that was the 'chalu' where the boat goes . Up to that place , the soil was raised and the paddy was left . There

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<sup>16</sup> M.X Joseph , Personal interview, age 44, Pizhala, Time:5.00pm, 16<sup>th</sup> October 2022.

<sup>17</sup> Raphael Elisha, Personal interview, age 71, Pizhala, Time:4.30pm, 20<sup>th</sup> October 2022.

the kappela of holy saint Kochuthressia and the jetty were built by Father Joseph Moonampilly. A 92 years old man Varuthkutti, from pizhala says that Father Joseph Moonampilly made a face to pizhala. Father is a personality which is to be specially mentioned with the history of pizhala. Ouso, who has rowed a ferry more than half a century is 88 yrs old and a rower who has completed a lifetime on a ferry. In the early days, the journey of pizhala people was in boat and as a part of that, kochousepp started the Chittoor – pizhala boat service. It continued for 51 years. A boat sink for seven times in water and creates problem to the operator who doesn't know swimming. If somebody ask how you overcome the situation, he says that, I sits on the boat. People says that this man never has bargains or demands for money while using the boat. When asked about pizhala island and the historical past of pizhala, the people of pizhala have many old in ages in their mind. As the region faces tragedy, hunger and poverty, pizhala preserved the serenity of the nature. And those are the good days in the lives of the people of the pizhala that they want to remember for ever<sup>18</sup>.

The great writer Sebastian Paul describes about pizhala in his work 'ente kalam, ente lokam' as 'mother found a place in the centre of the city. But due to poverty, it changed to kadamakkudi island'. It means that if mother foreright had stopped him from going to pizhala. He would have stuck in pizhala and become writer of pizhala as Ponikkara Rafi<sup>19</sup>. Pizhala has a large number of gravel workers. Gravel was delivered from aluva to the needy. It includes Antony Varuthkutti, Lonen Xavier, Thomman Gauri and Vincent. A teashop in pizhala has great importance in the history of pizhala. This teashop serves foods for the gravel workers and the other workers too. The teashop was owned by Edathil Devassi Rocky and his sister Mariya. The another notable feature of pizhala was the rice distributing centre. At the period of british rule, ration shop was runned by Mathew Anthappan<sup>20</sup>.

The pizhala church and temple are indispensable when looking at the historical tradition of pizhala. There are some things that are running in the mind of Erathara Varuthkutti about pizhala church. One among them is "Kettuthengu". Kerala is a land where coconuts are grown, pizhala church priest and people went to each house, and each family gave the best coconut in the field for the church. These coconut will be auctioned and the profit from the auction will be used for the construction of the church. The pizhala people collected money through

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<sup>18</sup> Edathil kochousepp, Personal interview, age 62, Pizhala. Time:10.00am, 21<sup>st</sup> October 2022.

<sup>19</sup> Paul, Sebastian,Dr, "Ente lokam ente kalam", Lavanya publications Chittoor, 2021.

<sup>20</sup> C.S, Prakashan, "History of Edathil family", winoffset printers Chittoor.

coconut and also collect donations from other churches and build today's church in pizhala within one and a half years<sup>21</sup>.

Looking at the history of pizhala, O.V Sebastian, native of pizhala comments that all the houses in the past were thatched houses. But houses made of mud are few. The day that these thatched houses, were repaired once a year was a day of happiness for the people. He also says that, afternoon and night, there were rich curries and porridge and they were happily shared by adults and children and it was known as 'purakett ulsavam'. But today, it is not possible to see thatched houses or purakett festival in pizhala. Because as time goes by, pizhala island and the residents move along the path of development. Perhaps, the pizhala we see today is the result of the burning efforts of the ancestors of pizhala. Another feature of the pizhala is the 'Cheena veli' [Chinese fence]. Coconut leaves were used to make decorations for wedding in the olden days. Especially, green straw was used for decoration. Instead, the cheena veli were made for decoration and it was under the initiative of Bava Ashan. Till 1990, the cheena veli was used for decorating marriage functions<sup>22</sup>.

## **IMPORTANCE OF EDATHIL FAMILY IN THE HISTORY OF PIZHALA**

The first migrants of pizhala is said to be the Edathil family, and it is significant to the history of pizhala. The forefathers of Edathil family who settled in pizhala from kannoor were the prominent public activist in the country. Pizhala church, school, panchayat office etc plays an important role among the people in pizhala. These institutions need special mention among the history of pizhala. It serves the people in one way or the other. These institutions also stand for the development of the country too. From the Edathil family, E.M Francis was the main educator in the pizhala school. He started his service as principal on 13<sup>th</sup> edava masam of Malayalam year 1099. This continued for almost forty years. And also his daughter, E.F Mary worked as a temporary teacher for two and a half years in pizhala school. E.M Sebastian was one of the leading social figure in the early days in pizhala.

The natives of pizhala need to go to cheranalloor panchayat before the panchayat came into existence in pizhala. After the establishment of kadakamudy panchayat, only one ward existed in pizhala. The panchayat was established in 1963. From 1963 to 1974, the position of

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<sup>21</sup> Erathara Varuthkutti, Personal interview, age 68, Pizhala, Time:5.00pm, 22<sup>nd</sup> October 2022.

<sup>22</sup> O.V Sebastian, Personal interview, age 69, Pizhala, Time:10.00am, 22<sup>nd</sup> October 2022.

panchayat member was continuously held by E.M Sebastian for sixteen years . During his tenure , he worked very hard for the betterment of villafe office , panchayat office and worked towards bring pure water to pizhala . Another person who also worked for the betterment of pizhala was from Edathil family , his name was Ouseputti Francis . Ousepputti francis held position of panchayat member from the years 1988 to 1991 . After this Sreemati Valsa Francis from Edathil family also got involved in social work in pizhala from 2000-2005. It also worth mentioning several people in pizhala gave up their lands for developmental activities in churches and other related institutions . It is also said that for the activities of schools and its other buildings land was given by Kaipari Devassi and for the activities of tha mariyan tailoring centre,land is given by Ousepputti .

The historically important chappel of Fathima matha is believed to have received the land from Mr. Anthappan ,wife Pauly and their childrens Joseph , Sajan , Roy . The bell in front of pizhala church is also historically important . However, because there was no space for the construction of bell tower the land needed for it was given by Edathil family . They also permitted the bell to be hang from a tree to their land . The money needed for the construction of this bell tower was given by Mathew Lonen and his sons . Another important personalities of pizhala was an “Ashan” called Augustine is known as Edathil Bava . All the wood work needed for the school and church was done by him throughout its construction . It is believed that he had around sixty four disciples under him . However , only five or six member were under him at one time . The license for the ration shop in pizhala was attained in 1966 . Even though many people tried to overlook the activity of the shop,till today Edathil E.L Philip leads the shop . In 1983 , July 8 ARD-14 license number was attained in his name for the shop .

In its early days , the people in pizhala was expert in the arts of chavittu nadakam , Nadanpattu etc . Edathil E.M George was one of the personality who proved his talents in the social and cultural field. His father Mathew mathappan is also well known as a writer. An unforgettable personalitry in the history of pizhala is Ousepp Xavier . The foots were necessary to protect feet . It was made by him in pizhala . There have been people who walked not just for the betterment of pizhala , but also for the country.Some of them are Augustine , Louis Mathappan, Thomas edathil , Mathew mathappan . The license given by the government to own firearms was only given to took privileged people and those with good character . This license was received by Kaipari Devassi , Mathew anthapppan , francis joseph etc .Even though there hav been developmental activities in pizhala still falls behind in progress in its country. Apart from the already mention the lack of theatres,factories , supermarkets , the necessary goods like

clothing also lack shops in pizhala . In the memory of the natives of the pizhala , Mary Vincent from edathil family ,there is a popular clothing store first of its kind , was build by E.N Lonen. Even now , only one clothing store exist in pizhala . On the northern end , there was a boat jetty were konginis are believed to have lived and to have produce aromatic goods , agarbathis and involve in the trade in pizhala <sup>23</sup>. this was stated by chittezhuth joseph antony , native of pizhala.However , they only lived there for only few years . The land of pizhala is good for agriculture and it is very fertile and comes at a low prices because it is far away from the city. Because of this several people from outside pizhala bought land from pizhala to give as lease and auction . Apart from already mention “cheenaveli” another important aspect of pizhala’s history is ‘valavaravanji’ . In early days , this valavaravanji was used for marriage function and visits . Around thirty people can easily sit in this vanji . Oars were used to steer these boat. Such a boat belong to antony bava who is expert in boat building of pizhala . The main attraction of church festival in pallipuram was furniture market . After the construction of furniture in his shop , the goods were taken to this festival on two boats . It is because of this , antony bava is a important person in the history of pizhala . As understood before the people of pizhala was interested in arts and sports . Among them ,Edathil Chavaro John is a important person in the field of musical arts . “ee prapanjathil jeevanulla ella manushya janthu sasyangalum Sangeetha aaswathakarayittanu janikkunnath athupole sangeetham oru manthrika valayamanu”is a quote by Chavaro john . Even for the next fifty years , the history of pizhala, the symphony school of pizhala build by him will be remember . “Illyamayil ninnum undavunnathenthum, namuk etavum priyappettathum ormikkan agraikkunnavayum aayirikum”is a quote by edathil lisamma Jacob .

