

## CHAPTER 9

# TRADE AND COMMERCE

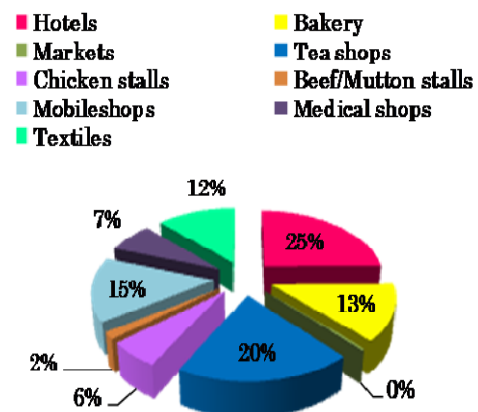
*Trade and commerce plays a pivotal role in shaping the development of any city's economy by making a significant contribution in terms of tax revenues and providing gainful employment. It attracts the public to the city leading to the overall economic growth. Thus a city grows as its trade and commerce flourish.*

*This chapter deals with the various commercial activities taking place within the Municipal Corporation area and existing trade centres. Also, the chapter discusses the hierarchy of commercial clusters in the Corporation boundary, economic profile such as key economic drivers of the Corporation, spatial distribution of economic activity, a brief on informal sector activity in the city and the problems and potentials of the Corporation area.*

### 9.1 EXISTING SCENARIO

Trade is the basic component of economic activity. As trade and commerce flourishes, the city grows. At present, the commercial activities as well as trade centres are mainly concentrated in and around Kannur zone. Ayikkara fish market, South

Bazar, Central market, Varam fish market, Kakkad fish market are the important markets in the Municipal Corporation area. The data regarding commercial activities in the planning area is shown in Figure.9.1 and it shows that most of the commercial activities are based on hotels, tea shops, mobile shops, bakeries and textiles.



*Figure.9.1 Types of commercial activities in Kannur Municipal Corporation area*

#### 9.1.1 IMPORTANT COMMERCIAL NODES AND THEIR HIERARCHY

Based on the existing status of commercial centres and their potentiality, hierarchy of commercial

