

PUDUKOTTAI DISTRICT

PUDUKKOTTAI DISTRICT

1. Introduction

i) Geographical location of the district

Pudukkottai district was carved out of Tiruchirappalli and Thanjavur districts in January 1974. The district has an area of 4663 sq.km with a coast line of 42.8 km. The district lies between 78.25' and 79.15' of the Eastern Longitude and between 9.50' and 10.40' of the Northern Latitude. It is bounded by Tiruchirappalli district in the North and West, Sivaganga district in the South, Bay of Bengal in the East and Thanjavur district in the North East.

ii) Administrative profile

Administrative profile of Pudukkottai district is given below

Sl. No.	Revenue Division	Taluk	No. of villages
1	Pudukkottai	Alangudi	73
2		Gandarvakottai	37
3		Kulathur	73
4		Illuppur	87
5		Pudukkottai	39
6		Thirumayam	81
7		Ponnamaravathi	49
8		Karambakudi	50
9	Aranthangi	Aranthangi	105
10		Avudaiyarkoil	96
11		Manamelkudi	72

Sl. No.	Block	No. of Panchayats
1	Annavasal	42
2	Arimalam	32
3	Kunnandarkoil	37
4	Ponnamaravathi	43
5	Pudukkottai	28
6	Thirumayam	33
7	Viralimalai	45
8	Aranthangi	52
9	Avudaiyarkoil	35
10	Gandarvakottai	36
11	Karambakudi	39
12	Manamelkudi	28
13	Thiruvarankulam	48
	Total	498

Name of the Municipalities	No. of Wards
Pudukkottai	39
Aranthangi	27
Town Panchayats	No. of Wards
Alangudi	12
Karambakudi	22
Keeramangalam	21
Annavasal	20
Keeranur	18
Illuppur	10
Arimalam	13
Ponnamaravathi	16



iii) Meteorological information

The average rainfall in Pudukkottai is 821 mm. During northeast monsoon this district receives the highest rainfall of 397 mm followed by, South west monsoon with 303 mm of rainfall. The summer and winter rainfalls are 81 mm and 40 mm respectively. Average rainfall shows that the rainfall is highest in the south eastern part of the district, which includes the coastal blocks of Manalmelkudi and Avudayarkoil. It gradually decreases towards the northeast where the average annual rainfall is found to be the lowest in Malaiyur. The temperature is very high during summer season, low during the winter season and moderate during other months.

2. Resources-availability

i) Land resources

The total geographical area of the district is 4,663 sq.km. The predominant soil type of Pudukkottai is red loam. About one fourth of the area suffers from being salinity/alkalinity. Following table shows the land contribution of the district.

Land	Area in ha
Wet	1,03,418
Dry	1,84,057
Forest	24,010
Barren & uncultivable	9,807
Land Used for Non Agriculture Purpose	1,25,672
Cultivable Waste	14,677
Pasture Lands	5,484
Trees and Tope	6,546

ii) Agriculture and horticulture

Agriculture is the main source of sustenance for a majority of the population. Dry land farming which is predominant suffers badly due to frequent monsoon failure, affecting agricultural production. Cereals have shown fluctuations both in area cultivated and production from 1980-81 to 1995-96. The largest coverage was in 1985-86 spreading over 127,174 ha and the highest production of 314,560 tonnes was achieved in 1993-94. The highest yield of 3030 kg / ha was achieved in 1994-95. The largest area coverage, highest production and highest yield / ha of pulses were achieved in 1985 – 86. The area, production and yield / ha dwindled and fluctuated in the subsequent decade.