All the achievements that pizhala acquired is through its own hard work and activities are always evident in the history of pizhala . In the early days , in front of of the houses in pizhala, a fish named Braal , appears in the yard during the rainy season says Erathara joseph Vincent. The people of pizhala remembers about a flood occurs in 1963 . It took a week for the water to come down . At that time , food items were delivered from the church to the homes in small boats .As big floods,small floods is also active in pizhala . During that time , all the children take it as a festival and walk with their feet in the water. A few days of school vacation is obtained due to flood . Pizhala residents used to understand the flow of tides by looking at the water in the stream . Most of the inhabitants of pizhala in the early stages had swimming skills. As the people of pizhala know fishing , each house had its own boats and the four sides of

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<sup>23</sup> Edathil E.F mary , Personal interview, age 56, Pizhala, Time:6.00pm, 19<sup>th</sup> October 2022.



pizhala is surrounded by water and the river routes were familiar to the people .Traders used to reach pizhala by boat through canals. Fishermans bring tapioca,jackfruit, and aluminuim from outside the pizhala. The arrival of the fishermans was announced to the locals by banging with sticks and making sounds . In the early days , people of pizhala used to watch movies at cinema talkies at cheranallur[beena talkies] . Along with farming and fishing as a means of subsistence for the labourers,a group of people worked in the brickyard.Mud is kneaded and rolled into molds and hence the bricks is made. Today, none of these jobs can be found in tge island. Another important form of employment was drying cashews and taking them to varapuzha market. A large share in the production of cashews is of great importance to the livelihood of pizhala residents. In the early days,the people of pizhala lived as a family and when there was a marriage or a death in any one family, they all worked together as a single family.Varghese Joseph,the sweet ice seller,is a person who cannot be forgotten when considering the history of pizhala.He filled the hearts and stomach of people by giving sweets to many parts of pizhala. The history of pizhala is said to be remembered even after a hundred years. The life history of pizhala anscestors and the people of kerala ig giving many lessons to the coming generation .

Many people have different opinions about the history of pizhala . A village once starving , with no infrastructure , no means of transportation , and no outsiders to look at . But as a result of the effort and prayers of the people there , pizhala is constantly moving towards development.Today , pizhala acts as the main pillar of kadamakudy panchayat including necessary infrastructures such as hospitals , schools , post office , village office etc . Travelling on the path of development , the natural scenary and collective attributes of pizhala have been carried forward and the pizhala island stands tall in kochi as the queen of arabian sea . And pizhala marks a important position in the history of kochi<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>24</sup> EV joseph , Xavier Erathara , Antoiny chittezhath ,EV Peter , Thomas CS , Francis Jacob ,George , Peter Edward ,Personal interview, age 51-61, Pizhala, Time:5.00pm, 23<sup>rd</sup> October 2022.

## **CHAPTER- 2**

### **THE DESCRIPTIVE STUDY OF LIFE, CULTURE AND SOCIO-ECONOMY OF PIZHALA ISLAND**

Informations about the origin of pizhala island and the information related to the place name is mentioned in the first chapter This chapter intends to discuss the social cultural and economic benefits of pizhala and the geographical features are also presented .This chapter deals with the basic infrastructures of pizhala including village office,panchayat office,post office health care etc. and its services to the people and also mentioning the educational system ,facilities of transportation and religious practices.

#### **BASIC INFRASTRUCTURE OF PIZHALA**

Important government institutions are located at pizhala which is considered as backbone of kadamakudy grama panchayat.Among them important government institutions are :

- Primary health centre at pizhala north ward
- Kadamakudy grama panchayat office
- Kadamakudy village office
- Union bank of india
- Pizhala postoffice
- Korampadam service cooperative bank

Pizhala island is mainly divided into two,southward and northward.The primary centre is situated on the north side of pizhala and this centre is about a century old and very comforting to pizhala people.Primary care and vaccinations are available here free of charge.Immunizations against corona virus were given here.Even people from bordering areas of island comes here for treatment.The treatment system is available from 9.30am to 12 pm. According to Valsala K.P , native of paliyamthuruth,people gave birth in the primary centres during the early days.Although there is a primary care centre,it is very difficult for the people at night when any hospital cases took place. In these situations,the people here depends on the hospitals in the town.Pizhala post office is another government institution is pizhala.Traditionally the pizhala post office was mainly concerned with the

collection,processing,transmission and delivery of mails.But today pizhala postoffice is providing many new services along with the old ones.These include financial assistance,retail assistance,premium services.Also pizhala post office provide bill collection system for all type of househokld services including mobile telephone bills and government electricity bills.Apart from those,premium services like speedpost,business post,media post are also important to pizhala residents and people living nearby.The islanders do not have to resort to other places for their essentials as there is a post office facility in pizhala.Postoffice facilities are available from 10am to 1 pm. This postoffice is known by the pincode 682027<sup>25</sup>.In the early days all the islands are under Cheranalloor grama panchayat.In1963,a panchayat was started by the name of Kadamakudy grama panchayat,to cover these island.Under this grama panchayat,all infrastructure facilities including village library and animal shelter are also located here.The panchayat functions from 10am to 5pm.Since,it is a panchayat that unites 13other island,we can see a long queue of people for many purposes from morning.The ward of pizhala are :

- Village – Kadamakudy
- Block – Edapally
- Taluk – Ernakulam,Kanayannoor
- Assembly constituency – Njarakkal
- Parliament constituency-Ernakulam

Electricity and clean water came to the river after the development of pizhala grama panchayat.The church of saint francis xavier was the first to get electricity in pizhala.This happened on November 29,1965.Also birth and death registrations and licenses in relation to reconstruction work are all under the jurisdiction of the panchayat.Kadamakudy grama panchayat id developing projects to improve the quality of life of the rural people day by day.As part of the 2018 flood,many reliefs are provided to individual households in pizhala and providing opportunities for rural livelihoods.Also the services of Kadamakudy grama panchayat includes old age pensions,agricultural labourer's pension and widow's pension.Pizhala is the capital of kadamakudy panchayat and has a unique place and culture.Also another government institutions is the village office situated in the north of pizhala.Due to the construction of new village office in pizhala,the old village is shifted to moolampilly in 2022. The village office is responsible for the maintenance of land and trees

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<sup>25</sup>Pizhala postoffice details|find postoffice .in <http://www.findpostoffice.in/kl/post-office/pizhala>

under the jurisdiction of kadamakudy grama panchayat and supervision of basic tax including building tax. Around 150 activities are covered under pizhala village office. Apart from these, korampadam service cooperative bank located in pizhala is helping many women entrepreneurs in pizhala to nurture their finances in the form of personal loans and kudumbasree loans on a daily basis. Also the people have their own basic facilities including veterinary hospital, union bank and related ATM services. However, it must be noted that pizhala is still logging behind in some respects as pizhala is one of the areas that are very close to city, but still underdeveloped. Even after the introduction of the pizhala moolampilly bridge, people of pizhala still face issues in travel facilities. But it needs to be mentioned that matters related to the development plan submitted by kadamakudy panchayat is improving and progressing. Information about one school, three anganwadis and two banks is collected from pizhala village according to the calculation of May 2022. Also in 2022, the development of pharmacy is one of the important feature. Essential medicines are available here. That is why the beginning of the project mentions that pizhala is moving towards development day by day. The unity and cooperation of the people is a significant feature associated with the development of pizhala<sup>26</sup>

## **EDUCATION**

Educational institutions play an important role in the cultural development of a region. Hence such institutions are considered as a sign of cultural progress of the natives. If we look at the education sectors in the history of early pizhala, there was a group of people who were educated only through the limited knowledge that was passed down by doing traditional occupations. Even then, the people of the region were interested in gaining more knowledge and passing it on to generation. During the early times we can see kudipallikudams as we can see when we look into the history. It has been mentioned in the first chapter that it was supervised by a person named Devasya Ashan. The development that starts from the pallikoodam is still continuing in pizhala. The eastern boat jetty at pizhala that we see today was just a river, and with the aim of increasing accessibility of the river, the school was built by building a boat bridge and building a school for education. In pizhala, St. Francis lower primary school was established on October 25, 1905. Kumara menon sir from elamkunnappuzha served as the principle of the school in early days. And other important teachers to be mentioned are panikar sir, Chacko sir, mattu master etc... Mathirapilly paili chavaro was the first person whose name

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<sup>26</sup> GIDA [ ghosree islands development authority]

was registered as number one in pizhala school. In the early days later in 1963 pizhala lower primary school was upgraded as upper primary school. Today the school is functioning in three buildings. Joseph moonampilly father and rocky kalathilparambil father are the two persons to be mentioned related to the reconstruction of many school institutions that are seen today in pizhala. In the early days, an average of 500 students were studying here. Since 1979, this pizhala school is functioning under varapuzha archdiocesan educational agency. But today we can see a lot of changes from the past. If we take the current state of the school, there are only a handful of students enrolled in UP. In today's pizhala, most of the parents send their childrens outside mainly to Ernakulam for their studies. Parents are reluctant to enroll their children in pizhala school despite good teacher training and adequate facilities are available. We can see only about 250 childrens here today. St.Francis Xavier school, pizhala is one of the schools that encourages childrens artistic passion and sports fields on a daily basis. Mr.william sir is serving as the present principle. who looks after the health of the children by providing porridge in the afternoon and milk and egg in the evening as nutritious foods. There are mainly three anganavadis located in pizhala. One in front of the pizhala church. The second one is near pizhala temple and the third is in the paliyamthuruth region. Today ,further construction of pizhala school has been started, but it is stuck half way, a positive approach from the government is not yet available regarding the construction of the school.<sup>27</sup> As per the current structure of the school, it was established in 1920 as a pvt. There are grades 1 to 7. In the early days, there was only Malayalam medium, But later English medium started here. The LP section and the UP section are located on the main road where pizhala bridge enters. The academic section of the school generally starts in April. Currently there are 10 classrooms for learning purposes. We can see all the classrooms in good condition. Despite having all the facilities like electricity and clean water, this school is alien to many. The school has 16 boys toilets. Adjacent to the school is a playground for children and library facilities is also available. There are a total of 613 books in the library and there are computer lab facilities for the development of the children in the field of IT. But currently only six computers is available in the computer lab. The lunch preparations area can be seen adjacent to the eastern side of the UP school. Also teachers with experience from outside have been arranged in order to encourage the artistic and sports interests of the children<sup>28</sup>.