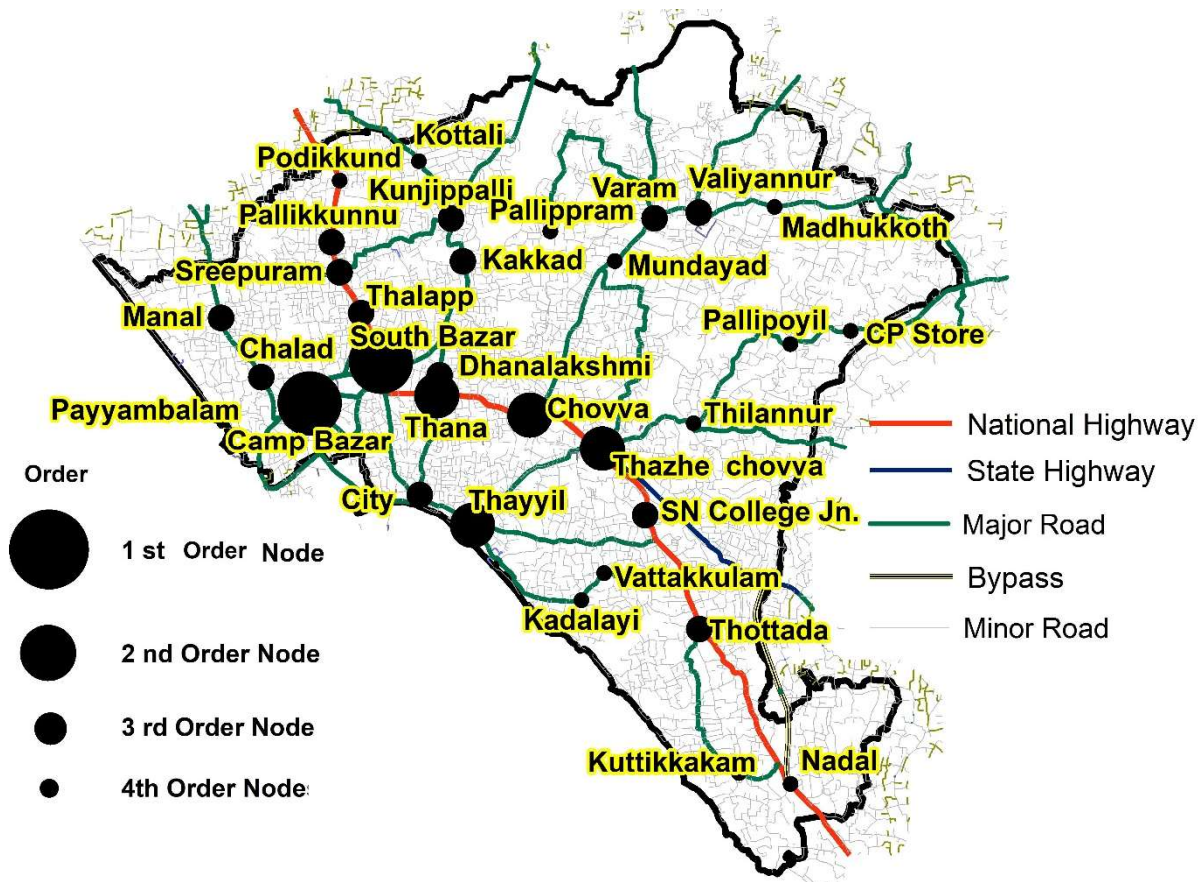


Figure.9.2 Major commercial nodes in the Kannur Municipal Corporation area

nodes in the Municipal Corporation area were identified. The spatial distribution of commercial nodes of different hierarchies is given Figure.9.2.

The figure indicates that Kannur zone (erstwhile Kannur municipality) is one of the first order commercial towns over a century and it is the most important commercial centre of the district. The central commercial area of old bus stand, new bus stand and the establishments on the either sides of the Thavakara main road, Fort road, Plaza junction to Prabath

junction road, Railway station road and NH 66 passing through the Corporation area constitute the highest trade and industries related activity zone.



Plaza Junction

Thus the major commercial nodes are located along the straight stretch of roads and on all important intersections of roads where there is high concentration of commercial activities occur. In the case of linear development, commercial activity or physical developments are there within a distance of 250 m. Since it is an important port town during ancient days, traders from all over the world came here to buy various items like spices, coconut oil etc.

Kannur and Caltex are coming under first order commercial nodes which include Plaza Junction, Central Market, Thavakkara, Prabhath Junction etc. Shopping malls, hotels, textiles, retail and whole sale shops, banks, bus stand, railway station etc. are located in these nodes. The central market is acting as an important collection as well as the distribution of food materials and general provisions brought from other areas and neighbourhood locality. Electronics, medical stores, textiles, stationery fancy, footwear shops, hotels and bakery are the other major trading places.



*Collectorate Road*

South Bazar; a market place on the NH 66 from Kannur to Taliparamba is very near to Caltex junction. Many government offices including District Collectorate, Taluk Office, Corporation Office, KSEB, Police Station etc. are located here. From Caltex, vehicles take diversions to bus stand, city, and all other parts of the planning area. The wholesale and retail of building materials and hardwares are also predominant activities here. Because of the traffic signal, free movement of the vehicles occur and hence only less traffic congestion and accidents occur. Pedestrians can cross the road easily because of the traffic signal. KSRTC depot is also located here. South Bazaar, a major commercial street of the area is always in traffic congestion. This is one of the main problems in this area.

Thana, City, Mele Chovva and Thazhe Chovva are second order commercial nodes. Thana is a commercial suburb in Kannur City. It is a junction of roads connecting Thana - Kakkad Road and Thana - Anayidukk Road to NH 66. Some shopping centres and private hospitals, KWA, Auditoriums, Car and Bike showrooms, Construction materials shops etc. are situated around Thana. The District Ayurveda Hospital is also situated there. The headquarters of North Malabar chamber of commerce is also situated nearby. Mele Chovva and Thazhe Chovva areas consist of commercial

shops including medical shops, hospital, service centre, schools etc. City area is the old main town centre of the planning area. Even though many old shops are there, some of them are decaying.

Ayikkara fish market also exists in the City area. The commercial centres there are significant in their way Ayikkara fish market, will be active in the morning itself. All types of fishes are available there. It is close to Ayikkara fishing harbour. Entry fee is charged for four wheelers but the area is left always unclean and the buildings need maintenance.

Talap, Sreepuram, Pallikunnu, Kunhippally, Kakkad, Thottada, Dhinalakshmi, SN College Junction, Vaaram, Valiyannur are third order nodes in Kannur Corporation area. Shopping malls, super markets, hospitals, schools, theatres, colleges, shops, medical stores, restaurants, tea shops, temples etc. are located in these areas.

