

# Decision for Kalingarayan's statue appreciated

Statue to come up at Nasuvampalayam; the anicut to be a tourism spot

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Special Correspondent

**ERODE:** Chief Minister Jayalithaa's announcement to install a statue of Kalingarayan in recognition of the Kongu chieftain's construction of a 56.5 mile canal named after him and to convert the anicut he had created on River Bhavani into a place of tourism importance, evoked widespread appreciation from farmers and other sections of the public in Erode district.

The canal constructed in a meandering formation for the purpose of covering maximum possible irrigational areas, runs through the entire Erode district up to the banks of River Noyyal.

The canal, laid 730 years ago, wets 15,743 acres in the district. It irrigates vast stretches of turmeric, sugarcane and paddy fields. The Chief Minister had announced that the statue would come up at Nasuvampalayam.

Lauding the Chief Minister's decision, S. Nallasamy, secretary, Federation of Tamil Nadu Agriculturists' Association, said Kalingarayan must be considered the harbinger of linking of rivers as he had established the canal linking the Cauvery and the Noyyal at a time when there was no scientific development.



**STURDY CONSTRUCTION** The serene embankment adds to the beauty of the canal constructed by Kalingarayan, the Kongu chieftain, in whose honour the State Government has decided to install a statue. — PHOTO: M. GOVARTHAN

He praised the State Government for concrete-lining the canal at a cost of Rs. 50 crore to prevent pollution caused by discharge of effluents by dyeing, bleaching and tannery units.

The announcement has fulfilled the demand we have been making for over 10 years. The statue would be a fitting tribute for a visionary who had laid the canal with his own money, B.M. Velayudham, president, Kaalingarayan Pasana Sabai, said.

"Concrete lining of the canal has been completed from the fourth furlong of third

mile to seventh furlong of ninth mile. Funds have now been sanctioned for concrete-lining from the first mile to the fourth furlong of the third mile. We request the Chief Minister to sanction more funds to extend the work from the seventh furlong of the ninth mile to the 15th mile. For this, Rs. 60 crore more would be required," Mr. Velayudham said.

At its meeting on Thursday, the District Planning Committee thanked the Chief Minister for the decision. Irrigation in remote parts of Erode was made possible by

Kalingarayan, the committee chairman S.R. Selvam said.

Special Correspondent adds from Chennai:

Earlier on Thursday, Chief Minister Jayalithaa said a statue of Pandya ruler Kalingarayan, who transformed several thousand acres of fallow land into fertile farms by an irrigation canal, will be installed in Erode district.

In an official release, the Chief Minister said Kalingarayan was a pioneer in the interlinking of rivers and the irrigation facilities that he created benefit 15,743 acres of farmlands.