The important crops cultivated are as follows:

Category	Common name	Botanical name
Cereals	Rice Cholam Varagu Ragi Maize Cumbu	<i>Oryza sativa</i> <i>Sorghum bicolor</i> <i>Paspalum scrobiculatum</i> <i>Eleusine coracana</i> <i>Zea mays</i> <i>Pennisetum typhoides</i>
Pulses	Red gram Cow pea Horse gram Black gram Green gram	<i>Cajanus cajan</i> <i>Vigna unguiculata</i> <i>Dolichos biflorus</i> <i>Phaseolus mungo</i> <i>Phaseolus aureus</i>
Oil seeds	Ground nut Coconut Gingelly Soya bean	<i>Arachis hypogaea</i> <i>Cocos nucifera</i> <i>Sesamum indicum</i> <i>Glycine soya</i>
Condiments	Chillies Tamarind	<i>Capsicum annum</i> <i>Tamarindus indica</i>
Sugars	Sugarcane Palmyra	<i>Saccharum officinarum</i> <i>Borassus flabellifer</i>
Fibres	Cotton	<i>Gossypium hirsutum</i>

An interesting feature in the farm sector is the development of orchards using dry farming techniques and minimum irrigation in the formation stage. Banana is the main fruit crop under irrigation. The major fruit crops are,

Banana	<i>Musa sp.</i>
Mango	<i>Mangifera indica</i>
Jack	<i>Artocarpus heterophyllus</i>
Guava	<i>Psidium guajava</i>
Acid Lime	<i>Citrus aurantifolia</i>

Jack, guava and acid lime are raised only on a very limited scale. Except for banana, the rest are raised on the red or lateritic soil belts. Brinjal (*Solanum melongena*) and ladies finger (*Abelmoschus*

esculentus) are the two major vegetables cultivated here. A noteworthy feature of this

district is the cultivation of cashew as a rainfed crop over extensive areas in the lateritic belt. However, no cashew processing unit has been established locally. The nuts are taken to numerous processing units that have sprung around Panruti in Cuddalore district.

iii) Forest resources

Major portion of the forests of this district was the personal preserve of the kings of Pudukkottai state. Large forest areas were preserved as the hunting grounds for the rulers, their families and friends. With the merger of the princely state with Indian Union, in 1948, the control of the forests were transferred initially to the Revenue Department in 1948 and subsequently to the

Forests Department in 1950. Following tables show the details of the forest area.

Reserved forests	12,082.6 ha
Unclassed Forests	Nil
Reserved Lands	Nil

Timber (Cu.m)	7.991
Fuelwood (MT)	9,996.527
Pulpwood (MT)	22,347.635
Cashew (ha)	717.70

iv) Mineral resources

The district has no significant mineral deposits. Stone quarries exist in Pudukkottai, Tirumayam and Kulathur taluks. Multi-coloured stones, which are quarried and exported as raw stones, are found in Kulattur taluk in Narthamalai area. Clay deposits occur in Gandharvakottai and part of Pudukkottai Taluks while red ochre and yellow ochre are reported in Tirumayam taluk, though not in significant quantities. Terracotta clay is available in Mazhiyur village in Alangudi Taluk and is currently used for production of toys, grain storage bin and other clay articles. Fire clay is available in Gandharvakottai taluk. Small quantities of quartz and limestone are reported in Vellakkalpatti and Meppusakudi while kankar is reported in Adhanakottai area. The low mineral base of the district is evident in the mineral production profile, which comprises 12,000 tonnes of rough stones and 300 tonnes of multi-coloured stones. The recoverable mineral resources available in the district are granite of Kashmir white variety.

v) Water resources

Agniyar, Ammliyar, South Vellar and GA Canal are the flowing water sources of Pudukkottai district. Agniyar basin is the main source of surface water. Agniyar river basin consists of three sub basins, namely Agniyar, Ambuliyar and south Vellar. There are seven tributaries in this basin. Agniyar is having three tributaries viz Nariar I, Nariyar II and Maharajasamudram. The river Ambuliyar is having two tributaries, viz Nerunjikudiar and Gundar. There are three gauging stations in Agniyar river basin maintained by PWD.