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<sup>27</sup>Joseph,M.X,” Shadhabthi smaranika”, Pizhala st.francis Xavier church, 1892-1992.

<sup>28</sup> St.Francis ups pizhala kadamakudy,Ernakulam,kerala <https://schools.org.in/Ernakulam/32080300301/st-francis-ups-pizhala.html>

## **ECONOMY AND BUSINESS**

In the past, pizhala villagers were engaged in occupations such as gravel hunting , fishing, stone work ,carpentry. In the evening the sand boats in periyar river were loaded with sand and reached pizhala and in the night , these sand boats were taken to kochi side and unloaded. This sand was brought to the needy people in kochi by some people known as Mooppans. Also in the early days, the people also did the spreading , harvesting ,threshing and separating the rice before the month of June. In the olden days, on the during the time of harvest, a week is given as holiday to school. The residents of pizhala were also engaged in occupations such as washing the coconut and paddy and pounding the shell, boiling the shrimp in light salt, preparing the meat etc.. There are now differences regarding work in pizhala considering the past and the present. Todays new generation is reluctant to do traditional jobs. Today most of the people in pizhala are engaged in the IT sector and the other modern jobs earning high incomes and most of them are working in kerala.and outside india. However ,some traditional jobs are still carried out by natives of pizhala. Some of them are pokkali cultivation,shrimp farming ,cheenavala cultivation, coperate farming initiative led by kudumbashree entrepreneurs. Also when the season come, some of the older women and men are involved in harvesting and drying shrimp for sale<sup>29</sup>.

If the talk about the pokkali cultivation more than 80 percentage of people engaged in pokkali cultivation. Usually during the rainy season the water level in crop field rises by 100 to 120 centimeter. In the presence of water is very important for pokkali farming. Because it is an agricultural land. Unlike the usual rice, pokkali is long and flat rice. Today many tourists come from different parts to see and enjoy pokkali cultivation. A native of pizhala ,E.D joseph land has mostly been set up for pokkali cultivation. Pizhala also organizes events like pokkali festival every year during the harvest season. Harvesting is done in mid-september. After the harvest of pokkali crop, its residue is used as fertilizer for shrimp cultivation. Pokkali festival is also known as Koithulsavam <sup>30</sup>. Today pokkali farmers in kerala also cultivates tigerprowns, crabs and shrimp along with their crops. Normally the harvest of prawns and crabs is related by the month of march. Today, people of pizhala earn a large percentage of income from pokkali cultivation. Pizhala is an area were both fresh water and salt water are mixed and hence pokkali cultivation flourishes here. The salinity of the soil cultivated with pokkali is then used as fertilizer for coconuts. Many pizhala housewives can be seen here coming down to the field

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<sup>29</sup> Sindhu Stephen, Personal interview, age 50, Pizhala, Time:4.00pm, 8<sup>th</sup> January 2023.

<sup>30</sup> ED joseph, Personal interview, age 58, Pizhala, Time:11.00am, 9<sup>th</sup> January 2023.

to harvest during the harvest season. This means that pizhala soil is very suitable for paddy cultivation. Cooperative farming is another source of income for the residence of pizhala. cooperative farming is mostly done by housewives and kudumbashree workers<sup>31</sup>

The women of the islands cultivated and harvested the marine plants and fish mainly *Thilapia*. It is reported that about 60 women cooperative entrepreneurs of pizhala have participated under the leadership of CMFRI. cage fishing is usually carried out in cages made of GI pipes. Four metre wide and six metre deep. However in pizhala earn a good percentage of their income from this type of farming. Also under the leadership of Kochi CMFRI workers. Workers of pizhala are provided with adequate training and support measures to more entrepreneurs. Collective farming is usually a low-cost but profitable venture. It is claimed that increasing collective farming will help eradicate poverty in Kadamakudy panchayat. The business sector of female entrepreneurs in pizhala is a good example for this<sup>32</sup>. Selling pickles is another important source of income for pizhala women entrepreneurs. Pizhala another economic sector developing occupation is gill net prawn fishing. Fishing is the source of income for 40 percentage of the people in pizhala. Fishermen do fishing in backwaters and adjacent low-lying areas.

Pizhala residents earn an income of over Rs.25,000 per amount through fishing and associated net farming. Prawn farming is mainly done in three types in pizhala. One is seasonal farming, second one is semi intensive prawn culture and last one is seasonal prawn cultural prawns practices. The rice growing season is usually from June to September, during which the presence of rains prepares the field for rice cultivation due to the low salinity of the saline water. After the monsoon is the season for shrimp farming. There is a practice of leasing some part of pizhala for prawn farming activities. Also fishes like *Thilapia*, mullet, *Etroplus* also bring economic benefits to the land of pizhala. In fine, we can see nets in many places and most pizhala have their own nets. We can see the people day and night who pull the nets. The people of pizhala earn many income from Chinese fishing nets. Fish obtained from these methods are sold in the market of Ernakulam, Chettibagam, Varapuzha and earn a profit. Another source of income for housewives in this region is the government scheme. The employment guarantee scheme. There are only 100 days of employment scheme in a year and the income from this is around Rs.350 per day. Also the tourist home should be mentioned when the economic business

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<sup>31</sup> Pokkali rice cultivation in Kerala and economic analysis | renjith p

<sup>32</sup> Business farming cultivation in pizhala island | <http://wap.business-standard.com/article/pti-stories/pizhala-island-village-ushers-in-fish-farming-revolution-11612200840-i.html>

sector of pizhala is discussed. The tourist home is owned by joseph, a native of pizhala apart from many foreigners, people includes families and friends come here to stay and enjoy the beauty of pizhala. The guests of pizhala tourists home are also equipped to indulge in boating which includes seafoods. Another source of income is the supply of essential materials such as bricks, mortar. The edathil agency is owned by Edathil lonan and earn revenue by delivering them to the people who need them outside and inside the pizhala. Another economic sector in pizhala is said to be well construction. A group of people in pizhala make their own materials for the construction of well. When discussing the economic achievement of pizhala residents they are advancing daily on the path of development from early times to today. Paddy cultivation and traditional work can be models for the new generation of pizhala residents. A very sad fact must be added to this that many measures are being taken today to increase the travelling comfort of the people. But the truth is that many agricultural field gets loss<sup>33</sup>.

### **PIZHALA -TOURIST PLACE**

Of course. Pizhala which is an isolated Island. Has now become a popular tourist destination for the Malayali. People including foreigners filled with shrimp bundles and pokkali cultivation. Pizhala is a favourite place for tourists today. It has turned out to be one of the best tourist destination in Kochi. Where you can spend time with family and other friends in a peaceful atmosphere. Everyday people come to enjoy the beauty and warmth of nature, completely separated from the noise. Pizhala island is an easily accessible place from Kochi. In recent times, one of the place that attract more tourists here is the homestay called pizhala pokkali tourist farm. The homestay is nestled among the paddy fields that are completely grown organically without the use of chemical fertilizers and pesticides. A rural feel can be felt here and the people who come and live here can engage activities such as farming and catching fish and prawns from the backwaters. There are also opportunities to paddle through the backwaters. During the season, we can spot various species of migratory birds here. The pokkali homestay offers a unique rustic charm and rich food to its residents. Another reason why pizhala is a favorite place for tourists is because of the bridge. Today's pizhala bridge is similar to our Kochi Marine Drive. In the evening, people come here from different parts to watch sunset and spend their evenings here. There are mainly three cafés, which attract the tourists. The cafés include Cheenavala cafe, Mud Cafe, Twilight Cafe. The place fills up with the arrival of people with the evening. The natural vision, the cool breeze and the sound of the

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<sup>33</sup> E.M Philip, Personal interview, age 60, Pizhala, Time: 6.00pm, 11<sup>th</sup> January 2023.



water and the birds, make the island unique. Janamythri hotel , which is runed by kudumbashree womens is also another favorite place for tourists in pizhala. Mostly we can see people belonging to the muslim community coming here to enjoy the natural beauty of pizhala. Because the three cafes in pizhala is owned by muslim owners. Apart from pizhala, other islands under the kadamakudy grama panchayath, including valiyakadamakudy, chariyamthuruthu were also popular tourists destination. In the coming years, thus island called pizhala may become the best tourist place in kerala .

