

ആചാര്യന്റെ കിളികുടുംബം എഴുത്തുകാരനും എഴുത്തുകാരനും  
ഒരു പ്രതീകാത്മകം ഉണ്ടാക്കി  
രായമം-ബ്രോൺസ്, ശില്പി - ബാലൻ താനൂർ

# Malappuram

Benoy Peter and Vishnu Narendran



Despite lack of major industries, most of the towns in Malappuram have significant presence of migrant workers from Tamil Nadu and West Bengal, indicating high incidence of small scale construction.



Malappuram district does not have any major industrial hub. There are some public sector enterprises in Kuttippuram and Edappal. Industrial units such as footwear, furniture or engineering firms can be found scattered in the district. The Kottackal Arya Vaidya Shala at Kottackal is an important enterprise in the district. Fishing is another industry given the district's long coastline. Laterite mining takes place across the taluks. The quarries in the district were dormant at the time of undertaking this fieldwork due to court intervention. Fishing, laterite mining and construction are the major industries that depend on migrant workers. The furniture industry has workers from Saharanpur in Uttar Pradesh and footwear industry engages workers mainly from Bihar. Young men from Tripura and West Bengal were also found working in restaurants in Tirur.

Despite the lack of major industries, most of the towns in Malappuram have significant presence of migrant workers from Tamil Nadu and West Bengal, indicating high incidence of small scale construction. Malappuram, Manjeri, Perinthalmanna, Kottackal, Tirur, Ponnani, Edappal, Valanchery, Kadungattukund, Indianoor, Tanur, Parappanangadi and Chelari were some of the migrant pockets identified. Besides workers from Tamil Nadu and West Bengal, presence of workers from Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, Tripura, Assam, Rajasthan and Jharkhand has also been documented. Tiruchirappally, Dharmapuri, Thiruvapur, Madurai, Viluppuram, Virudhunagar and Ariyalur districts are the source areas in Tamil Nadu. Bardhaman, Jalpaiguri, Murshidabad, South 24 Parganas, Nadia, Bankura, Cooch Behar and Hooghly are the districts in West Bengal from where workers come to Malappuram in large numbers. Workers from West Bengal in Tirur reported significant presence of migrants from Bangladesh in the district. There are migrants from Gorakhpur, Mau and

Unnao districts in Uttar Pradesh, and Golpara, Kamrup, Dhubri, Kokrajhar, Chirang and Morigaon districts in Assam working in Malappuram district. Bardhaman – Malappuram has almost evolved as a migration corridor between Kerala and West Bengal. Significant presence of families with children was not identified in the district. However, there are Tamil couples here who have come to work leaving their children with relatives in their native places.

### Marine Fishing

Ponnani is the major fish landing centre in Malappuram district. Migrants from Tamil Nadu and West Bengal worked on the fishing boats. Workers from Kanyakumari district in Tamil Nadu are mostly engaged as captain, and migrants from West Bengal work as deck hands. A significant proportion of workers from West Bengal in the fishing sector are Hindus. South 24 Parganas, from where traditional fishers from West Bengal come to work in major harbours in Kerala, was reported as the major source district. There were men from Madhya Pradesh, Jharkhand and Moradabad in Uttar Pradesh who work at the harbour loading and unloading fish and ice. The fishers live on the boats or in rented rooms near the Ponnani harbour.

### Laterite Mining

Laterite mining units are spread across most of the taluks in Malappuram. Indianoor near Kottackal and Melmuri near Malappuram town are the mining areas visited. The workers here are tribal Hindu men from Assam who said they hailed from Golpara, Dhubri, Kokrajhar or Kamrup districts. There were also workers from Bardhaman, Jalpaiguri and Cooch Behar in West Bengal. At the time of the visit, some mines had been closed on account of demonetisation, and workers had been instructed to wait for a week to resume work.

## Labour Nakas

Most of the towns in the district have labour *nakas*. In Tirur there are geographic demarcations of the *naka* and workers are conscious of it. Workers from Tamil Nadu, mostly from Viluppuram and Tiruchirappalli, wait in front of the private bus stand and at the ring road junction. The migrants from West Bengal seek work from the Masjid Bazar area. Bardhaman, Murshidabad and Bankura are the districts in West Bengal reported by the workers in the Masjid Bazar *naka* as their native places. Edappal junction, Kuttippuram and Valanchery private bus stand, Kottackal private bus stand, Perinthalmanna town, Manjeri old private bus stand, Tanur railway station road junction, Thazhe Chelari, Padikkal and Vettichira are some of the labour *nakas* in the district.

