

# THANJAVUR DISTRICT

# THANJAVUR DISTRICT

## 1. Introduction

### i) Geographical location of the district

Thanjavur district lies between 9° 50' and 11° 25' North latitude and 78° 45' and 79° 25' East longitude. It is bounded on the North by Thiruchirapalli and Cuddalore districts, on the East by Tiruvarur and Nagapattinam districts, on the South by Palk Strait and Pudukottai district and on the west by Pudukkottai district and Tiruchirapalli districts. Total geographical area of the district is 3,602.86 sq.km. This constitutes just 2.77 % of the area of the State.

### ii) Administrative profile

Administrative profile of the district is given in the table below.

<b>Number of taluks</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Number of revenue villages</b>	<b>906</b>
<b>Taluk</b>	<b>Revenue villages</b>
Kumbakonam	124
Orathanadu	125
Papanasam	120
Pattukkottai	175
Peravurani	91
Thanjavur	93
Thiruvaiyaru	89
Thiruvidaimarudur	89



### iii) Meteorological information

The mean maximum temperature was 37.48°C during May – July. Similarly, the mean minimum temperature was 20.82°C during November-January. The north east monsoon provides much rainfall with 545.7 mm and 953.2 as normal and actual rainfall respectively, while southwest monsoon provides 342 and 303.1 mm as normal and actual rainfall respectively.

During May, dust storms, whirlwinds and dusty winds flow from various directions. The south west winds that set in during April, become strong in June and continue till September Cyclonic storms of high velocity affect the district once in 3 or 4 years during November - December.

## 2. Resources availability

### i) Agriculture and horticulture

Thanjavur district stands unique from time immemorial for its agricultural activities and is rightly acclaimed as the granary of South India lying in the deltaic region of the famous river Cauvery and criss-crossed by lengthy network of irrigation canals. Therefore this coastal district abounds in green paddy fields, tall coconut groves, vast gardens of mango and plantain trees and other verdant vegetation.

Thanjavur district is essentially a deltaic plain comprising of old and new delta. The old delta has a net work of canals and channels of the river Cauvery and Vennar. Upper portion of this new delta area is irrigated by Grand Anaicut canal. Tapping of ground water is done considerably in this area to advance the first cropping season Cauvery to avoid damage due to North East

monsoon and to accommodate two crops namely Kuruvai and Thaladi.

The soils of new deltaic area are amenable to a wide variety of crops such as coconut, mango, guava, pulses, cotton, gingelly, groundnut, banana etc. Cultivation of oilpalm and soyabean is also carried out in this district wherever assured water supply and drainage facilities are available.

The major crops cultivated in Thanjavur district are paddy, pulses, gingelly, groundnut and sugarcane. The minor crops like Maize, soyabeans, redgram are in rice fallows. In new delta area, the groundnut is the principal crop. Paddy is the principal crop grown in three seasons viz. Kuruvai, Samba and Thaladi. Pulses like black gram, green gram and cash crops like cotton and gingelly are grown. Sugarcane is cultivated both in new delta and old delta. Banana is primarily grown in Padugai lands.

A. Total Cultivated area ( ha )	2,41,292	
B. Net area sown (ha)	1,92,030	
C. Area sown more than once (ha)	49,262	
<b>D. Area &amp; Production of Principal crops</b>	<b>Area in ha</b>	<b>Production in Tonnes</b>
Rice	155	703
Millets & other cereals	Nil	Nil
Pulses	16	6
Sugarcane ( In terms of cane )	15	1502
Groundnut	7	23
Gingelly	6	2
Cotton ( bales 170 kg. Lint each )	1	1
<b>E. Agricultural Land Holdings (2000-01)</b>		
i. Holdings	291264	
ii. Area & average size of holdings ( ha)	227674 & 0.78	
F. a) Important food crops	paddy, sugarcane, green gram, black gram & banana	
b) Important non-food crops	groundnut, coconut & gingelly.	