## **TRANSPORTATION FROM PAST TO PRESENT**

A few thing have been mentioned in the first chapter about the means of transportation in pizhala. Years ago, most of the residents of pizhala, kadamakudy, varapuzha , mulavukad depended on ferries and boat for transportation. But with the progress of time, most of the boats have stopped service today. Today , ferry and draft service is only visible north of pizhala, chennoor, pizhala- valiyakadamakudy regions. Today many islanders have modern transportation system. However it must be mentioned that for many. The memories of boat trips and ferries gave a special feelings. Boats which provide services to varapuzha , pizhala, Ernakulam belong to chullikattil lonan. It was a time when people felt royalty who own boats of their. Mary matha, pushpakumari,olivia kumari,Elizabeth rani,binni Theresa are the list of boats which comes under the ownership of chullikattil lonan. He also named after his family members. Besides this ,thalakettil family of eloor and edathil family also has boat of their own. Similarly , boat owned by Lakshmanan who was a pizhala resident were also received. The oldest boat that operated on the pizhala route was water lilly. Those who have reached their eighties have memories of the water lilly journey at their young age. The owner of water lilly boat was a member of the thaliyath family of varapuzha. Also another boat was operated on pizhala route was boat called mathevus .which was owned by a person mathevus at varapuzha.<sup>34</sup>

There are certain things that come to mind of George joseph, a native of pizhala. He says that the longest boat was the queen elizabeth. This boat could not be brought close to the shore at lowtide. Its main obstacle was its length. Not only that, many boats could not get close to the boat jetty due to the flood. The queen elizabeth boat would not have been able to do it all because of its length. Today luxury cars rented for wedding purposes. But later the queen Elizabeth boat is for rent for the marriage. Because the boat could have accomodated more

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<sup>34</sup> pandaraparambil pappu Xavier, Personal interview, age 62, Pizhala, Time:12.00pm, 10<sup>th</sup> January 2023.

people with luxury. There is a story that chullikadaan later acquired this boat at auction. According to resident of pizhala in the 80s , a person from chennoor, kuttan owned this Elizabeth rani boat. And the name of the boat was later changed to sreechithira. Another boat that stands in the memory of the natives was the fastest sitting boat named as St. joseph. The children of those generation has a craze about boats. The morning and evening generally crowded. The passengers include traders, workers and students. In the olden days before the construction of todays pizhala bridge , many goods were brought to Ernakulam with large bundles of sack for trade in these boats. But most of the boats operate only at fixed times. It make it very difficult for many people when emergency situation arise. And another interesting fact is that even people found their life partners through the boat trips. Boats were not the only early means of travel for the settlers. They include canons also. The rafts are made by joining a large piece of iron in front of two large boat. The service hours of there raft are from 5.30 AM to 11 PM. And after that it was difficult to reach pizhala. There are situation in the peoples mind where urgent hospital cases come at night and people experiences risk in life<sup>35</sup>

Since the ferry were mode of transportation,that connected all the communities of pizhala island. If such ferry services were to go on strike in an emergency the journey of the workers would become very difficult. It was quite an adventure to travel by ferry boats, the early mode of travel in pizhala. Because the ferry boat can accommodate maximum six to eight peoples, but with peoples work rush and childrens schoolrush, the boat is often over crowded and this leads to many accident cases in pizhala. Apart from there in rainy season there is often a situation were many boat have to stop service due to the heavy presence of heavy wind and rain. Such these conditions adversely affect the life of peoples in pizhala. If we talk about the raft services, it can accommodate a lot of people at a time, but there are times when the raft runs out of working engine parts and oil during the service. Such cases also fall under the condition of knocking by the way of life of these natives. The fact is that even though the transportation facilities including pizhala bridge have came to pizhala today,but peoples from outside are still not ready to settle and buy the land in here. Perhaps that is the reason why the name of the isolated land has been heard since the early times of pizhala. It is an incident that people will never forget that due to the lack of night time transportation in pizhala, valiyaparambil clara the native of pizhala,gave birth near the pizhala boat jetty without being able to go other hospitals. If raft service is available after 11 PM then one has to go to the raft owners house and call him,and if the facility is available at a certain time 150 to 300 will be

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<sup>35</sup> George joseph, Personal interview, age 56, Pizhala, Time:4.30pm, 11<sup>th</sup> January 2023.

charged. It has been mentioned the lack of transportation facilities in the early years adversely affects the medical needs. Because due to the lack of night service and insufficient beds in pizhala hospital, people have to go outside hospital. Hence the transportation is very necessary factor in pizhala. Even before 2020, transportation is an issue and problem is exacerbated by the fact that all the panchayat main offices are located in pizhala island. In those days when there was no proper transport system, the day to day functioning of the local body was adversely affected. Also the 2018 flood is another fact that need to be discussed while mentioning pizhala transportation. Residence of pizhala and kadamakudy are not yet to recover from the effects of the floods. The small village of cheriyakadamakudy near the place of pizhala still has not recovered from the flood. 2018 august 15 is unforgettable day in the people of pizhala. Because many peoples in pizhala was lost their houses and they suffered poverty due to the flood. In such cases also the lack of transportation adversely affected the lives of people in pizhala<sup>36</sup>

Pizhala is located around 6 km from kochi, this village and its atmosphere are amazing to outsiders. But speaking to the local residents here and reveal the opposite side. Later, due to the efforts of the people, pizhala-moolampilly bridge 2020 was realized. But after this, many problems arise among the islanders. When the matter related to the construction of the bridge come up, many people have to give up their land to the government for the construction of the bridge and lost their homes and lands. Even after the construction of the pizhala bridge, the people of pizhala are still faced many difficulties. Walking across the bridge during the time of afternoon is very difficult. The bridge is very difficult as there are no trees or other plants on either side of the bridge and there are no shops nearby the bridge for the essential water. Although the progress of the bridge has improved the traveling comfort of the people of pizhala, but it still very difficult for pedestrians.

Also there are complaint regarding the sale of alcohol and drugs on the bridge at night. And before the construction of bridge, thefts were not common on this land. Because which was surrounded by water on all four sides. Because it was impossible to get out at night, if the theft was fined. But today, with the advent of convenient means of transportation many thefts and smuggling are smoothly done here. In the early days only a few of people in pizhala had

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<sup>36</sup>The New Indian express, "Reeling under flood woes, pizhala cries for attention"  
<http://www.newindianexpress.com/cities/kochi/2019/apr/17/reeling-under-flood-woes-pizhala-cries-for-attention-1965277.amp>

automobile facilities. only few peoples gave their vehicles to people but such situations led to many problems.

## **SOCIO RELIGIOUS PRACTICES IN PIZHALA ISLAND**

As the pizhala island comprises of church and temple the people of pizhala is associated with this religious centres. Socio religious patterns always affected pizhala natives. Thus in a manner the social infrastructure of the region have a molding effect on the population. Religion is always an appropriate and a significant part of social life in general. The people who belonged to their own religion believed it strongly.

## **RELIGIOUS INSTITUTION AND PRACTICES**

### **CHURCH**

pizhala.as mentioned in the previous chapter ,pizhala island comprises of people who belong to hindu and Christians.The presence of muslim religion and their ritual practices and comprising the south-west and east are inhabited by Christians and the north by hindus. Most of the people of pizhala belong to Christian community. As mentioned in the first chapter,church was first under At the very beginning,lets discuss about the religious matters and rituals of the island of varapuzha archdiocese and then under kothad parish.On 12<sup>th</sup> September 1918, pizhala was brought under the kothad parish by Bernard Arguin Sonis Bishop<sup>37</sup>.The varapuzha archdiocese gazette published on February 5,1920 records that the parish of kothad , which includes pizhala,had 294 families and 1517people<sup>38</sup>.

### **PIZHALA AS AN INDEPENDENT PARISH**

Another milestone in the history of pizhala parish is on may 9,1939 when Dr.Joseph Attipetti Bishop declare 3005/39-10, continueing this on may 28,1939, pizhala was declared as one independent parish. As part of this ,on July 16<sup>th</sup>,1942,the first holly mass was offered for the first time in pizhala. Since then the parish has been known by the name of Saint Francis Xavier<sup>39</sup>.

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<sup>37</sup>Kurishingal, Issac," Pizhalayude charithram",winoffset printers Chittoor, 2007.

<sup>38</sup> Kurishingal, Issac,"Pizhalayude charithram ", winoffset printers Chittoor, 2007.

<sup>39</sup> Kurishingal, Issac,"Pizhalayude charithram", winoffset printers Chittoor, 2007.

## **CHURCH-FOUNDATION STONE**

May 1939, Father Joseph Moonampilly took charge as the first priest of pizhala, an independent parish. He decided to build a new church to replace their quarters of the old church 28 and on March 19, 1941 on the feast day of Saint Joseph, Bishop Joseph Attipetti performed the foundation stone ceremony for the new church in pizhala. On December 3, 1941, the four-foot high floor and one foot high wall of the cruciform church was completed. If we talk about the things related to church it was 25 Kol [measurement] long and eight and a half Kol wide. The rest of the front were rolls of the cutstones. The roof was built on poles and was made of bamboo and thatch. After blessing the newly built church, priests came from varapuzha church, moolampilly church, puthanpally seminary church on Sunday to offer the holy mass. Thus the list of those who come to the parish and offered service is very long.

## **LAND UNDER THE OWNERSHIP OF CHURCH**

Below is the information about the properties belonging to St. Francis Xavier parish pizhala. This information is obtained from a variety of sources and includes information from owners who have given up their lands for the betterment of the parish.

## **THE LOCATION OF THE CHURCH**

Date of registration – 1892 March 21

Land was given by – Parayil Avara Varkkey Tharakan from Ezhupunna

Land purchased by – Dr. Layonard Mellano for church. Today's church and the church bungalow is situated in this region. This information is obtained from the archaeological collection of the varapuzha church.

## **REGIONS OF CEMETRY**

Date of registration – 1933 December 24

Land was given by – Lonen Augustine of Madathi parambu

Land purchased by – Rev. Father Illiparambil Mathew Augustine, Madathil Pappu Lonen.

Total area – 10 cent

Survey-530/4, Re-survey – 295/6

## **FRONT AREA OF THE CHURCH**

Date of registration – 1943 October 26

Land was given by – Edathil Kaipari Devassi

Land purchased by – Father Joseph Moonampilly

Apart from this region, the sites of the new school buildings sits on the east side. These site where the Holly Kochu Thressya sits was registered on December 16 1952 and was given to church by Attullil Vareedh Paili. He also gave 22cent area land as a contribution to church and is recorded as survey number 520/1. Besides this tenement on the north side of the church is recorded as being registered on 28<sup>th</sup> July 1953. And the site on which the school sits north of the church should be recorded as having been registered on 2<sup>nd</sup> July 1962. Erathara Augustine Joseph, Oliparambil Devassi Francis gave places for the school. This take place during the period when Father Rocky was the priest at pizhala. Besides this, the northern part of pizhala on the distant cost also gave up its place to church. It was registered on January 31, 1991. This family left four cents of land for the church as part of this. Apart from this, the places including the north, south, and east boat jetty comes under the ownership of church<sup>40</sup>.