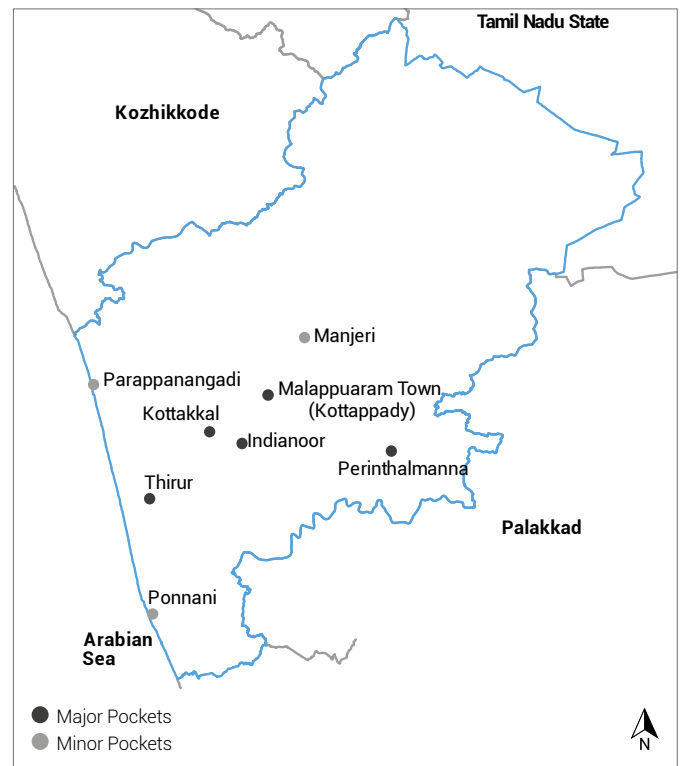
## Residential Pockets

Most of the towns in Malappuram district have typical rented facilities for migrant workers that one can easily recognise. At Nambisan Pady (Kottappady) in Malappuram near Mannur Shiva temple, there are several structures built for and rented out to migrant workers. Migrant workers from different states can be found residing in the same building though in different rooms. For instance, workers from Viluppuram, Thanjavur, Dharmapuri and Madurai districts in Tamil Nadu, who did construction work, and workers from Bardhaman and Murshidabad districts in West Bengal were found living in adjacent rooms. There were also workers from Assam.

At Melmuri, there were Tamil families from Namakkal who were engaged in granite stone work. There were also single men from Assam and West Bengal who worked in the laterite mining sector. Indianoor was another hub of migrant workers in the laterite mining sector, particularly men from Assam. At Manjeri also workers from Tamil Nadu and other states were found living in the same multi-storied building. Workers from Mau district in Uttar Pradesh, Ariyalur, Virudhunagar and Madurai districts in Tamil Nadu, and Bardhaman, 24 Parganas, Murshidabad and Nadia districts in West Bengal were also found living in Manjeri.

Kottackal is another hub of migrants. There are rooms rented out to migrants in Swagathamad area where workers, mostly from Murshidabad and 24 Parganas in West Bengal, live.