**Paddy Fields**

Micro-level agricultural planning at the village level to step up agricultural production was first introduced in composite Thanjavur district in the early 60s. This paved the way for concerted village level planning and contributed in a great measure to step up agricultural production manifolds. The setting up of Thiru Arooran Sugar Mills in the late fifties induced a section of the traditionally rice growing farmers to switch over to sugarcane. The setting up two more sugar factories has diverted part of the rice growing areas to sugarcane.

The important fruit crops are:

- Banana - *Musa sp*
- Mango - *Mangifera indica*
- Guava - *Psidium guajava*
- Acid lime - *Citrus aurantifolia*

Of these, banana is the major fruit crop cultivated over about 4,000 ha while all the other fruits put together are raised in about 1,100 ha. In the lateritic soils of Vallam, Pattukottai and Peravoorani, cashew (*Anacardium occidentale*) is raised in about 4,000 ha under rainfed conditions.

**The major vegetable crops raised are**

Brinjal	<i>Solanum melongena</i>
Ladies finger (Vendai)	<i>Abelmoschus esculentus</i>
Onion	<i>Allium cepa</i>
Elephant yam (senai kizhangu)	<i>Amorphophallus esculentus</i>

## ii) Forest resources

According to the latest figures of the Forest Department, the extent of forests is as follows:

<b>A. Forest area (ha)</b>	
1. Reserved	1. 3836.03
2. Unclassified	2. Nil
3. Reserved Lands	3. 68.545
<b>B. Out turn of forest products</b>	
Timber (cu.m)	2,678.685
Lop & top ends (tonnes)	774.305
Cashew nuts (tonnes)	4.176

## iii) Mineral resources

The major portion of Thanjavur district is covered by Cauvery alluvium and reported to have potential for mineral wealth. Vallam stones, laterite, sandstone, kankar and yellow ochre have been reported from the district. Quartz crystals rolled into pebbles occur in the tertiary formation. Iron ore is found to exist in the neighbourhood of Vallam. Vallam area in Thanjavur taluk yield laterite of fine quality. Pebbles of transparent quartz occur in conglomeratic sandstones near Vallam. These are of the amethystine citrine and smoky varieties.

Kanker and tuffaceous limestones occur under redsoil laterite ranging in thickness from 0.3 to 1.0 m. Kankar layers are also noticed in stream sections. The important occurrences are seen in the Grand Anicut canal cutting between Kuruvadipatti and Pudur and also in the neighbourhood of Thirumalaisamudram. The thickness of Kankar in Thirumalaisamudram area ranges from 2.0 to 2.5 m and the total reserves have been estimated to be about 0.5 mt. The

Kankar is of good quality, coal ranging from 48.42 % to 52.72 % and low in Magnesia.

#### **iv) Water resources**

The river Cauvery and its tributaries are the most remarkable feature of Thanjavur district. Cauvery is considered to be the best of the rivers that drain the Southern Peninsula of India. The river flows from Karnataka State and passes through Dharmapuri, Salem, Erode, Thiruchirappalli Thanjavur, Thiruvarur and Nagapattinam districts covering a distance of about 770 km draining an area about 72,800 sq.km in all. Springing from a spot lying on Brahmagiri mountains on western-ghats at a height of 1,320 m above sea level, Cauvery meanders its way across Karnataka and Tamil Nadu and showering not only economic prosperity on millions of people but also carving a niche for itself in their lives in historical, culture and religious realms. Emerging as a small rivulet from the Coorg mountains the river Cauvery expands rapidly increasing in volume, as hundreds of streams and rivulet merge with it which are mostly fed by the heavy rainfall of the South- West monsoon. After Sivasamudram Falls in Mysore, the Cauvery again forms beautiful waterfalls at Hoganekal in Dharmapuri district.