## **TEMPLES IN PIZHALA**

There are two main temples situated in the pizhala are Balabhadra temple and Moorthingal Sree Vaishnava temple.

**BALABHADRA TEMPLE** – This temple was first established in pizhala. This temple is located near pizhala primary health centre. This temple belong to pulaya community. It stands on about five cents of land. This is a temple which is more than 100 years old and there is pooja here only two days in a month.

**MOORTHINGAL SREE VAISHNAVA TEMPLE** – This is another most important temple in pizhala established in 1924. This temple belong to kudumbi community. It is situated on about one acre of land. The main diety here is Lord Vishnu. Also the gods include bagavathi, brahmarakshas, nagaraja, nagayakshin also presented here. Theri is pooja is every morning and evening and many devotees come here to pray.

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<sup>40</sup> Kurishungal, Issac, "Pizhalayude charithram", winoffset printers Chittoor, 2007.

## **IMPORTANT FESTIVALS**

During the magha month of rohini, hanging the flag took place. This happens every three years in Capricorn and every three years in libra. This festival last for five days. As pizhala is an island, the presence of elephant cannot be seen in the utsav.

HOLI [ MANJAKULI ] – Yellow bath will be held in this temple on 7<sup>th</sup> day after the holi starts in north india. Yellow bath is held in the evening on the days of veluthavaav, one month after the end of the festival. Turmeric, coconut water and fresh water mix and kept in a big vessel. All the devotees men would fetch this water and pour it on their heads while chanting prayer mantars. Bathers will be yellow in colour. It is called yellow bath because of bathing with turmeric. It is said that the story behind this custom is the Darukavadham which took place in puranic times.

NIRAPOOTHIRI – This is another ritual performed in this temple during the month of chingam. The head of the family men or women goes to the temple in the morning. A coconut with a betel leaf in hand, a one rupee and a tulsi flower are wrapped in it and taken to the temple. The poojari will offer this to the diety and in return give a grain of rice to the worshipped families. Also, the lamp is lit and the coconut is roasted and the coconut water flows on the tulsithara. Tulsi flower brought from the temple and worshipped before the dedication of the gods goddesses will be prayed. This ritual is believed to bring prosperity throughout the year and another ritual that take place in temple is ‘Desavilak’ which lasts for three days following the ‘kottum pattum’ and lunch. Some of the other temples in pizhala are family temples:

- Sree rama Lakshmana hanuman temple
- Hanuman temple
- Bhagavathin temple
- Vanadurga temple, Paliyamthuruth
- Maravan temple, Paliyamthuruth

In some of these temples, hens are slaughtered at night and food is given to the school students of pizhala. A group of people in pizhala are hindu believers and practice hindu rituals<sup>41</sup>.

Today the natives of pizhala and their organisations, the pizhala bridge arises, connecting with moolampilly, the bridge that connect pizhala with main road has changed the lives of the

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<sup>41</sup> sarasan and valsala K.P, Personal interview, age 54 and 52, Pizhala, Time: 5.00pm, 2<sup>nd</sup> January 2023.

people. But because of the bridge not only positive things but also negative things have happened. The pizhala bridge and the hard needy work of the people involved in its construction, the changes in the people's lives after the bridge came and the problem that followed are discussed in detail in the next chapter.



## **CHAPTER-3**

### **THE PRESENT CONDITION AND PROPOSITIONS FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF PIZHALA**

Pizhala's basic infrastructure, changes in the educational sector, improvement in economy, importance of tourism, the early ways of travel and the present condition and the social and religious developments have been discussed in the previous chapter. This chapter deals with the information regarding the development faces by pizhala island day by day, the problem rises due to the development, government initiatives and policies, whether this policies are positive to the islanders and also focusing on the demands of islanders, the problems related to the pizhala-moolampilly bridge, the protests against the process and the final decision is discussing in this chapter.

#### **MOVEMENTS OF PIZHALA-MOOLAMPILLY BRIDGE**

As a result of years of efforts and struggles of pizhala residents, in the month of june 2020, the people of pizhala receives a means of travel to reach their homes at any time of the day or night without depending on the ferry facility. Pizhala was an island isolated by water in four sides. But with the development of the bridge, the pizhala island is attracting attention among people today. With a population of more than 3000 people, pizhala island is located in kochi, is about 6km from Ernakulam city and about 650metres away from the nearest village of Ernakulam, moolampilly. The two temporary ferry was depended by the islanders for years for the easy access to kochi city via moolampilly. As a result of many struggles and efforts, the construction of mollampilly bridge connecting pizhala has started but the further steps towards its construction have come to a standstill. It was a huge relief for the residents of pizhala, when the construction of the pizhala-moolampilly bridge reached completion in November 2018 despite a delay of nearly five years. But in spite of these activities, a great concern was rising among the residents of pizhala. Because even though the construction of the bridge was completed, the approach road to the bridge did not reach the bridge, so it remained unused for months. The residents of pizhala have not received any action from the government till date which mostly affects the common people. MLA S.Sharma inaugurated the construction work of approach

road or connectivity bridge in 2017<sup>42</sup>. But the islanders suggest that the inauguration of the construction and development of the approach road and the bridge is nothing more than feeling the upcoming elections. Since, Pizhala is a part of Kadamakudy panchayat in Ernakulam district, it has only one primary school and primary health facility. Islanders depended solely on ferry service to travel to the mainland for educational purpose, emergency hospital cases and jobs. Needless to say, the cries of Pizhala residents for proper connectivity are years old. In 2013, Goshree Island Development Authority, a government agency for the development of the Kochi area city, started the construction of the Pizhala-Moolampilly bridge. But the GIDA and Kerala State Construction Corporation Limited is also facing a lot of criticism regarding the delay in the completion of the bridge. There are many issues raised by the islanders, but even today the government is turning its back on them and not taking any initiatives. Following this, Pizhala islanders and Pizhala youth association came together and started many organizational activities.

### **STRIKES AND PROTESTS BY PIZHALA ISLANDERS**

The hard work of many people and organizations can be seen behind the development of Pizhala-Moolampilly bridge connecting the residents of Pizhala to the land and the main road. The island communities have come together to form a coalition after the islanders demands to the government and delays in the process related to the Pizhala-Moolampilly bridge and related connectivity. The name of that association is Pizhala Karamuttikkal Samithi. Under this samithi, many students of Pizhala and related organizers staged several protests in front of the Kakkanad collectorate regarding their Pizhala bridge and related road and development works. For more than five years, the construction of the bridge was half-way. The local people staged several protests against the approach road. Due to this, the authorities realized that an approach road was needed to connect the bridge to the land<sup>43</sup>. What is the rationale for building a bridge without an approach road asked the president of Karamuttikkal Samithi, Maglilin. After several protests by the people and the interventions of the district administration, the GIDA finally started the work on the approach road<sup>44</sup>. When we protested not a single MLA or panchayat officials supported us, says Pizhala resident Sajan C.M. Even as Pizhala residents

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<sup>42</sup>The News minute, "New bridge near a Kochi island remains unused because there is no approach road|2019 <https://www.thenewsminute.com/article/new-bridge-near-kochi-island-remains-unused-because-there-s-no-approach-road-97957?amp>.

<sup>43</sup> Maglin C.S, Personal interview, age 48, Pizhala, Time:5.00pm, 12<sup>th</sup> October 2022.

<sup>44</sup> Sojan T.M , Personal interview, age 42, Pizhala, Time:6.00pm, 8<sup>th</sup> November 2022.

raise their rights related to connectivity, the government keeps making empty promises to the residents. The hollow reply from the government is that, the work will be completed soon. But pizhala residents argue that we no longer need such answers<sup>45</sup>. People face many problems when two temporary ferry boats break down simultaneously. Thathaparambil Biju claims that one of our biggest problem is that we cannot reach hospitals at emergency and students are not able to reach school on time during exams. The district administration is demanding that it will take about eight more months to complete the work of approach road. But people's demand is not to wait not longer<sup>46</sup>. They decided to convey their protests to the officials and provide funds to construct a temporary road connecting island to bridge to enable speedy construction of the approach road.

## **HUMAN BRIDGE**

On 2005, MLA S.Sharma laid the foundation stone for the project which includes 22 metre pizhala-moolampilly road and 9 metre pizhala-pudussery road. Following this, on December 29, 2013, the famous former chief minister Oommen Chandi laid the foundation stone of the bridge. Even after nine months, the work of the bridge has not moved even an inch. The islanders said that the land should be given free of cost for the bridge, but the government did not even take any steps to acquire the land. The goshree project GIDA connected other islands with Kochi and then pizhala was still left as an unconnected island. The island which provides basic facility is home to thousand of people. Protesting against the government's indifference in constructing the bridge even after nine years, the youth organizers of pizhala raised their protest by building a human bridge. People staged a protest by building a human bridge across the river connecting pizhala island to moolampilly and another protest march to Ernakulathappan ground was conducted by each family from each house related to the further steps of the bridge. But the other part relating to the development activities of pizhala bridge is that not only the Karamuttikkal Samithi, but also the LDF, DYFI members of pizhala also conducted many protests and activities. We can make two types of arguments regarding the construction activities of pizhala Karamuttikkal Samithi. While the members of this Samithi are protesting against the development activities of their island, many unauthorized activities are also taking place under this Samithi. The Karamuttikkal Samithi is facing several challenges. On the one hand, the

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<sup>45</sup> Biju T.K , Personal interview, age 40, Pizhala, Time: 10.00am, 12<sup>th</sup> December 2022.