Apart from the retail trade centres in the CBD, there are small scale commercial nodes that are distributed all over the planning area satisfying the daily needs of the residents. Podikkund, Kottali, Pallippram, Mundayad, Madhukoth, Pallipoyil, CP store, Thillannur, Vattakkulam, Kadalayi, Nadal etc. are some fourth order nodes in the planning area. Even

though it is well connected and serviced by road to all major cities, the development of commercial activities is haphazard in the Municipal Corporation area.

### 9.1.2 INFORMAL SECTOR/ STREET VENDORS

Urban planning in developing countries; particularly in cities with rapid urbanization is facing a problem with the informal sector it consists of all jobs which are not recognized as normal income sources, and on which taxes are not paid. Informal sector consists of retail or service unit, stationery or mobile, working without roof or in small kiosks on roadside. The informal sector mainly comprises of street vendors who offer goods or services for sale to the public without having a permanent built-up structure but with a temporary static structure or mobile stall (or carried as head load). Such unplanned growth affects the urban order and cleanliness of the city. Thus, conflicts arise between urban authorities trying to keep their cities clean and the urban informal sector operators who need space for their activities.

The spatial distribution of street vendors of the planning area is shown in Figure.9.3. About 200 street vendors



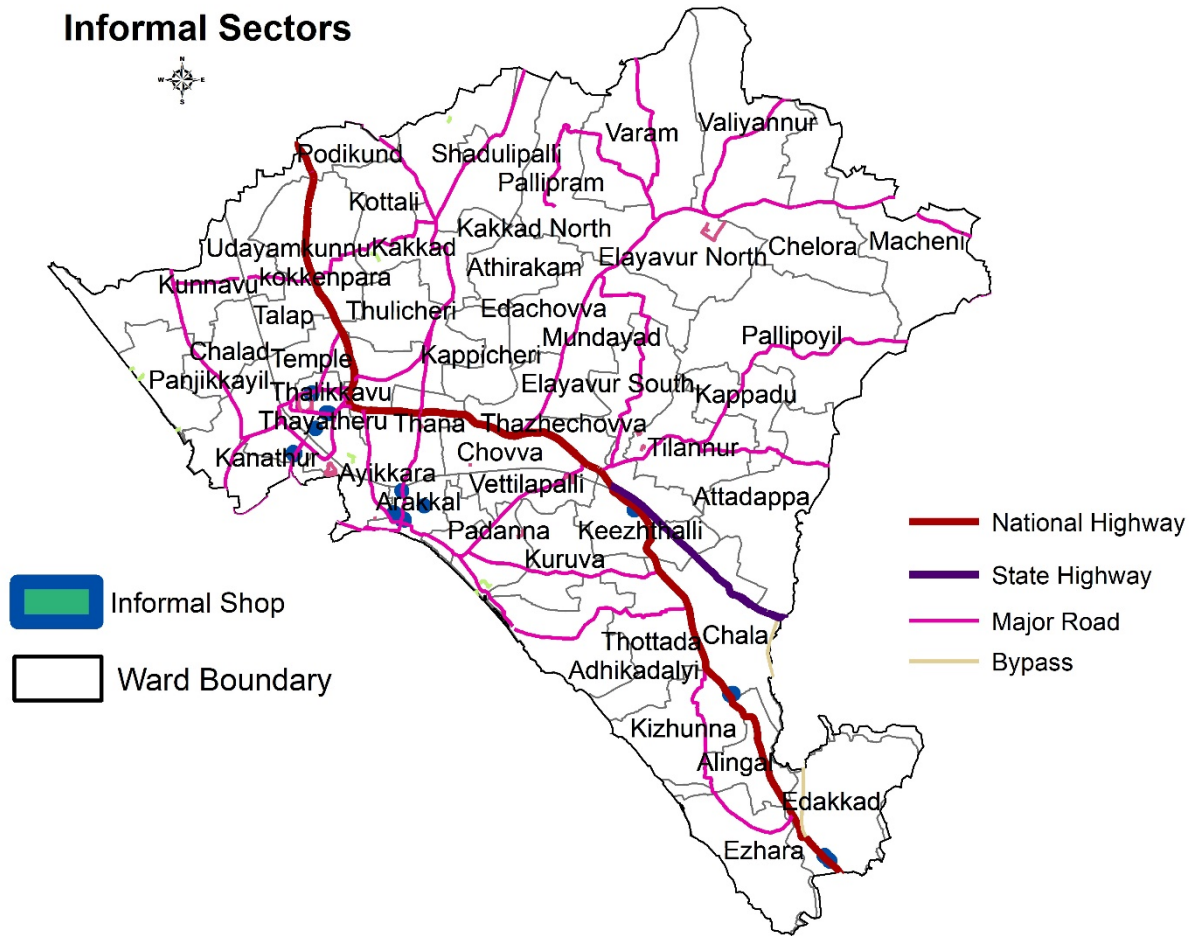


Figure.9.3 Spatial distribution of informal sectors

find their livelihood there though their distribution is not uniform. Informal sector activity is managed by fruit vendors, dress materials and tea stall owners. Higher concentration is seen in stadium, market, plaza junction etc. Tendency of street vendors is to settle in areas where there is constant movement of people. Higher concentration is seen in the Stadium, Market, Sub jail road, Press club road, Station road etc.

## 9.2 DEVELOPMENT POTENTIALS AND PROBLEMS

Kannur Municipal Corporation area is the district headquarters, which indicates its commercial importance. Commercial centres are concentrated in the central area of the district. The major problem faced by the city is the congestion at commercial units due to insufficient space. It is due to vehicular and pedestrian traffic beyond the capacity

of the existing facilities. It prevents smooth manoeuvring of vehicles causing frequent traffic block and also lack of basic infrastructure facilities.

The Corporation area is centrally located in the district and has good connectivity with all parts of the district and many commercial centres within the central area are lying close to bus terminals which only make the city congested. The problems due to the narrow road network at market area and lack of parking facilities, and proper signals, insufficient loading and unloading facilities, narrow roads and congested street in busy market area are the main disadvantages of the planning area.

Ayikkara fish market is not maintained properly. Not only Ayikkara market, but also the central market is also not maintained properly. Solid waste management is the main issues occurring there. Lack of public comfort stations is adversely affecting the hygienic condition of the Corporation.