The three minor tributaries, Palar, Chennar and Thoppar enter into the Cauvery on her course, above Mettur, where the famous dam has been constructed. The Mettur dam joins the Sita and Pala mountains beyond that valley through which the Cauvery flow, upto the Grand Anicut. The dam in Mettur, impounds water not only for the improvement of irrigation but also to ensure regular and sufficient water to the important Hydro-Electric generating station at Mettur. The river further runs through Erode district where river Bhavani merges with it. While passing through Erode, two

more tributaries namely Noyyal and Amaravathi join it before it reaches Thiruchirappalli district. Here the river becomes wide, with a sandy bed and flows in an entirely different direction till it gets split into two at upper anicut, 14 km West of Thiruchirappalli. The Northern branch of river is called the Coleroon while the Southern branch retains the same name Cauvery and then goes directly eastwards into Thanjavur District. These two rivers join again and form the Srirangam island near Thiruchirappalli.

The Chola king, “Karikalan” has been immortalised as he has constructed the bank for the Cauvery all the way from Puhar (Kaveripoompattinam) to Srirangam. It was built as far back as 1,600 years ago or even more. On both sides of the river are found walls spreading to a distance of 1,080 ft. The dam Kallanai on the border between Tiruchirappalli and Thanjavur constructed by him is a superb work of engineering, which was constructed with earth and stone and has stood the vagaries of nature for hundreds of years. In 19<sup>th</sup> century, it was renovated in a bigger scale. The name of the historical dam has since been changed to “Grand anicut” and stands as the head of great irrigation system in the Thanjavur district. From this point, the Coleroon runs north-east and discharges herself into the sea at Devakottai, a little south of Parangipettai. From river Coleroon, Manniar and Uppanai branch of at lower Anicut and irrigate a portion of Mayiladuthurai taluk and Sirkazhi taluk. After Grand Anicut, the Cauvery divides into numerous branches and covers the whole delta with a vast network of irrigation channels. The mighty Cauvery river here is reduced to an insignificant channel and falls into the Bay of Bengal at the historical place of Poompuhar (Kaveripoompattinam) about 13 km north of Tharangampadi.

The river Cauvery flows through the entire district in different names, through its tributaries and branches viz., Grand Anaicut canal, Vennar, Pannaiyar, Koraiyar, Vettar, Kodamuritiyar, Thirumalairajanar, Arasalar, Veerasozhanar, Mudikondan, Noolar, Vanjiar, Vikaraman, Nattar, Kirtimanar, Nandalar, Majalar, Mahimalayar, Palavar, Cholasudamani, Puthar, Valappar, Vadavar, Pamaniar, Mulliyar, Ayyanar, Adappar, Harichandranathi, Vellaiyar, Pandavaiyar, Odambogiyar, Kattar, Kaduvaiyar and all these branch off into a number of small streams.

Among the various names by which the holy Cauvery is known during its course, the most popular in Tamil Nadu is “Mother Cauvery” due to the high sanctity attached to it. It is worshipped by the people irrespective of caste, creed or religion during Mahamagam festival celebrated at Kumbakonam once in 12 years. The Pilgrims after a bath in Mahamagam tank proceed for a holy dip in Cauvery which is believed to purge of all sins. In the Tamil month of Adi (July – August) on the 18<sup>th</sup> day, (Adi-Perukku), the people throng the bank of the river for the holy bath and pray to the mother Cauvery for their prosperity. In the Tamil month of Aypasi (October- November) thousands of devotees participate in a festival called “Kuda Muzhukku” celebrated on the banks of the river Cauvery at Mayiladuthurai. Many famous temples on the banks of river Cauvery and its tributaries have also earned fame as either sacred religious centers or beautiful scenic spots, providing the much needed respite and mental solace to urbanites.

#### **v) Fisheries production**

Thanjavur is one of the 13 maritime district of Tamil Nadu engaged in marine fishing and its fish production is about 5% of the total catch of the State. The State has a

total coast line of to 1,076 km embedded with 442 fishermen villages of which Thanjavur district occupies 45.1km stretch in Palk strait. It has 27 fishing villages in the district from Thambikkottai in Pattukkottai taluk in the north and Sembagamadevi Pattinam in Peravurani taluk in the south. The total inland fish production is 11,530 tonnes and the respective figure for the marine fish production is 9,020 tonnes.