## Migrant Pockets in Malappuram District, 2016-17



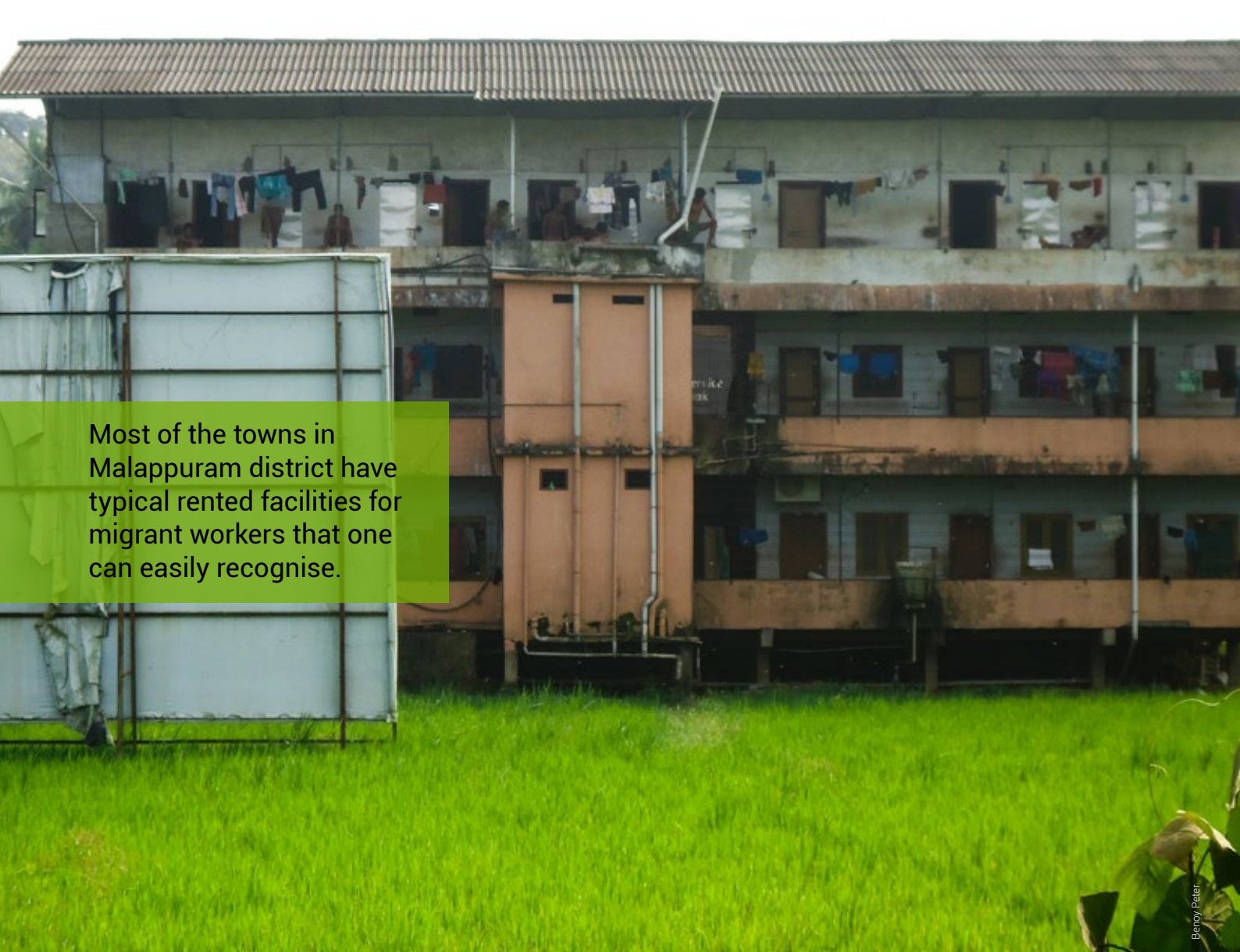
Indicative map, not to scale

At Parappanangadi, there are several buildings on Tanur Road that house workers from West Bengal, Assam and Odisha.

Perinthalmanna has a colony of Tamil workers where migrants from Krishnagiri, Dharmapuri and Thanjavur can be found. Tirur, Ponnani, Edappal, Valanchery, Kadungattukund, and Chelari were some of the other residential pockets identified.

Migrants from Tamil Nadu and West Bengal work on the fishing boats that operate from Ponnani. Workers from Kanyakumari district in Tamil Nadu are mostly engaged as captain, and migrants from West Bengal work as deck hands.





Most of the towns in Malappuram district have typical rented facilities for migrant workers that one can easily recognise.

October 2017

## Centre for Migration and Inclusive Development

CMID is an independent non-profit think tank devoted to migration and inclusive development, advocating for and promoting the social inclusion of migrants. CMID provides evidence informed solutions for mainstreaming inter-state migrant workers in India. This district brief was prepared based on a qualitative research undertaken by the authors across the 14 districts in Kerala during November 2016–May 2017. The study was funded by Thummarukudy Foundation. CMID also acknowledges the fellowship provided to the authors by Aajeevika Bureau during the period January to June 2017.



Centre for Migration and  
Inclusive Development.