An important point to be noted in this basin is that there are no reservoirs across any of the rivers of this basin, the main reason being none of the rivers has copious flow. There is no direct ayacut fed by the rivers of this basin. Even though there are no reservoirs in this basin it is somewhat nullified by the supplementation of Cauvery water to part of the command area through G.A.Canal. It is supplementing the ayacut under 16 anicuts located in Agniyar, Ambuliyar and their tributaries.

vi) Fisheries production

Pudukkottai district has a total coastal length of 42.8 km serving 32 coastal villages and towns. Fishermen population of Pudukkottai district is 25,027 (male 7880, female 6,746 and children 10,401). Among eleven taluks of Pudukkottai two taluks i.e. Manamelkudi and Avudaiyarkovil comprise all the 32 fishing villages. Its coastal length starts from Kattumavadi and ends with Enathi. Entire coastal length is utilized by the fisher folk for fishing. The sea stretch is situated in Palk Bay entirely in continental shelf a shallow region, muddy bottom having with various species of sea-weeds. Inland fishery, largely a seasonal activity, is concentrated in tanks and ponds in Alangudi,

Thirumayam and Kulathur taluks. The major fish varieties caught are ray fish, sharks,

vii) Heritage resources

Sittannavasal

This ancient abode of Jains dating back to the 2nd Century B.C is about 16 km from Pudukkottai . The rock-cut cave temple here has beautiful fresco paintings in natural colours as in Ajanta. The natural cavern with stone beds in which the Jain monks were said to have sought refuge for meditation. This cave contains lithic record (Brahmi Script of 2nd Century B.C). There are a few sculptures of Jain Thirthanharas in the ardhmandapam and the inner shrine of the cave temple. The ceiling of the ardhmandapam contains fresco paintings of the 9th Centure A.D. The cave temple is said to have been excavated in 9th century A.D and it is a pandya creation and art. Sittannavasal is one the oldest habitation of man in the district and is rich in megalithic sites. The cave temple and other sites are under the control of Archaeological Survey of India.

Kudumbalur

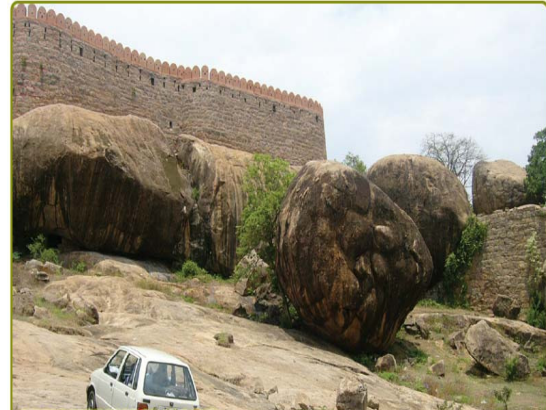
Kudumbalur is 36 km from Pudukkottai and 42 km from Thiruchirappalli. It was formerly the seat of Irukkuvelirs, who were related to the Cholas. Kodumbalur is one of the ancient places in the district and is mentioned in Silappadikaram, The epic hero and his wife are said to have passed through this place on their way to Madurai. The early Chola temple here is known as "Muvarkoil". Of the three shrines of Moovarkoil only two exist now. These temples were built by Vikramakesari in the 10th Century A.D. The architecture of the temple is unique among South Indian temples and is the forerunner of all the grand Chola monuments. The sculptures of Kalarimurthi,

prawns, silver bellies, octopus and crabs.

Gajasamharamurthi, Ardha-naari Gangadaramurthi etc., are interesting master pieces of art. The Muchukundeswarar temple of the early Chola period is another important temple of archaeological importance.

Thirumayam Fort

The Fort, the Siva and Vishnu temples are the tourist attractions here. The fort played an important role in the history of Tondaiman rulers of Pudukkottai and the British. The erection of this 40 acre wide fort in 1687 A.D is attributed to Sethupathi of Ramanathapuram. There are two cave temples one for Siva - Satyagiriswarar - and another for Vishnu - Satyamurti. Vishnu is in the form of Ananthasayi, called Adivangam. It is an of important Vishnavite centre.



