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AREA PROFILE
STATE PROFILE OF
TAMIL NADU
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TAMILNADU MAP
AREA PROFILE

STATE PROFILE OF TAMIL NADU

Geographical Information

LOCATION:

Tamil Nadu ranks eleventh in size among the states of India. It is situated on the eastern side of the Indian peninsula between 8.5N and 13.35 N and 78.35 and 80.20 E.

Kerala, Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh are in its neighbourhood. The Indian Ocean is its boundary on its southern side, and Tamil Nadu has a coastline of 1,000 Km.

Area

The land area of Tamil Nadu is 1,30,058 sq.km

Formation of Tamil Nadu

Madras Presidency under British rule was eventually reconstituted as Madras State. It was subsequently declared as the political state of Tamil Nadu (Land of the Tamils) in 1969.

Reorganization of Districts

The state had 13 districts as administrative units in 1965. They were reorganized several times and now there are totally 32 districts in Tamil Nadu.

Rainfall and Seasonal Conditions

Tamil Nadu received an average annual rainfall of 1304.1 mm during the year 2005-06, which is higher by 36.1% over the normal rainfall of 958.5 mm.
Climate and Natural Vegetation

Tamil Nadu lies to the South of the Tropic of Cancer and falls in torrid zone. The Bay of Bengal and Indian Ocean influence the climate of the coastal region. The east coast enjoys tropical maritime climate. the central part of Tamil Nadu experiences hot and dry weather conditions whereas Chennai which lies on the coast has moderate temperature throughout the year. In summer, the hill stations like Kodaikanal and Uthagamandalam are cooler than Madurai and Tiruchi because they are at higher altitude.

In general, the climate of Tamil Nadu is mainly influenced by the Western Ghats, hills of the Eastern Ghats and Bay of Bengal. So it has tropical monsoon type of climate. Average monthly temperature remains 21°C throughout the year.

The climatic seasons can be classified as three seasons. They are as follows:

1. Hot Summer Season
2. Rainy Season
3. Cool Winter Season

Vegetation

Tamil Nadu has a variety of flora and fauna. Physiography, nature of soil, and climatic conditions are the main factors that determine the distribution of natural vegetation. The forest covers nearly 17% of the total area of the region. We can classify the vegetation belts into three such as the deciduous forest, tidal forest and desert vegetation$^5$. 
Physiography and Regionalisation

Tamil Nadu, the 11th largest state of the Indian Union, consists of areas of old rocks such as the granites, crystal and metamorphosed rocks, limestones and sandstones. The land can be broadly divided into hills, the plateau and the plains.

Hills

The hills of Tamil Nadu have two nature divisions (i) The Western Ghats and (ii) The eastern Ghats. These two meet at the Dodabeta peak on the Nilgris. Which is at a height of 2,637 metres (8,652 ft).

(i) The Western Ghats:

The Western Ghats, also known as the Sahyadri Mountains, is a mountain range along the western side of India. Smaller ranges, including the Cardamom hills and the Nilgiri Hills, are in northwestern Tamil Nadu. The Nilgiri Hills are home to the hill station Ootacamund. In the southern part of the range are the Anaimalai Hills.

The well known lakes are the Ooty (2500 m altitude, 34.0 ha) in Nilgiris, and the Kodaikanal (2285m, 26ha) and the Berijam in the Palani Hills. Most of the bigger lakes are situated in the state of Tamil Nadu. Two smaller lakes, the Devikulam (6.0 ha) and the Letchmi Elephant (2.0 ha) are in the Munnar range, and Yercaud lake (1340m, 8 ha) in Shevaroy Hills.

Historically the Western Ghats were well-covered in dense forests that provided wild foods and natural habitats for native tribal people. Its inaccessibility made it difficult for people from the plains to cultivate the land and build settlements.
The Western Ghats are home to thousands of animal species including at least 325 globally threatened species. Many are endemic species, especially in the amphibian and reptilian classes.

(ii) The Eastern Ghats:

Unlike the Western Ghats, the Eastern Ghats are the discontinuous hills and only a part of them are found in the State of Tamil Nadu. The Eastern Ghats extend in the form of detached hills such as the Javadhus, Shevroys, the Kalrayans, the Kollimalais and the Pachaimalais.