Out of 4,899 families, 490 families are living in terraced houses, 874 families are living in tiled houses, 736 families are living in fishermen free houses and remaining 2,799 families are living in thatched houses. The census data further reveals there are 370 mechanised boats which are operated from Kallivayalthottam, Mallippattinam and Sethubavachathram fishing villages. There is a T Jetty in Mallippattinam coastal village constructed in 1980 to facilitate easy landing of the catches of mechanised boats. Around 2,500 fishermen were involved in mechanised fishing operations. In addition to the mechanised boats, 924 plank built boats and 107 cattamarams are also operated from the coastal villages providing employment opportunity for more than 3,000 fisherman of this district.

Thanjavur district is also richest in inland fishing due to the presence of Cauvery river system. The irrigation channels, canals major and minor tanks are the richest in fish varieties. The inland fishing consists mostly of local carps, major carps and other varieties such as cat fish, murrells, tilapia etc., About 5,000 inland fishermen are engaged in fishing. Seeds of catla, rohu, mirgal and common carp are also produced at the Fisheries Department, Fish Seed Production Centre. Silver carp and grass carps early fry are brought from West Bengal and reared by private fish seed

producers. Enormous numbers of fishermen are engaged in fish production by culture methods. Fishing rights in rivers, channels, tanks and water bodies of Forest Department have to be leased out only to Fishermen Co-operative Societies on priority basis and in turn these societies will lease out the fishing rights to its members.

## vi) Heritage sites

### Big temple

The Brihadeeswarar temple, called the Big Temple, is dedicated to Lord Siva. It was built by the great Chola King, Raja Raja I (985-1012 A.D). It is an outstanding example of Chola architecture. Recognizing its unique architectural excellence, UNESCO has declared it a World Heritage Monument. The 64.8 m tall vimanam (tower over the sanctum sanctorum) is testimony to the engineering skill of the Cholas. In keeping with the size of the temple, it has gigantic “Mahalingam” in the shrine, measuring 4m in height. A monolithic Nandhi chiseled out of a single rock, measures 5.94 m in length, 2.51 m in breadth and 3.66 m in height. It is the second largest Nandhi in India. The Nandhi or bull is the vehicle of Lord Siva.

Beautiful Chola fresco paintings adorn the inner walls of the temple. One of the outstanding temples in South India, the Brihadeeswarar temple is the Chola dynasty's finest contribution to Dravidian temple architecture. What makes the construction so unique is the variation from the usual temple building style of having a tall gopuram and smaller vimanam. At the Big Temple the vimanam soars high while the gopuram is smaller. The 64.8 m tall, 14 tier pyramid shaped vimanam is raised from a square base and topped by a huge monolithic cupola carved from an 81.3 tonnes block of granite. It was raised with the aid of a 6 km long inclined plane.



**Brahadeeswarar Temple**

### Palace

Just 1 km away from the Brihadeeswarar Temple is a magnificent palace, surrounded by huge fort walls. Dating back to the 14<sup>th</sup> century A.D., it was built partly by the Nayaks and partly by the Marathas. The Maratha royal family resided in this palace. It is a fascinating building with huge corridors, spacious halls, decorated rooms, tall observation towers, beautiful stucco works, wonderful fresco painted walls and ceilings, an underground tunnel and intricate carvings. The royal family's sacred “Chandramaulesshwarar Temple” is located within the palace walls.

### Art gallery

The art gallery has a fabulous collection of bronze icons, stone sculptures and pieces of art. The Collection is unique for its representation of Hindu gods and goddesses, myths and legends. The exhibits are priceless for their historical value.