<sup>46</sup> The News minute, "New bridge near a Kochi island remains unused, because there's no approach road" 2019 <https://www.thenewsminute.com/article/new-bridge-near-kochi-island-remains-unused-because-there-s-no-approach-road-97957?am>

organizing committee and other party members of pizhala argue that the activities for the development of the island are a strategy to gain control over the entire island. But it has to be said that there is some truth in this idea. However, as a result of the efforts of the people of pizhala, the pizhala-moolampilly bridge has arrived. But even after the arrival of the bridge, the people of this place had to face many difficulties<sup>47</sup>.

## **PROBLEMS FACED BY THE PEOPLE AFTER THE CONSTRUCTION OF PIZHALA BRIDGE**

Pizhala – moolampilly bridge is very essential for the people of pizhala. But due to this the islanders are facing many problems. Before the pizhala-moolampilly bridge, the islanders depended on ferry boats to reach the shore. But after the arrival of the bridge, the people faced unfavorable and favorable conditions. After the arrival of the bridge, the ferry services had to be stopped completely and those who had been employed in the ferry services lost their livelihood due to these conditions. Erathara kunjumon a ferry service employee from pizhala says that the condition of the people who did know other handicrafts has become very bad.<sup>48</sup> Also many families have lost their houses and land due to the construction work of the bridge and the fact is that, the houses of the both side of the approach road have to be demolished for the development of nine meter road in pizhala is also causing concern among the people. Another concern is that, road construction is progressing following the pizhala church, the front of the church located in the middle of the road will have to be demolished, which is not accepted by the Christian communities. After the arrival of pizhala -moolampilly bridge, the residents have to face many problems at night. One of the important problem is the arrival of the alcohol and drug gangs at night, as there island is far away from the city. It is favorable for them to avoid the eyes of the police. Before the arrival of the bridge, there was no looting and robbery in this island which was surrounded on four side with water and it was absolutely impossible to escape after 11 o'clock. But another fact is that even after the arrival of the bridge there are many robberies taking place in this island. Also with the arrival of pizhala bridge, the shore can be easily reached at any time of the night. But the common people who do not have vehicle facilities, the pizhala bridge is very difficult. Due to the pizhala bridge, the pizhala to moolampilly has some distance, as there are no places to rest on the either side

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<sup>47</sup> The Deccan Chronicle, "Current affairs relating with pizhala island human bridge | <https://www.deccanchronicles.com/amp/140930/nation-current-affairs/article/%E2%80%98human-bridge%E2%80%99-protest-pizhala-against-inaction>.

<sup>48</sup> kunjumon K.T, Personal interview, age 56, Pizhala, Time:6.30pm, 11<sup>th</sup> January 2023.

of the bridge, no shops to drink water or no trees on either side of the bridge, making it very difficult for pedestrians. Most of the hardships are experienced during afternoon and many mothers who have to go to housework for their daily livelihood including students also face problems while travelling alone. The fact that women and children are intimidated by strangers and outsiders in such situation needs to be highlighted. Many of their problems are faced during the night and day time and another problem faced by the resident is the electric posts standing in the middle of the roads near the bridge as the road is not properly maintained and the electric posts makes difficult for the pedestrians and the people who drives vehicles. Although the residents of island have requested to replace such electric posts from across the road, the people did not get a positive response from the panchayat authorities till the last few days. The pizhala can be said to be fully developed only when the corresponding approach road comes up. Still there is no complete bus facility at pizhala. The people depended on KSRTC bus and that too only till the junction where bridge ends. After this, people again walk long distance to reach their homes. Most of the travel problem is felt by the paliyamthuruthu natives. Who are the part pf pizhala and can reach their homes only by walking for hours. At least if they take auto facility to reach easily, they charge at least 100 to 150. As for the family who go for household for their daily life, they have to save their hardly earned money only for their transportation. Another problem that bothers the islanders is the traffic blocks because the current road are not a meter wide and create blocks including the vehicles coming from where the road is watered on the both sides and the vehicle are not able to take back to the sites causing traffic jams. Another problem after the arrival of pizhala bridge is garbage and smoke. Pizhala bridge is becoming a favorite place for tourists every day in the evening as outsiders deposits plastic kits and bottles after using them. Also the smoke from the vehicles make island polluted. Often the situation of abuse of the island can be seen even today and all the consequences are felt by the islanders. During the night, the couple uses the bridge as an amusement spot creating problems to the people of pizhala. Another problem is the dumping of the coconut trees in the bridge for the construction of approach road create traffic issues. Also after the bridge arrival, there were no street lights until recently, making night time travel difficult, but by September 2022, the government had installed solar lights on the both side of the bridge, which helped reduced such travel difficulties to some extent. A number of disputes are still pending regarding the bridge construction and associated approach road. Due to the construction work of the approach road, many farm owners have been forced to withdrew their farmlands. Also with the influx of tourists , farmlands are polluted by plastic and other activities. Due to the heavy presence of tourists at pizhala bridge, during night time and on holidays, there is no parking facility at

pizhala bridge. So the tourist park their vehicles in bridge and the residents of pizhala had to face many travel difficulties due to the parking of there vehicles on bridge. Although the pizhala bridge has come to benefit the people of pizhala and improve their living conditions, the residents have to face such minor difficulties. In the following part of this chapter, the measures and related activities of the government related to pizhala- chathanad bridge are going to be discussed.

## **SOCIAL IMPACT AND ASSESSMENT STUDY OF PIZHALA – MOOLAMPILLY BRIDGE**

Development of several islands continues today under GIDA , a government mandated agency to integrate isolated island communities in to the city. The development of pizhala – moolampilly, pizhala – chathanad island comes under the project of GIDA. 28<sup>th</sup> general council of goshree development authority decided to take up development project of chathanadu island. The first phase of this project is the pizhala – moolampilly brigde and associated approved roads to connect the moolampilly, ezhikkara, kadamakudi panchayat with vallarpadam NHS, with the aim of providing direct acces to the above mentioned islands to the city. Because the people of these panchayat islands are totally depended on the city for medical assistance, education and other alternative facilities. It can also be said that this type of connectivity to the national highway further ensures the socio- economic development of the island communities. Moolampilly- pizhala is almost complete. But connectivity bridge needs to be constructed to descend the bridge to pizhala island but this is still pending. Government has sanctioned ES and AS for the construction of moolampilly – pizhala bridge and its number is 2018/1889/188/189/2013 which was later sanctioned under GIDA as LR.NO.GIDA 1721/2016. 95.79 crores have been sanctioned by the government for the construction purpose of pizhala- moolampilly bridge including subsequent connectivity road of pizhala island<sup>49</sup>. When assessing the social impact related to the road construction, many more people will have to be evicted from the area that is part of pizhala ward 10. For the construction of the approach road and bridge and many people will have to give up their land for construction which leads to social problems. And also creates loss of pokkali farming and shrimp farming. The mostly affected area is 10<sup>th</sup> ward of kadamakudy grama panchayat, which is included in kadamakudy village in kanayannor thaluk of Ernakulam district during the construction works related to the

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<sup>49</sup> Social impact assessment study ;land acquisition for construction of bridge for the connectivity of pizhala moolampilly bridge and approach road

development of moolampilly – pizhala bridge. The length of the pizhala bridge is about 104 meters and it is impossible to carry the construction materials in lorry in connection with the developmental work of the bridge.

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SOCIO- ECONOMIC AND CULTURAL ASPECTS OF AFFECTED FAMILIES DUE TO THE CONSTRUCTION OF BRIDGE**

Many families face many difficulties related to the bridge construction. In this demographic details, local cultural activities, livelihood, socialization patterns are discussed in both parts. About 7 percentage of families in the pizhala – moolampilly projects lost their land and the documents regarding the loss of the land is gained. Out of this, five families belong to OBC category and others 2 percentage of families belong to general category. Nuclear family is mostly affected by project construction. If we check the income and poverty level of these families, according to the public distribution system. Six families have blue and pink ration cards. And two families have white ration card. The affected family involved in the construction work of the bridge included 12 children below 18 years of age, four members above 60 years of age and two widows. The families of Mr. babu George and Mr. mohan George earned their livelihood from rice farming and shrimp farming and their land was adversely affected by the construction of the project<sup>50</sup>. Most of the people in pizhala are dependent on pokkali farming for their livelihood and it can be understood from the data collected that many people lost their farming lands, due to the construction of bridge and had to shift their livelihood to other occupation. Other religious and cultural organizations have not been affected by the construction of the bridge project. The properties belong to other political organization are not included in the construction of the project. The concrete road belonging to 10<sup>th</sup> ward under kadamakudy grama panchayat affects under the construction of the bridge. As pizhala is an isolated land, the construction of the bridge not only leads to negative impact but also positive impact. Because this one bridge project improves the mobility of the people and transport in the area. The SIA study reports reveal that the existing pizhala road need to be widened to connect the pizhala island with moolampilly pizhala bridge. The SIA report notes that road

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<sup>50</sup> Social impact assessment study; land acquisition for construction of bridge for the connectivity of pizhala moolampilly bridge and approach road

construction is necessary for socio- economic development and road connectivity is necessary to deal with natural calamities<sup>51</sup>

In June 2020, pizhala-moolampilly bridge was opened but the smooth flow of traffic on the bridge is still being hampered as the approach roads are yet to be completed. The delay in land acquisition has been cited as the major factor in completing the road project. The displaced residents will have to pay compensation by the authority. The areas under the GIDA includes fortkochi, part of vypin, gundu island, thanthonnithuruthu, kuzhupilly, edavanakadu, mulavukadu and kadamakudy grama panchayat. It is pointed out that the water metro will largely solve the problems of the residents. But the road network is needed to provide quick access to the city.<sup>52</sup> pizhala -valiyakadamakudy bridge is as important as the construction of the pizhala-moolampilly bridge. The state government is said to have allocated Rs 40 crores in the 2017-2018 budget for the pizhala valiyakadamakudy bridge. Since then, the project has been followed by the PWD divisions as well. Between moolampilly – pizhala bridge and valiyakadamakudy- chathanadu bridge which joins the container terminal road, is pizhala-valiyakadamakudy bridge. GIDA records that the construction of the pizhala – moolampilly bridge is 90 percentage complete and the Rs 57 crore is assigned, and the 75 percentage of the valiyakadamakudy -chathanadu bridge completed. An incident that happened in 2018 needs to be mentioned while taking about the development of pizhala- moolampilly bridge. It is recorded that in march 2018, two gurdurs of the moolampilly- pizhala bridge collapsed due to the fact that bridge was under construction for a length of 180 meters while the bridge construction was in progress. The accident occurred during the removal of framework placed in the river for the construction of handlines. Fortunately, there were no casualties as the workers were at rest time and the reason led to an increase in the duration of the development and construction works of the bridge.

