

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

Irinjalakuda is a town in the South Indian state of Kerala, which is noted for its age old presence and harmonious existence of Hindu, Muslim and Christian cultures. Irinjalakuda is one of the thirty two Brahman settlements which were founded in Kerala well before the establishment of the Cera kingdom with their new capital at Mahodayapuram. It is famous for the Koodalmanikyam temple that has Bharata as the main deity. The Diocese of Irinjalakuda and St Thomas Cathedral, the famous Christian church is located in the heart of the town. 'Pindiperunal', the traditional church festival of Irinjalakuda is an attraction of all the people without caste distinction. Juma Masjid, the mosque of the Muslim brethren is located in the Northern part of the town. Religious co existence paved the way for stability and social harmony through the ages.

Irinjalakuda is located on state Highway 22(Kerala), which links to major national highways NH47and NH17 in the state. Irinjalakuda is 32km south of Trichur. Two main roads SH 22 and SH 61 criss-crosses Irinjalakuda town. SH 22 connects Shornur and kodungalloor, SH 61connects Potta and Moonupeedika. The nearest railway station is the Irinjalakuda railway station which is about 7km East of the town centre at Kallettumkara en route to Chalakudy. Near by towns are chalakudy, which is 18km East, the temple town of Kodungalloor 16km South, Edathirinji is 8km South West of Irinjalakuda. The sea shore is 7km on its West. The nearest Airport is the Cochin International Airport at Nedumbaseery, 34 km away.

As of 2001 India census Irinjalakuda had a population of 28,873. Males constitute 48% of the population and females 52%. Irinjalakuda has an average literacy rate of 87% which is much higher than the national average of 59.5%. While male literacy stands at 88%, female literacy is 86%.

Irinjalalakuda assembly constituency was a part of Mukundapuram (Loksabha Constituency). Now it is a part of Trichur (Loksabha Constituency).

Irinjalakuda is blessed with its age old cultural heritage. In the era of renaissance and reform movement, the contribution of Irinjalakuda is noteworthy. The gigantic banyan tree situated near bus stand stands as a symbol of Irinjalakuda provides a harmonious and peaceful atmosphere where people can gather and listen to various eminent speakers is truly a witness of

history. The ancient koodalmanikyam temple and its temple festival attract thousands and thousands even today. Irinjalakuda pindiperunnal, the church festival of the catholics and the related vedikkettu-fireworks and its attraction even today is proverbial. Personalities like Unnayi Warriar, Ammannur Madhava Chakyar, C R Kesavan vaidyar, K Radhakrishnan, Innocent etc recalls the vivid cultural heritage of Irinjalakuda.

In this research work we have tried to draw a detailed picture of Irinjalakuda, its past and present. For this study we mainly depended on natives of Irinjalakuda as informants for recent history. Besides, books and souvenirs, many important historical documents also used for the study.

In first chapter we included a general profile of historical importance of Irinjalakuda based on historical documents. Next we described land and polity of Irinjalakuda. Here a detailed account given on Municipality, Panchayaths, Government institutions, market and other social places. The third chapter gives a detailed description of Christianity and the diocese of Irinjalakuda. In this portion we included important places and personalities, statistics of the various institutions, the charitable activities and the social interactions of the diocese etc. A brief account of almost all educational institutions in Irinjalakuda is included in the study. Health related institutions also described here as one chapter. Biography of great figures who contributed immensely to history, literature, art, culture and science also given in detail. Brief profile of the history and present functioning of cultural centers like Unnayi Warriar Kalanilayam, Ammanuur Gurukulam, Libraries, Theatres and recreation clubs etc are included.