### Saraswathi mahal library

The Thanjavur Maharaja Serfoji's Saraswathi Mahal Library is one among the few libraries in the world with texts of the medieval period. It is a treasure house of knowledge carefully fostered and nurtured

by successive dynasties of Nayaks and the Marathas of Thanjavur. It contains a rare and valuable collection of manuscripts, books, maps and paintings on all aspects of Art, Culture and Literature, The Encyclopedia Britannica, in its survey of the Libraries of the world, describes it as “the most remarkable library. It was made a Public Library in 1918.

### **Sangeetha Mahal**

Also in the Palace is the Sangeetha Mahal, an acoustically perfect music hall. It is a striking example of the engineering skill of ancient builders.

### **Royal museum & Serfoji memorial hall**

This is regarded as a 'Gurustalam' where Lord Dankshinamurthy is held in great reverence. The shrine attracts a large number of devotees when Jupiter transits between zodiac signs. Parvati, the consort of Lord Shiva, is said to have reborn on the banks of Amrita Pushkarini within the temple precincts before reunited with Shiva.

### **Marattah durbar hall**

Its huge pillars, beautiful stucco paintings and fresco-painted ceiling are eye-catching.

### **Schwartz church**

The 18<sup>th</sup>-century Christ Church or Schwartz Church a legacy of Tanjore colonial past, stands to the east of the Shivanganga Tank. This church was founded by the Danish missionary, Reverend Frederik Christian Schwartz, in 1779. When he died in 1798, the enlightened Maratha ruler, Serfoji II, donated a striking marble tablet, made by John Flaxman and this has been placed at the western end of the church. It depicts the dying missionary blessing his royal patron, surrounded by ministers and pupils from the school that he established.

### **Rajarajan mani mandapam**

It is in the southern part of Thanjavur. It was built during the 8<sup>th</sup> World Tamil Conference in 1995. This Mani mandapam has a museum in its ground floor.

### **Sivaganga tank**

This water tank lies beyond the North West compound of Brihadeeswarar Temple. It is surrounded by large walls and known for its sweet water.

### **Rajagopala beerangi (cannon)**

This is a huge cannon placed at the eastern gate of the Fort. The place is called 'Beerangi Medu'. The Cannon is amazing in size and the quality speaks of the metallurgical knowledge of the people of those times. The Beerangi is the biggest in India.

### **Tholkappiyar sadukkam**

This Sadukkam (Square) was built during the 8<sup>th</sup> World Tamil Conference. One can have a panoramic view of Thanjavur town from the tower.

### **Tamil University**

Established here in 1981, the Tamil University is engaged in research and advanced studies in Tamil. It is devoted to the cause of promoting Tamil Literature and Language. It enables advanced studies in Tamil like Literature, Grammar, Linguistics, Religion and Philosophy, Manuscriptology, History, Epigraphy, Sociology, Folklore, Anthropology, Arts Sculpture, Music, Drama, Legal Studies, Administration, Science, Engineering, Computer Science, Medical Science, Encyclopedia and Adult Education.





**Tamil University**

### **Poondi matha basilica**

The Poondi village is about 35km from Thanjavur and the nearest railway station is Budalur. It is a Roman Catholic Pilgrim Centre like Velankanni. Accommodation is provided to the pilgrims by the church authorities.

### **Thirukarugavur**

The Arulmighu Mullaivananathar and the Karpagarahshambigai temples are situated in the riverbed of river Vettaru a branch of the Cauvery at a distance of 20km northeast of Thanjavur and at distance of 20 km southwest from Kumbakonam. This sthalam Thirukarugavoor is ancient and has been extensively quoted by the Great Shaivite saints Thirugnana Sambandar and Thirunavukkarasar on the dieties Eswara Mullaivananathar and the Goddesses Gharbharakshambigai.