## **WATER METRO IN PIZHALA**

As mentioned in the first chapter, pizhala island is developing day by day with the development of the pizhala bridge and now the water metro system sanctioned by the central government is in favor of island. But advent of water metro has proved to be a way out of some adverse

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<sup>51</sup>The Times of india, “Development of kochi, pizhala island | <https://m.timesofindia.com/city/kochi/pizhala-island-collectors-nod-to-land-acquisition/amp-articleshow/94276733.cms>

<sup>52</sup>The Times of india, “Infrastructure development of kochi city” | <https://m.timesofindia.com/city/kochi/speed-up-infra-projects-officials-told/amp-articleshow/80797113.cms>



situations. Residents are of the view that after the development of the bridge, the water metro will not be a solution to their travel convenience if the approach road is not completed. The central government has assured to deliver the construction of water metro facility in the areas under kochi island development authority. Pizhala residents are not against the development of water transport and public transport facilities. But the developments of roads in pizhala is still pending. Residents of pizhala says bridges are of primary importance. Out of the islands under GIDA , most of the islands depend on ferry services and boats. So people need more road networks and road transport than water transport. But most of the roads on the island are no more than 3 meters wide. It must be said that with the arrival of kochi water metro, pizhala island will attract more foreigners and tourists. Due to the lack of approach road in pizhala island many families of island are not able to bring their own vehicles to their homes. Due to the construction of the kochi water metro, access to the boat jetty on the eastern side of the island has been temporarily suspended. This will adversely affect islanders and students traveling by boats.

## **THE CURRENT SITUATIONS AND PROBLEMS FACED BY PIZHALA ISLANDERS**

The developmental activities of pizhala islanders from the early days to the current situation have been seen in the first and the second chapters. Along with development , the islanders are still experiencing many problems. The first problem is the life problem that came after the flood. Many families have still not recovered from the 2018 flood. Flood have adversely affected the social and economical sector of island. Many families lost their houses, farms and necessary documents. Pokkali farming and 60 percentage of agricultural fields were destroyed in the flood. The damage of the flood was mostly affected in the cheriyakadamakudy, which is a part of pizhala island. As part of flood, Indian navy team constructed an iron bridge for the case of travel for the residents<sup>53</sup>. The main problems still faced by the pizhala residents is the post-flood living conditions. Considering the present situation in pizhala, the main problem facing by the islanders is the lack of an approach road. As part of the pizhala islanders hardwork and struggles, pizhala- moolampilly bridge was constructed. But it is never fully developed due to the lack of further approach road and the connecting routes of the residents. Even though GIDA has recently approved the construction of three bridges in the goshree region. GIDA failure to establish the necessary connectivity and prepare a 350 meter road in pizhala island is

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<sup>53</sup> Sreerag M.S, Personal interview, age 30, Pizhala, Time:5.30pm, 11<sup>th</sup> January 2023.

leading the islanders to protest. The people are protesting even more because the project to widen the narrow panchayat road has not received technical approval. The main problem is that the revenue department is not ready to acquire the land to measure the land to widen the narrow approach road which is only suitable for two wheelers. Pizhala ,being located in the center of the kadamakudy island. Pizhala has a hospital, veterinary hospital, many government offices. So , the proper road connectivity of the bridge is very important for the 14 islanders of kadamakudy. As the service was stopped with the commissioning of 2013, the islanders demanded that an active stand should be taken especially by the kadamakudy grama panchayat. Not only the issue of the road, but the electric post located in the middle. Also obstruct the traffic of the residents. The islanders says that other agencies, including the revenue should work together for the constructions of the kochi water metro as the construction materials need to be transported by road. Lack of water is another problem faced by the residents of pizhala. Everyday the problem of lack of water is troubling people. Street light issues are another major problem facing by the people of pizhala today. Many places including many public roads have not got street lights from the panchayat and it is very difficult to go to places including small pocket roads. Some roads are provided with street light but their functioning is poor. This is making it very difficult for the people. People have informed the panchayat and their ward authorities against their but the truth is that no action has been taken yet.

Lack of such street lights leads to health hazards for people. Such situation reach such a point that it is impossible to understand and identify the routes properly after nightfall in many places. The islanders want the panchayat authorities to take proper actions against it. Another problem that the people of pizhala are currently experiencing is the problem of hospitals. The working hours of the primary health centre at pizhala are from 9 to 12.30 p.m. but after these hours, the islanders finds very difficult when urgent hospital cases arrive. Kothad aster medicity is the closest to the island but the journey to takes at least 20 minutes. This kind of travel problem is having a negative impact on the islanders when it comes to emergency cases. Looking at it from the another side, having a government hospital on an isolated island where no one cases is a privilege. Also if the hospital working hours are extended, it will be very beneficial for the islanders. Another problem faced by pizhala residents is lack of proper waste disposal. As compared to past years, today pizhala is filled with plastic and other wastes including public places causing various diseases and also increasing mosquitos. After the residents filed compliant against this, the panchayat has appointed the ADS members of each ward of the panchayat to collect plastic and other wastes from all the houses at the beginning

of the month. However we can see waste dumps in many places in pizhala. And the smell of this waste causes disturbances to the islanders . the outsiders also dump waste in plastic kit in pizhala, the islanders are demanding that the panchayat authorities intervene legally against this. We cant see proper road system in many parts of pizhala island. Many roads are patholes and that type of road can cause lot of problem to the residents. This lead to road accidents. The island residents have also complained to the panchayat authorities but no significant action is being taken from their side. The truth is that although the road is being worsed on in some places. It has not been completed yet. Many roads and pocket roads are partially destroyed. Apart from these another problem faced by the residents of pizhala is the stench from the public drains . most of the drains are not properly realed and this led to many diseases due to bad smell and spread of mosquitos. As mentioned in the first part of the chapter, the pizhala-moolampilly bridge has not fully reached pizhala. It can be said that the development will be complete only if the approach road along the bridge is completed. Similarly, another thing that the islanders want is the pizhala- moolampilly bridge should reach chariyamthuruth-valiyakadamakudy. Because it is very difficult task to reach paliyamthuruth, which is the oart of pizhala.

If pizhala pizhala- moolampilly bridge is followed by chariyamthuruth the residents of paliyamthuruthu will be more comfortable in their journey. Also most of the shops are located in valiyakadamakudy, Paravoor ,chennoor etc...It is very difficult children for studying in these levels of school as they walk along distance to reach the schools. If proper road and bridges are built, bus services can be continued and these problem of childrens can be solved to an extend. Another issue that deserves serious consideration is the yet to be completed work on the pizhala school building. Education at pizhala school is from 1<sup>st</sup> to 7<sup>th</sup> grade but a two storey building is being constructed as part of am effort to upgrade it from UP level to high school level.the work on its upper part started in 2018 but till date the work has not been completed due to the lack of sufficient funds. Although complaints have made by the school authorities , no action has yet been taken from the government side. This is a demand raised by the people of pizhala. Pizhala island is a community that promotes the arts in childrens education. Proper education and artistic support are essential element for an average student.

### **GOVERNMENT IMPLIMENTED POLICIES IN PIZHALA**

Although the people of pizhala are facing many problems , the favor received from the government should be mentioned. Primarily, pizhala is an agricultural land where the soil is

suitable for agriculture and the presence of water is high so agriculture flourished . As a result in most of the areas, pokkali cultivation is seen. Funds require for their growth, high quality seeds are distributed from panchayat and Krishi bhavan. Also , the main source of income for women is through collective farming. Majority of the women earn income from it as part of this, authorities related to promoting cooperative farming under the leadership of kochi CMFRI are providing adequate funds and incentives to women entrepreneurs. It is a self sufficient sector. And another employment for women to earn income is the employment guarantee scheme scheduled for 100 days in a year. Daily wages is about 350 given by the government which enables the housewives to earn small income. Also government provides many benefits to the construction workers in the name of KKNTC and the scheme of providing hen and duck to the housewives is also provided by the panvhayat . Through all this, the financial sector of women entrepreneurs in pizhala is also developing. Also the government provides various funds in the form of loan and credit to promote the development of women entrepreneurs . Another important government implemented policy is solar lights. Due to the difficulty of travelling at night, the government has installed solar light all over the bridge it improves night travel<sup>54</sup>.

## **DEVELOPMENTAL ACTIVITIES OF PIZHALA KARAMUTTIKKAL SAMARA SAMITI**

The development work of karamuttikkal samara samiti is a noteworthy factor in the history of pizhala. The hard works and efforts of many members is behind the growth of pizhala bridge as seen today. The kadamakudy island communities are still isolated .protest to connect pizhala island to land took place, islanders join hand in hand without considering the political party they belong to. District panchayat and block panchayat members representating from pizhala and participated in the strike. When the development project of pizhala – moolampilly bridge was started and no progress was made even after 10 years. And the people of pizhala unitedly formed a committee. That is called pizhala karamuttikal samara samiti. The meaning of the term is to get all the difficulties of life of people in pizhala. After the great flood of 2018, pizhala karamuttikal samara samiti was formulated on august 27, 2018 with the intention of changing the present system from the insecurity of pizhala islanders and working towards the development of kadamakudy islanders. Why the kadamakudy islanders were not progressed.. is still a question mark . after 56 years of kadamakudy panchayat formed on December 28,

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<sup>54</sup> Dineesh olipattil, Personal interview, age 38, Pizhala, Time:5.00pm, 5<sup>th</sup> January 2023.

