

PALACE AT THIRUVATTAR - A GLANCE

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The old historical palace was situated on the eastern side of the Adhikesava Perumal Temple at Thiruvattar. On those days whenever the Venadu rulers visited this temple they used to stay there. It was earlier known as *Toniman Perumal Palace*.¹ After the decline of Venadu power, it was come under the control of Travancore kings. Thiruvattar palace was approximately situated in three acres of land. The main portion of the whole building consists of a hall measuring 32'x 20 1/2' with three foot thick walls and a *varandah* of 7 1/2 wide running all round. A total of forty eight wooden pillars support the *varandah* roof. The upper floor is divided into five spans covered with a wooden ceiling. The main and the *varandah* roofs were Dutch tiled over thembavoo² rafters 6"x2". *Nalukettu* was situated on the right side building and there was a kitchen and *varandah* in front of it. Rooms are located on the left side of *Nalukettu* at the main entrance of the compound wall and the flight of steps leading to the river Paraliyar is built with the help of big cut stones.³ The river is flowing near to the palace and there was facility to get down to the river through staircases to take bath comfortably by the kings.

Sri Mulam Tirunal, the Travancore king made a tour of Thiruvattar and arrangements were made for his visit in the beginning of February, 1900. On February 9, he started his journey from Trivandrum through Neyattinkarai he reached Kuzhithurai on February 10, in that night he spent his time and stayed in the palace at Kuzhithurai. On the next day, he arrived at Thiruvattar, there visited newly constructed buildings - Magistrate Court, Police Station, English School and Iron Bridge. The chief engineer made arrangements in the Thiruvattar Palace for holding offices, take rest and relaxation. On February 12, Maharajah visited Pechipparai on that day itself returned to Thiruvattar and stayed at Thiruvattar Palace. On

13 and 14, February he stayed at Kuzhithurai Palace and from there through Neyattinkarai he returned to his Palace at Trivandrum⁴.

Condition Palace after 1910

Since 1910, the palace was in dilapidated condition and Diwan Peishkar of Southern Division often inspects the palace and reported its condition in 1913 and 1914 respectively. On September 7, 1914 the Chief Engineer reported to the Chief Secretary to the Government that the walls of the building were sound condition but, there were some cracks at the crown of the arches over the doors, on the ground floor and upper floor. In the wooden ceiling, the planks are damaged and there were leakages in the roofs and the wooden pillars supporting the *varandah* roof were rotten. In the upper floor, the beams and joists were in sound condition but sagged. The joists were not in uniform level and the floor became loose and shaky and the *varandah* foot rafters were all rotten and the roofs were leaky.⁵

The estimate also submitted by him was the first floor was dismantled and the decayed planks of the upper ceiling were removed and also the whole floor lay at the right angles to the joists. The rotten wood works of the roof was replaced with new scantlings and the whole roof was covered with tiles as it was done on the same portions of the building. The rotten ends of the *varandah* posts were sawn off and the granite bases were placed at the cost of rupees 3000/-. *Nalukettu* on the right side was almost in good condition except the kitchen and the *varandah* in front of it. The roof timbers of the later were slightly decayed and some of them needed renovation. The old Dutch tiles should be replaced with Mangalore pattern. The cost of the repairs was about rupees thousand five hundred to rupees two thousand. All the rooms on the left