### **Patteeswaram**

Sri Durgai Amman Temple is situated at Patteeswaram, a village near Kumbakonam, TamilNadu, India. This Durga when worshipped by the Cholas was so powerful that the Chola kings have left an indelible mark in the history of India by their constructional work. With the blessings of

Goddess Durga, the Chola princes were able to construct 1000 Shivalinga. The Goddess is so powerful that since her arrival at this temple, the original temple has lost its prominence and people throng for blessings from her only.

### **Manora**

Rajah Serfoji built this 8 storey victory town in 1814 to commemorate the victory of the British over Napoleon Bonaparte at Waterloo. It is situated on the shore of Bay of Bengal in Sarabendrajanpathinam village about 20km South of Pattukottai town. This ancient fort Monument is styled 'Manora' a derivation from "Minors" of North Indian architecture. This historical monument majestically shooting up in air is 140 ft. height. Manora is a pleasing blend of Roman pillar architecture. This hexogen shapped 10 storyed fort represents the 19<sup>th</sup> Century architectural taste of Maratha king Serfoji of Thanjavur. The panosanic view of the sea, the floating boats, breezy coconut trees, scattered fisherman houses take different beautiful shapes at every storey.

### **Papanasam**

In Papanasam (30 km) there are two temples; the Pallaivanatha Swamy temple constructed by the Chola King and the other is the 108 Sivalayam temples. There are also a Granary (storehouse of paddy) which measure 86 ft in width and has a height of 36 ft with a capacity of 3,000 kalam which is a measure. The Nayaks between 1600 and 1634 constructed it. The State Archaeological Department declared it as a monument. One can see the 108 Sivalingams only in the temple in Papanasam.

### **Swamimalai**

Swamimalai (32 km) is one of the six abodes or Arupadaiveedu dedicated to Lord Subramanya.

## Darasuram

Raja Raja Chola II built the Airateswara or Darasuram temple. It is an excellent example of 12<sup>th</sup> century Chola architecture and is well preserved to this day. The frontal columns of the temple have unique miniature sculptures. During the 14<sup>th</sup> century the large stone statues surrounding the temple were replaced with brick and mortar statues similar to those found at the Big Temple in Thanjavur. The Archaeological Survey of India has restored the temple. This has been declared as a World Heritage Monument.

## Uppliyappan Koil

Uppliyappan Koil is situated at a distance of 6 km from Kumbakonam and 46 km from Thanjavur. Lord Venkatesaperumal like the Tirupathi Balaji is also called Oppil Upper.

## Thiruvilai Maruthur

Thiruvilai Maruthur is about 8 km from Kumbakonam and 48 km away from Thanjavur. The river Cauvery passes through this village. The village is also called Madhyarjunam and the presiding deity is Mahalingeswarar and goddess is known as Perunamulaiyammai.

## Navagraha

There is a cluster of Navagraha temples near Kumbakonam. Each temple is located in a different village. Each of these temples is considered an abode of one of the Navagrahas. However, the majority of these temples are dedicated to Shiva.

## viii) Biodiversity

In Thanjavur district, there are no typical mangrove forests. The vegetation found along the coast comprises mostly.

Herbs and shrubs, the important species among them are given below.

Umari	<i>Suaeda maritima</i>
Seetha pavalam	<i>Salicornia brachiata</i>
Yanai nerunji	<i>Pedaliium murese</i>
Mookaratti	<i>Boerhavia diffusa</i>
Kalapaai kizhangu	<i>Gloriosa superba</i>
Kandan kathiri	<i>Solanum surattense</i>
Kudhirai kulambu	<i>Ipomoea pescaprae</i>
Ravanan misai	<i>Spinifex littoralis</i>

## 3. Impacts

### i) Urbanization

The estimated sewage generation is 321.5 lakh liters per day in urban areas with a breakup of 250 lakh liters per day for municipalities and 71.5 lakh liters per day for town panchayats. Underground drainage system is partially available in all the three municipalities. Overall solid waste generated in the district adds up to 102 tonnes with a break-up 70 tonnes in municipalities and 32 tonnes in town panchayats.

