

KALINGARAYAN

Kalingarayan (then named Lingaiyan by parents) was the son of Nanjaiya Gouder , of Kanagapuram Village near Vellode in Erode District in the 13th Centruy.

Lingaiyan joined the army of Pandya King Veerapandyan as an ordinary Soldier. By virtue of his heroic actions rose high in rank as the Chief of Veera Pandyan's army. Later by sheer wisdom he became the minister of Veera Pandyan who awarded him the title "Kalingarayan" a very high honour.

He was appointed to rule over the Kongu Nadu on behalf of the Pandyan King.

As a welfare for the people he built a barrage across the Bhavani river near a place where there is the confluence of the river Cauvery and river Bhavani. From the barrage he dug a canal of length 91 KM at the end of which the canal empties into Noyyal a tributary of Cauvery. He also built a dam across Noyyal river, another tributary of river Cauvery the remains of which can be seen even today He also became a forerunner in linking of rivers.

In Kalingarayan dam is situated at 534 MSL and the place where the canal empties into the Noyyal is at 412 MSL, the distance between measures 32 miles. This works at 3.79 feet fall per mile. Along the course he has avoided raised lands and dug the canal winding and twisting its course; so the distance of 32 miles has to be covered in 56½ Mile Distance. Using the natural land level he has completed the canal. Therefore his knowledge and skill in Engineering has to be lauded.

After completing the canal work, (1281, '5th month of Thai') he proclaimed that none of his own descendants should use the benefit of the canal irrigation. This is adhered even to this day. He then turned his attention to the welfare of the downloded and ordered that they could put on chappals, plaster their houses and play musical instruments for function (these were prohibited to them)

He renovated old lakes and also dug new ponds and lakes. He

cleared forest areas and helped people to inhabit them there.

He attended to renovation of temples and as far the tax he ordered that least force should be used in the matter of tax collection.

There are many literary reference praising the achievements of Kalingarayan in the inscriptions and copper plates.

He completed the canal work in the year 1281 and on the 5th of Thai, the tamil month. This great work has been appreciated by many English Scholars and researches.