Thirumayam Fort

Kudumianmalai

Kudumianmalai is 20 km from Pudukkottai. The presiding deity of the temple here is Sikhagiriswarar. There are beautiful sculptures in the temple. The temple is noted for numerous inscriptions. Remarkable among them is the one relating to a musical treatise. It is the only one of its kind, dating to 8-9th century AD., and the

notations can be played in a veena called 'Pirivadini' with 8 strings. There is a rock-cut cave temple with massive bas-relief dwarapalakas and with the architectural features of Hoysala style which belongs to 8-9th century A.D. The Anna Agricultural Farm and Agriculture Research Institute are the other interesting features of this place.

Viralimalai

The temple of Lord Subramanya at this place is on a hillock. It is a peacock sanctuary. It is 30 km from Trichy and 40 km from Pudukkottai. The Principal idol Lord Subramanya with Valli and Devasena is seated on a peacock. It is one of the important centres of Lord Muruga and various festivals relating to Lord Muruga are celebrated here.



Viralimalai

Avur

The old chapel here was constructed in 1547 A.D by Father John Venantius Bouchet and the new Roman Catholic Church was constructed in 1747 A.D. The Tamil Scholar Rev. Father Joseph Beschi (Veerama Munivar) also served in this church. The Easter passion play followed by car festivals, takes place in summer, which attracts people of all faiths.

Sri Gokarneswara Temple

Thirugokarnam

The Rock-cut cave temple of Sri Gokarneswara - Brahadambal at Thirugokarnam is a Pandya art and belongs to 9th century A.D. It is the tutelary deity of Thondaiman rulers of Pudukkottai. The Pudukkottai Museum is situated at Thirugokarnam. It has rare collections in Geology, Zoology, Paintings, Anthropology, Archaeology, Numismatics, Economics, Botany and Philately. The fine sculptures of various periods are the, main attractions at the Museum.

Pallivasal

One of the Islamic Pilgrim centres, this is located on the Pudukkottai – Madurai highway. The saint entombed here is Bava Fakruddin, popularly called as Kattubava, is the grandson of the celebrated saint of Nagore, Shahul Hameed. Both Hindus and Muslims visit this place and it is a symbol of religious harmony in the district. Annual 'Urs' takes place in the month of Rabiul Ahir.

Avudaiyarkoil

This is the most ornate temple in the district full of bursting baroque sculptures, the temple of Athmanatha It is called Thirupperundurai in inscriptions and intimately associated with Siva saint Manickavasakar. The sacred book Saivism, Thiruvacakam of Manickavasakar originated from this shrine. The god is worshiped formless and no images in the santhanam. The utsavamurti of the temple is Manikkavasakar. The mandapams are full of breathtaking sculptures, a veritable gallery of sculptures. Avudaiyarkoil is 49 km from Pudukkottai.

viii) Biodiveristy

These forests are unique in nature and the floristic compositions are as follows,

Characteristic species

- *Manilkara hexandra*
- *Mimusops elengi*
- *Albizia amara*
- *Memecylon umbellatum*
- *Diospyros ferrea* syn *maba buxifolia*

Top canopy

- *Mimusops elengi*
- *Diospyros ebenum* (Occasional)
- *Strychnos nux vomica* (Occasional)
- *Strychnos potatorum* (Occasional)
- *Diospyros chloroxylon* (Occasional)
- *Drypetes sepiaria* (rare)
- *Syzygium cumini*
- *Canthium decocum* (frequent)
- *Zizyphus glaberrima* (frequent)
- *Acacia leucophloea* (frequent)
- *Catunaregam spinosa* (frequent)
- *Buchanania lanzan* (Occasional)
- *Sapindus emarginatus* (Occasional)
- *Albizia amara*
- *Albizia lebbek*
- *Tamarindus indica*
- *Azadirachta indica*
- *Borassus flabellifer*

