

A Proud Chapter in Rural Electrification

The Birth and Growth of the Co-operative Electric Supply Society, Sircilla

This article honours the vision behind CESS, Sircilla - a pioneering rural electrification model that helped bring power, progress, and public service to every corner of the erstwhile Sircilla Taluka.

The history of the Co-operative Electric Supply Society (CESS), Sircilla, is not merely the story of an institution; it is the story of a social transformation. At a time when many rural areas in India were still waiting for basic infrastructure, Sircilla emerged as a remarkable example of what committed public leadership, co-operative effort, and visionary planning could achieve.

Historical Background

During the 1969-1970 period, India's power sector was receiving significant external support for infrastructure development, particularly in the field of rural electrification. American assistance, largely channelled through the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), encouraged expansion of electricity networks for agriculture, village lighting, and rural economic growth.

It was in this larger developmental backdrop that Sircilla Taluka assumed national importance. As per the historical account available, Sircilla was one among five talukas in the country selected for achieving 100% electrification through a co-operative electricity distribution model inspired by the American co-operative system.

A Landmark Achievement for Sircilla

The achievement was extraordinary. It is stated that all 173 villages in the erstwhile Sircilla Taluka were brought under electricity coverage through the formation and development of the Co-operative Electric Supply Society, Sircilla. What makes this accomplishment even more admirable is that the target was reportedly achieved within a span of only three years.

At a time when electrification itself was considered a difficult developmental challenge, such rapid and comprehensive implementation reflected efficiency, discipline, and strong local commitment. For farmers, artisans, small traders, students, and households, the arrival of electricity was not just a utility service; it was a new beginning.

The impact of this initiative can be understood in practical terms:

- village street lighting improved safety and public convenience;
- agricultural activity received a major boost through electrification support;
- small-scale industries and local occupations gained new momentum; and
- rural households became connected to a larger vision of development and dignity.

Recognition and Financial Support

The success of the Sircilla experiment did not go unnoticed. According to the account available, this accomplishment received recognition at a high level, and the Asian Development Bank extended a free grant of Rs. 5 crores nearly five decades ago - a very substantial amount in that period, when the value of the American dollar in India was around Rs. 5. In present-day terms, this historical support would represent an enormous developmental contribution.

Such recognition underlines the fact that the progress made by CESS, Sircilla, was not routine. It was viewed as a model worthy of encouragement, support, and appreciation.

Public Leadership in the Early Years

In the formative years of CESS, Sircilla, the growth of the institution was closely watched by public representatives of the erstwhile Sircilla Taluka. The available historical note refers particularly to the following MLAs who monitored and supported its early development until the first elections to the Society:

Sl. No.	Name of MLA	Year(s)
1	J. Narsing Rao (Congress)	1962 & 1972
2	Ch. Rajeshwar Rao (CPI)	1967
3	Gotte Bhupathi (Independent)	1962 & 1967

The historical note also records that leaders associated with the Congress tradition guided the RESCO/CESS structure in Sircilla for more than four decades, and that despite changes in political power at the State level, the chairmanship in Sircilla remained shaped by its own local democratic and co-operative character.

Why CESS Matters to Consumers Even Today

Consumers often look at an electricity institution only from the angle of present-day service - bill payment, supply quality, outage restoration, or new connection procedures. But institutions like CESS deserve to be remembered in a larger historical sense. They were created to take development to the people, especially in rural areas, and to ensure that electricity would become an instrument of social and economic empowerment.

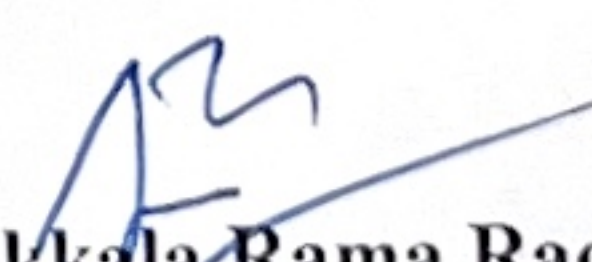
For the consumers of Sircilla, therefore, CESS is not just an office or a service provider. It is part of the region's developmental identity. Its history belongs to every farmer who irrigated his field, every household that first saw electric light, every weaver and worker whose productivity improved, and every village that entered a new era of growth.

Conclusion

The birth and growth of the Co-operative Electric Supply Society, Sircilla, stands as a proud chapter in the history of rural electrification in India. It reflects the strength of collective effort, the wisdom of public leadership, and the long-term value of service-oriented institutions. The people of Sircilla have every reason to take pride in this legacy.

As consumers, citizens, and inheritors of this legacy, we should preserve the memory of this achievement and continue to support institutions that work for public welfare, accountability, and progress.

(Based on the historical note shared)


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