### ii) Industrial development

There are totally 234 registered industrial factory units in Thanjavur district. Number of trade unions are 9; there are no large scale industries here; medium scale industries are 10; small scale industries are 357; cottage scale industries are 85. Thanjavur continues to be predominately an agricultural district.

During the decade, two sugar mills one in Co-operative Sector at Kurungulam in Thanjavur taluk and another one in private sector viz. Thiru Arooran Sugar Mills at Thirumandankudi near Kumbakonam were setup. More than 3 modern rice mills run by Tamil Nadu Civil Supplies Corporation and one Food Corporation of India have also been setup. One spinning Mill is also functioning in this District. In addition one

Sugarmill at Kottur village is Thiruvudaimaruthur taluk has been setup during this decade. Out of 14 blocks in this district 11 blocks have been declared as either industrially backward or most backward as such there is a great scope for the development of small scale industries in this district.

There are four small scale industrial estates in this district, three in Thanjavur and one in Kumbakonam. It is reported that 59 units in Thanjavur (Nanjikkottai road) produce chemical, bakery, and polythene bags. There are 10 BHEL subsidiary units in Pillayarpathi, Thanjavur taluk, 27 units at Thirupuvanam in Thiruvudaimarudur Taluk producing polythene, chemical and rubber products. The industrial estates are controlled by Small Industries Development Corporation of Tamil Nadu SIDCO which is also supplying paraffin wax (Type II) to SSI units.

From early days Thanjavur has been a flourishing centre of cottage industries and handicrafts like handloom cloth and cotton sarees produced here are renowned. Mat weaving is spread over a number of places but the superior varieties of mats are made in Vilankudi Chakkrappalli and Madukkur. Ornamental fans are made out of palmyrah leaves and they are artificially painted and decorated with silk threads.

This district is also famous for a wide range of utility and decorative articles like Thanjavur bell, metal plates, bronze images, bowls, napkins and powder boxes etc, made of bronze and copper images with inlaying and engraving work of motifs drawn from Hindu Mythology done in silver etc known as "Thanjavur Swamy works". Chief centres of Metal work are in Kumbakonam and in Nachiyarkoil. This district is equally well known for its pith works consisting of beautiful models of Hindu idols, temples,

mosques, garlands, bouquets, parrots and peacocks. The flower garlands and bouquets are in much demand during Christmas days. Pith is growing on the river beds in Thanjavur and Kumbakonam taluks. The manufacturing of musical instruments from jack wood like Veena, Tambura, Violin, Mrithangam, Tabela and Kanjira exhibit excellent taste, knowledge and workmanship. The jack wood has a special quality for producing musical sounds.

Thanjavur, Kumbakonam are well known places for the manufacture of musical instruments. Handloom industry occupies an important place in the economy of Thanjavur district as it provides livelihood for more than 60,000 people in this district. It is reported that the number of looms in Thanjavur stood at 13,233 of which 10,662 looms come under co-operative sector.

### **iii) Natural disaster prone areas**

Cyclones ravage the district once in 3-5 years, during north east monsoon, resulting in flood and crop damage. During 1982-83, 1990-91 and 1992-93 cyclones of high intensity have affected the district. Every year monsoon cyclone flood and drought situation may occur during Rabi season which may also considerably affect the paddy production in Thanjavur district. After the construction of the Upper Anicut, floods often threatened the anicut and serious erosion on the banks of the Cauvery occurred. This danger was however minimised in 1845 by the construction of Cauvery dam. In order to avoid the danger completely, Upper Anicut was rebuilt in 1899 so as to provide passage for the flood water down the Coleroon in cases of emergency. Cauvery Vennar regulators which is immediately below the Grand Anicut divides the stream between rivers and controls flow of water. All coastal villages are under the threat of Tsunami.