Under wood

- *Carissa carandas* (abundant)
- *Flacourtia indica* (locally abundant)
- *Diospyros ferrea* (frequent)
- *Grewia sp.* (abundant)
- *Gymnosporia sp.* (frequent)
- *Ixora arborea* (frequent)
- *Tarenna asiatica* (frequent)

- *Memecylon umbellatum*
- *Garcinia spicata*

Shrubs

- *Strobilanthes*
- *Dodonaea viscosa* (abundant)
- *Glycosmis pentaphylla*
- *Ochna squarrosa*
- *Gmelina asiatica*

Herbs

- *Hemidesmus indicus*

Southern Carnatic umbrella thorn forests

Top canopy

- *Acacia planifrons*
- *Albizia amara*
- *Chloroxylon swietenia*
- *Canthium dicocum*
- *Gyrocarpus jacquini*
- *Givotia rottleriformis*
- *Sapindus trifoliatus*

Under growth

- *Acacia latronum*
- *Dichrostachys cinerea*
- *Atalantia monophylla*
- *Hemicyclia sepiaria*

Shrubs

- *Randia dumetorum*
- *Carissa spinarum*
- *Zizyphus spp*
- *Acalypha fruticosa*
- *Barleria sp*
- *Soleannum toroum.*

Climbers

- *Pterolobium hexapetalum*
- *Acacia pennata*

Fauna

Mammals

- Bonnet macaque - *Macaca radiata*
- Jungle cat - *Felis chaus*
- Jackal - *Canis aureus*

- Small Indian civet - *Viverricula indica*
 - Mongoose - *Herpestes edwardsii*
 - Black naped hare - *Lepus nigricollis*)
- Reptiles**
- Green whip snake - *Ahaetulla nasutus*
 - Cobra - *Naja naja*
 - Indian Krait - *Bungarus caeruleus*
 - Russel's viper - *Vipera russelli*
- Aves**
- Peafowl - *Pavo sp.*
 - Black drongo *Dicrurus adsimilis*
 - Jungle and house crows
 - Egrets, Partridges

3. Impacts

i) Urbanization

Over 85% of the town population is covered by protected drinking water supply. The estimated sewage generation is 91.8 lakh liters / day. The total daily solid waste in urban areas of Pudukkottai district is 45.5 tonnes with collection efficiency of 89%. Of these, 25 tonnes are generated in Pudukkottai town itself. About 250 workers are engaged in solid waste management. The primary component of the waste is compostable matter which accounts for 85% of the total waste.

ii) Industrial development

There is not much industrial activity in this district. There are only 29 large and medium units operating in the district while as many as 3,000 units are reportedly working in the small scale sector. A major facility available to industrial enterprises in the district is the developed plots and built-up sheds provided by SIPCOT and SIDCO

respectively. There are no reported air pollution areas in Pudukkottai district.

4. Government initiatives

i) Initiatives to improve fisher folk livelihood

1. National Fishermen / Women Savings cum Relief Scheme

This scheme envisages and supports the fishermen / fisherwomen financially during fishing off season i.e) October to December. Members of fishermen / fisherwomen Co-operative Society those who are below poverty line, engaged in full time fishing and aged between 18 and 60 are eligible for this scheme. Each fishermen / fisherwomen has to pay Rs.70/- per month for 8 months from January onwards and Rs.40/- for the 9th month. The total amount collected from fishermen is Rs.600/- and the contribution by Central / State Government is Rs.1200/- Thus the contribution of Rs.1800/- will be distributed to fishermen / fisherwomen in 3 equal monthly installments of Rs.600/- each.

2. Registration of fishing boats

Registration and licensing of fishing boats are done by the department after proper inspection as per the Tamil Nadu Marine Fisheries Regulation Act, 1983.

3. Issue of identity card to fishermen

Monitoring work for proper fishing is done by fisheries, coast guard and police official by issuing individual ID cards to fishermen. About 14,962 ID cards were issued up to now for fishermen in Pudukkottai district.