In the planning area, there exist a large number of informal sector units which are not organized clusters. Organised informal units with their eating places with casual shopping facilities are needed to be provided at all the informal potential areas.

The location of stationery units is not uniform and it should be ensured that such activities shall not be concentrated on single location. The

increased number of informal sector as well as the lack of sufficient public comfort stations is other issues faced by the planning area.

Since the major commercial nodes have easy access from bus terminals, functioning of weekly markets will be very useful for the people as well as the farmers. Well planned weekly markets should be started at every commercial node.

### 9.3 INFERENCE

At present, the development of trade and commerce in Kannur Municipal Corporation area is very encouraging. The first order commercial nodes are mainly concentrated in town wards or Kannur zone; (the erstwhile Kannur municipality). It is the main commercial node which is mostly characterized by congestion due to vehicular and pedestrian traffic beyond the capacity of the existing facilities. Narrow roads and lack of parking areas are the main issues in the Corporation area which prevent smooth manoeuvring of vehicles causing frequent traffic block. The Corporation has to acquire suitable land for truck terminals, parking plazas etc.

Since major commercial centres within the central area are lying close to bus terminals, the development of bus terminals are very essential. The existing commercial nodes require

further development to catalyze the economic development and to provide the people a healthy town.

Ayikkra market as well as the central market should be well maintained and developed for the convenience of the people. The location of present stationery units shall be considered for relocation or improvement. The local authorities should take new designs of stalls, push-carts and mobile van of various sizes and should provide cleaning facilities. Proper waste collection facilities should be provided to every shop.

In new urban areas, informal bazaars could be part of the planned commercial areas at two levels. These could be implemented in the initial planning stages along with development of residential areas. There are large numbers of informal sector units in the city but they are not organized clusters and are mainly concentrated in Stadium and Plaza areas only. There is a need to provide for organised informal eating places along with casual shopping. An

informal unit shall not be permitted within a distance half of the width of the road from an intersection. The areas of informal sector shall have suitable public conveniences and solid waste disposal arrangements.

Weekly markets, the traditional style of retail shopping is quite popular in Kerala, especially among the lower and middle income groups. They have a good potential in the planning area. These markets should be operating in a systematic manner choosing locations central to a large population centres either on vacant land or on the roadsides. Major commercial nodes can be taken as their location. Parking and other open spaces within the service markets, commercial centres could be so designed that weekly markets can operate in these areas during non-working hours.

Establishment of more comfort stations and ensuring of their regular maintenance by the authority at every major commercial centre is essential for making the planning area healthy as well as hygienic.