1963 there has been no progress in kadamakudy islands the project that were given in the 1960s with the aim of improving situations and have not yet reached the target by 2023. Despite pizhala being the capital of kadamakudy grama panchayat, the lack of a good road to travel comfortably has been dragging the people for 56 years. Kadamakudy hospital which used to provide 24 hours inpatient treatment and delivery services, has now been reduced to just a few hours a day. After the inauguration on December 29, 2013 the moolampilly- pizhala bridge was completed in June 2020 with the intervention of the karamuttikkal samara samiti. But till date no good road facility and street lights has reached in the roads of pizhala . It is necessary to expose the corruption behind the construction work of moolampilly pizhala bridge and the approach road to pizhala which started in 2013. As mentioned above, the lack of a bridge made difficulties of people in pizhala during the 2018 flood. When there was no way to escape kerala from the flood of the century. The fisherman from the vypin came to the aid of the residents of pizhala the karamuttikal samara samiti also advocated the idea that a bridge would be necessary for the islanders to escape in case of emergencies like this again.

The residents in pizhala marched to the collector camp office on October 1,2018 to inform the authorities and public representatives of the need to open the rescue route. As a result of this on October 8, 2018 the approach road of pizhala was given the administrative permission. But its performance has been slow till date. Under the karamuttikal samara samiti, fine students also joint this strike. Due to the difficulties faced by the students due to the lack of adequate transport facilities, the students are coming to the protest against this situation. They submitted letter to the district collector pointing out their travel problems.<sup>55</sup> The 100 days will be enough to complete the 14 meter approach road which is major requirements of pizhala residents. But the students insist in the agreement given by the collector that this can be allowed for 120 days. The students demanded that the construction should be completed even though extra time has been given. If the collector does not give a written assurance that the construction of the road will be completed within that time. The students have decided to suspend their studies and go on strike. At present two rafts are operating in pizhala and students have to leave early to reach college and schools. And this affected the childrens by the physical strain caused by traveling too early. The karamuttikal samara samiti is pointing out all this in front of the government rulers. Although the construction of the bridge is almost complete. But still people protesting for the related approach road. The construction of the approach road is under GIDA . but the fact is that the GIDA general council has not even met yet. An estimate of 12 crores has been

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<sup>55</sup> Mathrubhoomi, malayala manorama punlished on 1, October 2020

approved for the construction of road but no decisions have been taken till date. The cheriyakadamakudy island lying near the part of the pizhala is also suffering lot of difficulties. When during the time of the flood the only thing people to escape to other shores was a small bridge. But that bridge too was in a dilapidated nature. Many families lost their houses and fishing nets. And the islanders had no other means of income, and they depended on the Indian navy officers help. Under the karamuttikal samara samiti, decisions were taken to resolve the problem of the cheriya kadamakudy island and action was taken against it. If was taken the current situation the good passable for the cheriya kadamakudy island has been completed to some extent compared to the pizhala. Only the people of pizhala are still fighting for their road facilities. The construction work has started on the GCDA to connect islands and city. However through this , the islands hope that, the island can be fully connected to the city. Along with this the residents believe that there will be major changes in the trade network in varappuzha and surrounding islands.

The honorable MP Sri, KV Thomas has informed that he will provide the necessary fund after discussing with the karamuttikal samara samiti build a landing road from moolampilly – pizhala bridge to pizhala island<sup>56</sup>. In additions to the government announcement that money has been allocated for the construction of the landing. This announcement was also made that money would be allocated from the minister fund. But till date there has been no progress in this regard. The karamuttikal samara samiti has decided to continue the strike till the completion of the approach road. Last year December 2022, the hundred of women and children participated in the night to protest against their proper road connectivity. This strike was also led by the karamuttikal samara samiti. Not only has the work on the associated approach road, the government only 80 percentage of the compensation for land acquisition for the project has been distributed to the people so far<sup>57</sup>. Although many petitions and letters have been given by the island communities as complaints, the responsible authorities are not taking action against it. As mentioned in the beginning of this project , pizhala is a village close to the city. The main problem of this island is the means of transportation. The residents of this island united, and completed the moolampilly – pizhala bridge, but the lack of related road facility is still an the internal problem of the residents of pizhala. When the development activities of pizhala karamuttikal samara samiti are discussed, the struggles for the bridge are not only ones. On the

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<sup>56</sup> E.J JACOB the member of karamuttikal samiti, Personal interview, age 51, Pizhala, Time:7.00pm, 1<sup>st</sup> March 2023.

<sup>57</sup> Mary Vincent the president of kadamakudy gramapanchayat, Personal interview, age 42, Pizhala, Time:5.00pm, 7<sup>th</sup> March 2023.

contrary, the members of the committee take care to ensure development in all areas with the aim of upliftment of an islands. The 80 percentage of people of pizhala island are the members of the karamuttikal samara samti , which promotes the skills of children pursuing higher education and provides them with the necessary assistance. This chapter mainly describes an island that is developing day by day and at the same time a region that faces many challenges as part of its development. This chapter discusses the problem face by the residents of pizhala today, they demand and they still put before the government and the protests they made for it and the policies given by the government.

## **CONCLUSION**

The early history of Pizhala, the growth and changes in the socio- cultural, economic field the development of the small island of pizhala and the associated struggles and activities have been seen through the last three chapters. This dissertation the brief survey of socio-historical study of pizhala island is divided into five chapters. The first chapter deals with the introduction covering the basic informations about pizhala. The second chapter deals with the origin and historical background of pizhala. That is how did the place pizhala originate, how did the word pizhala get to this area, the thirteen other small islands under kadamakudy grama panchayat that share the border with pizhala, the first settlers of pizhala , and the importance of edathil families in the history of pizhala which shed light on the path of cultural development are mainly described in the first chapter. Also the second part discusses the historical aspect of pizhala. In the first part of this project we can understand the life of group of people who live daily without basic transportation facilities. The third chapter of this project mainly discusses the socio- cultural, economic and geographical background of pizhala. It mainly describes the changes in the economy of pizhala and subsequent way of life, cultural progress, religious conditions, educational achievements and the basic infrastructure of pizhala the capital of kadamakudy panchayat. Pizhala village and its islanders are a people who preserve education and artistic intrests. Also the basic economic sector of the people of pizhala including pokkali farming, nesting ,cage fishing. Apart from these other economic sectors are also discussed in this section.

As mention from the first part of this project pizhala is a diverse region. The fourth chapter of this project mainly discusses the developmental activities and current situation of pizhala. Pizhala is a developing region but along with this development, the region is facing many challenges which are clearly described in this fourth chapter. Although it is a developing region, the people of this place still need to realize achieve developmental activities from the government. In such a way, the demand put forward by the people of pizhala to the government are also discussed in this section. Also describes the opening of pizhala – moolampilly bridge on 22<sup>nd</sup> June 2020. And the document related to it and the people struggles for it. The facts related to the completion of this project need to be mentioned. The informations obtain through oral interviews from the islanders was valuable. Also a lot of informations was collected from the ancestors of pizhala to understand the early history of pizhala. The book history of pizhala by father issac kurishingal helps the identifying the informaations of pizhala. As we come to



the conclusion part of this project a few important fact we need to be mentioned. After taking the current situations of the residents of pizhala there are some developmental project to be received from the government. But today , the government and GIDA which is the development agency of islanders is not doing anything for the betterment of pizhala. People of pizhala are still facing many problems. Now their main demand to the government is the need to speed up the construction work of the approach road . therefore , following this, on behalf of the government. And GIDA secretary the following are requested to the honorable collector . GIDA and the kerala construction corporation contractors are fully responsible for all the accidents and loss of life arising out of the problems following pizhala- moolampilly bridge and lack of basic transport facilities due to lack of complete road infrastructure. Announce the exact date for completion of the construction of the approach road along pizhala- moolampilly bridge and make it tourist eligible and inform public or media about this date.

Pizhala- moolampilly approach road construction corporation should be investigated by the independent agency. After pizhala- moolampilly bridge the arrival of tourists and the resulting polluting atmosphere should be taken into account and necessary restrictions should be put in place. Also among the demands put forward by the people of pizhala is to ensure efficiency regarding the duration of the developmental activities of pizhala under GIDA which is the agency for the development for the islanders. Boats and ferry services are important in the lives of people in pizhala. People are facing many travel problems after pizhala- moolampilly bridge. The cancelled ferry services and boat services will be useful for students and pedestrians so resume the cancelled ferry services. Resumptions of ferry services to restore livelihood of the ferry workers. The construction of ST. Francis school, restarted in pizhala is more useful for the children of pizhala. People living in the eastern part of pizhala have faced many problems related to the construction of water metro.

From the information collected as part of this project, the problems faced by the residents can be solved to some extent through some solutions and recommendations ; encourage private participation in ferry service, resume ferry services to facilitate traffic, the government should be ready to acquire the land related to the construction of the approach road. If timing of the primary center is increased by few hours more it will be very beneficial for the people. The establishment of government supplyco should be included in pizhala for emergencies and essential food items. The water authority should take necessary decisions after understanding the lack of water facilities in pizhala. Pizhala is a developing village .following by the current development the pizhala island can be made as a developing place in kochi.

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## **APPENDIX**

## APPENDIX



**Pizhala Ferry Service**





## **Pizhala Bridge**



## **Human Bridge**



## **Damage Occurred During Bridge Construction**





**Protests by the Islander against Government Actions**