#### **4. Government initiatives**

##### **i) Initiatives to improve fisher folk livelihood**

1. From 1996-97 onwards under Ma. Singaravelar memorial Fishermen free housing scheme, 718 concrete roofed houses were constructed and handed over to houseless Fisher folk.
2. Link roads to the fishermen villages from the main roads facilitate the fast and easy transport of the fish catches to the nearest market and the fishermen get good prices for their catch. Street lights to fishermen villages have been provided.
3. In 24 fishermen villages in Thanjavur district, 209 street lights and 10 sodium vapour light in 5 villages have been provided by the Fisheries Department. In addition to the lights provided by local body.
4. Guide lights had been provided in the fishermen villages to locate their shore during night time.
5. During rainy season (September – December) due to unfavorable conditions the fishermen cannot venture into the sea and they are without earnings. To minimise their suffering and to create a saving habit among fishermen, the saving cum Relief scheme was introduced. The subscription is collected at the rate of Rs.45/- for eight months (January to August) ( $45 \times 8 = 360$ ) from each fishermen. In addition to the fishermen share Central and State Government shares are added and distributed to the fishermen during lean season.

6. All the members of the fishermen co-operative societies are covered under insurance scheme and the premium amount was paid by both Central and State governments equally. In addition to the above scheme another scheme called Group Janatha personal accident insurance scheme has also been implemented which the premium amount is paid by the fishermen themselves financial assistance is extended when the under this scheme fishermen meet with an accident or in the case of Death.
7. In addition to the above schemes many other schemes are also implemented such as subsidy for purchase of inboard & outboard motors, fishing gears and crafts. During rainy season weather warning reports are received from met centre, Chennai and are informed to Fishermen villages.
8. Through fisherwomen co-operative societies aluminium vessels, ice boxes and baskets were given at subsidised cost to improve their fish marketing business. Training was given to them in marketing, processing and net making.
9. Through Tamil Nadu States Fisheries Apex co-operative Federation (TAFCOFED) Integrated Marine fisheries development programme was also implemented in selected villages.

##### **ii) Coastal protection initiatives**

Bio-shield projects like mount wall construction are in progress in this district along the coast after the tsunami.

### iii) Awareness initiatives

Various awareness creation activities have been made among the fisherfolk about tsunami and CRZ issues by different Government and Non Government organizations. Attempts have been made to develop bioshields, rebuild livelihoods, and reclaim soil in the tsunami affected agricultural fields in Thanjavur district.

### 5. Summary / Conclusion

- Thanjavur district is bounded on the north by Thiruchirapalli and Cuddalore districts, on the east by Tiruvarur and Nagapattinam districts, on the south by Palk Strait and Pudukkottai district and on the west by Pudukkottai district and Tiruchirapalli districts.
- Total geographical area of the district is 3602.86 sq.km This constitutes just 2.77% of the area of the State.
- This district comprises of 8 taluks and 906 revenue villages.
- Thanjavur district is occupied by different geological formations with different types of soils.
- Thanjavur district stands unique from time immemorial for its agricultural activities and is rightly acclaimed as the granary of the South India lying in the deltaic region of the famous river Cauvery.
- This coastal district abounds in green paddy fields, tall coconut groves, vast gardens of mango and plantain trees and other verdant vegetation.
- The major portion of Thanjavur district is covered by Cauvery Alluvium and reported to have potential for mineral wealth. Vallam stones, laterite, sandstone, kankar and yellow ochre have been reported from the district.
- The river Cauvery and its tributaries are the most remarkable features of Thanjavur district.
- Thanjavur district occupies 45.1 km stretch in Palk Strait with 27 fishing villages in the district from Thambikkottai in Pattukkottai taluk in the North and Sembagamadevi Pattinam in Peravurani taluk in the South.
- The total inland fish production is 11,530 tonnes and the respective figure for the marine fish production is 9020 tonnes.
- In Thanjavur district, there are no typical mangrove forests. The vegetation found along the sea coast comprises mostly of herbs and shrubs
- Cyclones ravages the district once in 3-5 years, during north east monsoon, resulting in flood and crop damage.