

## Odanthurai – The Wonder Village

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### Abstract

Odanthurai– The Living Example of Transformation.

R Shanmugam The Face behind this transformation, was elected as the panchayat head in 1996, after the end of 5 year tenure of his father & introduced various developmental scheme's in his tenure (1996-2006) which transformed the village having grass huts, no electricity, no drinking facility, no school to a smart village which is self sufficient in terms of electricity, every person having a roof to live, basic facilities such as 24/7 electricity, drinking water, Basic urinary facility at each house as well as all over the village & a public school. In Year 2006 saw the end of his tenure as the panchayat seats were reserved for women, his wife lingamal took over as the head of the panchayat, R Shanmugam supported his wife during her tenure (2006-2016) in case of important developmental decision's. This Village have set an example that every village in India can transform into smart village, if it has strong leadership & proper decision making, corruption free administration, public participation & Utilization of the developmental policies created by state to the fullest.

**Keywords:-***Odanthurai, developmental scheme, corruption free administration, developmental policies, strong leadership*

### Introduction: -

Imagine A Village where every person has a roof above him, self-sufficient in terms of electricity, piped drinking water, 24x7 electricity, every home having urinal facility, basic urinal facility all over the village, clean roads, no farm labor's, loan's having zero defaulters. Acanthurid, A Wonder Village located 40 km north of Coimbatore, capital of Tamil Nadu, has become an Ideal Village for every village in India, attracting president of World Bank, Ministers of Africa, Researchers & Students from all around the world. But, Acanthurid had a different picture before 1996, it was a village full of grass huts, with a population of 1050 people, no water facility, no electricity, no basic education & problems like any other Village faces. But the picture changed when Shanmugam took the lead of panchayat in 1996 & introduced a serious of development proposals. The changing scenario entails how and in which manner transformation took place.

### Objectives: -

- 1) To Understand the Importance of Corruption Free Governance.
- 2) To Understand the Importance of Participation of People in The Development process.
- 3) To Understand the Importance of utilizing current benefits provided by the state, to the fullest.
- 4) To Understand the power of decision making in a decentralized government.
- 5) To Understand the Importance of Strong Leadership.

### Methodology: -

Use of secondary method for collecting data was preferred for this research paper, articles from top newspapers like Business Standard, The Indian Express & The Hindu Were Referred.

### Data Collection :-

#### Developmental Policies Under the Governance of R Shanmugam

##### 1) Construction Of houses under the scheme green house.

Odanthurai was a village with a population of 1050 with grass huts all over and no one owned their own house. But, in 1996, R Shanmugam took the advantage of the green house scheme of the Government. Under this scheme 850 houses were built and handed over to the house owner.

The Village Saw a reverse migration & today the population of Odanthurai is more than 9,500, where every person has a house to live.

## 2) **Development Of Water Facilities (Pipeline, Booster Station, Filtration Unit & Overhead TankCrore)**

In 1996, villagers had to travel 2-3 Km long to Bhavani River, to get drinking water. This Problem was addressed by the panchayat & by the end of 1997, every village of the panchayat had borewell & overhead tank. After that, Shanmugam addressed this problem and proposed a loan of Rs 30 lakh with the state To Set Up Pipeline's, but the proposal was rejected due to the amount. In 1999, Mr. Shanmugam again kept the proposal for setting up pipeline's, this time he approached the proposal under the Rajiv Gandhi National Drinking Water & Sanitization mission, till then the project cost increased to 48,00,000, Mr. Shanmugam managed to collect 4.8 lakh i.e., 10% of project cost from the villager's, this was the highest village contribution, under the scheme & the proposal was passed. A 13 Km Pipeline, Booster System, Filtration unit was built in a time span of 11 months.

## 3) **Installation Of Wind Mill**

It Was observed that 60% Income of the panchayat was spent on electricity bills, street lights ,motor, Booster System &filtration Unit, to resolve the matter, Mr. Shanmugam applied for the loan with the Nationalized bank for Rs 1.15 Crore for the installation of wind mill , when he observed that many private company were acquiring the land at subsidiary rate, to install the windmill with the help of Government, he thought that installing the windmill for the Village would be a good idea as all the natural resources required to produce electricity like land & Wind belongs more to the villages, this time the Village Contributed `35 Lakh and the proposal was passed under the Remuneration Enterprise Scheme in year 2005-2006, The State Government could not believe the Entrepreneur spirit of the R Shanmugam, amazed with the public participation the state passed the scheme & the loan was sanction by the nationalized Bank. The Windmill Generates 6.75 lakh megawatts energy of which 4.75 lakh megawatts is consumed by village itself & the remaining 2 lakh units are sold to the Tamil Nadu State Electricity Board which generates a Revenue of Rs 19 lakh. Today It has repaid loan, principle & Interest amounting to Rs 1.84 Crore & are generating revenue of Rs 19 Lakh per Anum form selling the units.

## 4) **Setting up Microfinance Scheme**

The panchayat provides loan to the people at the interest rate as low as 1% & the loan amount starts from Rs 100-10,000. Many Ministers were sent to study this microfinance scheme. Mr. Shanmugam took advantage of this opportunity & charged them Rs 1000 per person to attend the session of microfinance

## 5) **Setting up of School**

Odanthurai, didn't have any school, the students had to travel 4 km far from the village to avail primary as well as secondary education. Under the governance of Mr. Shanmugam, Primary& Secondary school was set up in the village itself. Today, the Panchayat have its own school for primary & secondary education & there are hardly any dropout's.

## 6) **Participation of Village**

Every Scheme Proposed by R Shanmugam saw participation on a huge level by the villager's, trust played the important factor, they knew every time any proposal raised by Shanmugam is for the development of the village. Villagers had so much faith in him that, in year 1996 he was elected as panchayat head, the tax collection was as low as Rs 20,000 & at the end of the year i.e.,1997 it raised to Rs 3.75 lakh. The villages participation was through support as well as action, every person in the village tries to keep the village clean on his/her own level, no wonder why this village is one of the cleanest villages of India.





1) Green House Scheme (Construction & Hand Over of 850 Houses Under the scheme “Green House”)



2) Windmill (Built by taking loan of Rs 1.15 Crore from nationalized bank under the Remuneration Enterprise Scheme & contribution of villagers of Rs 35 lakh)



3) School (Set Up of local school which provides primary & secondary education, so that the children don't have to travel 4 km to other villages for education)



4) A Public Toilet in Odanthurai



5) Then V/S Now

**Conclusion: -**

Every Village of India has a potential to transform itself from a poor village having no basic facilities of any electricity, drinking water, sanitization to a smart village like Odanthurai, with right leadership, corruption free decentralized governance, utilization of available developmental schemes for villages provided by state & public participation.