4. Fishing ban period relief assistance to fishermen

In order to protect the fisheries resources, fishing ban period have been announced during the fish breeding season in the east coast, the ban period is from April 15 to May 29. Mechanized fishing boats are not allowed fish during this period.

5. Fishermen Accident Group Insurance Scheme

Members of fishermen cooperative societies who are aged between 18 and 65 are eligible under this scheme. Annual premium for the insurance is Rs. 30/- and the same is contributed by the Central and State Governments on 50:50 basis. Rupees one lakh is given as relief for death while fishing and rupees fifty thousand is given as relief for becoming handicapped while fishing.

6. Fishermen Accident Individual Insurance Scheme

Members of fishermen cooperative societies are eligible under this scheme. Annual premium amount is Rs. 70/- Rupees one lakh is given as relief for death or becoming when fully handicapped and rupees fifty thousand as relief for partial handicap to fishermen.

7. Diesel supply to fishing boats

Sales tax exempted diesel is supplied to fishing boats through Tamil Nadu Fisheries Development Corporation Bunks and selected private bunks. Required quantity of diesel for fishing boats is released daily ascertaining the hours of voyage and hours of fishing. Periodical inspection is done and the fishermen are allowed to carry the diesel only in the diesel

tank of fishing boats. 560 mechanized fishing boats and 336 traditional fishing boats with outboard engine get the benefit in Pudukottai district

8. SGSY (Swaranjayanti Grama Swarozgar Yojana) Scheme

In Pudukottai district, several trainings have been given under this scheme to fishermen and fisherwomen. Those who have undergone the Sea Weed Culture training are eligible to get the subsidy. Thereby 32 SHG (Self Help Groups) have availed a total amount Rs.24,84,000/-

9. Strengthening coastal security

Regular meeting with the fishermen of the fishing villages are convened by the Asst. Director of Fisheries to enlighten the importance of security issues, advising them about Iron Mouth Battle League prohibition,

serious issues of illegal fishing and to get support from the fishermen for imposing coastal security along with police officials.

10. Training to fisher youth

a) Modern fishing methods: Candidates between 18 and 35 years of age having 5 years of sea experience can join in this training. He will be given Rs.400/- month as stipend during this 10 months course.

b) Junior mechanic course: Candidates between 18 and 35 years of age, 8th standard pass, 5 years of fishing experience can join this training course with a stipend of Rs.400/- month throughout 10 months.

11. Assistance for the upgradation of skills in maritime education

A financial assistance of Rs.50,000/- for the entire course to a candidate in two stages. Either of his parent should be a

member of the fishermen Co-operative Society member.

iii) Awareness initiatives

In the first year after the tsunami, glimmerings of hope shone through the darkness of utter devastation and misery. Panic stricken minds, flooded with repeated thoughts of that fateful day, found hope in the quick and proactive relief efforts, taken by the District Administration. Restoration and reconstruction progressed on a steady and definite schedule. After urgent attention was given to the primary needs of health, psychosocial support, child protection, shelter, water and sanitation and education, the focus of administration shifted to permanent reconstruction measures. These, in turn boosted livelihood support, activities. With these efforts, communities in coastal and adjoining villages were able to augment earning capacity and improve their quality of life. Steps were also taken for averting a future tragedy, such as the one the December 26th, 2004 tsunami left in its wake. Bio-shield projects, shifting residences away from vulnerable zones, improving communication and warning mechanisms in coastal villages are being implemented.

5. Summary / Conclusion

- Pudukkottai district was carved out of Tiruchirappalli and Thanjavur districts in January 1974.
- The district has an area of 4663 sq. km
- The predominant soil of Pudukkottai is Red Loam.
- Though agriculture is the main source of sustenance for a majority of the population, the scenario is not quite encouraging.
- Reserved forests in the district is 12,082.6 ha
- Agniyar, Ammliyar, South Vellar and GA Canal are the flowing water sources of Pudukkottai district.
- Pudukkottai district has a total coastal length of 42.8 km which includes 32 coastal villages and towns.
- No major drought, flood or cyclone has been reported in this district.