The Javadhus ranges between 1090 metres and 1160 metres in height. Elagiri, a hill resort is found here. The Kalrayans, the hills of villupuram district, are the birth places of the tributaries of the river Vellar. These hills are noted for the tribal settlements. The Shevroys are found in the Salem district. The height of these hills ranges between 1500 to 1600 metres. Yercaud, the summer resort, is on these hills. Solaikadu is the highest peak on these hills with the height of 1640 metres. Bauxite is found in abundance here.

The hills found in Perambalur district are the Pachaimalais. Black granite is mined here. It is of very high quality and has no match in the world. Kolli hills are found in the district of Namakkal. From these area Bauxite is mined. To the east of the Pachaimalais and Kolli hills are the Palamalai. From here granites and debris are obtained. The hills found in the district of Salem are the Kanchamalai and the Chalk hills. Iron ores and mangesite are obtained here.

The Plateau

The Pleateau in Tamil Nadu is found between the Western Ghats and Eastern Ghats. The elevations are between 45m in the west and 150 m in the east. The land slopes from west to east. The landscape of the plateau is an
extensive bevelled landscape with low relief. Bharamahal plateau lies west to this region. It is the continuation of the Mysore plateau in Tamil Nadu. Its height ranges from 350m to 710 m.

Coimbatore plateau lies between the Nilgiris and Dharmapuri. It is rocky and its height varies from 150m and 450m. This region includes Salem, Coimbatore and Erode districts. The area of the Nilgiris plateau is about 2560 sq.km. Its height varies from 1800 m to 2900m, Moyar river separates this plateau from the Mysore plateau.

**The Plains**

The plains found in Tamil Nadu can be classified into (i) Coromandel coastal plains, (ii) the Cauvery Aluvial plains and (iii) the dry southern coromandel coastal plains. From Pulicat lake in the north to Cape Comorin in the south the Coastal plain stretches for nearly 992 km. in length.

**(i) The Coromandel coastal plains:**

The northern or the Coromandel coastal plains slope towards the Bay of Bengal in the east. These plains contain the fertile Palar, Cheyyar and Vellar basins. Several hill ranges cut across these plains in the south. The plains consists of Thiruvallur, Kanchipuram, Vellore and Thiruvannamalai districts.

**(ii) The Cauvery plains**

The Cauvery plains are the most fertile plains with alluvium. These plains are the rice bowl of Tamil Nadu. Along with its distributaries, the Cauvery drains these plains. The plains extend over the districts of Dharmapuri, Salem, Thanjavur, Tiruchirapalli, Thiruvarur, Pudukkottai, Nagapattinam and Karur.
(iii) The Dry Southern plains

The dry Southern plains are the highlands at the foot hills. These plains extend in the districts of Madurai, Ramanathapuram, Sivaganga, Virudhunagar, Dindigul and Thoothukudi. These plains are confined mainly between the coastline and 150m contour.

Along the coast, there is a narrow belt of sand dunes, which rise to about 10m on the Thoothukudi coast. Further south, in Thirunelveli district, the red sand hills, locally known as 'teris' rise to over 50m behind the sands. The remaining part of the plains are mainly alluvial formed by the fast flowing rivers such as Cauvery and Tamiraparani. These rivers form wide deltas at their mouths.

Agriculture

Tamil Nadu has historically been an agricultural state, while its advances in other fields launched the state into competition with other areas. Even so, Tamil Nadu is a leading producer of agricultural products in India. Tamil Nadu agriculture is heavily dependent on the river water and monsoon rains. The perennial rivers are Palar, Cheyyar, Ponaiyar, Kaveri, Meyar, Bhavani, Amaravati, Vaigai, Chittar and Tamiraparani. Non-perennial rivers include the Vellar, Noyal, Suruli, Gndar, Vaipar, Valparai and Varshali. Tamil Nadu is also the leading producer of kambu, corn, rye, ground nuts, seeds and sugar cane in India.

At present Tamil Nadu is India's second biggest producer of rice. Tamil Nadu is the home to Dr. M.S.Swaminathan known as the "father of the Green Revolution" in India.
Industry and Manufacturing

Tamil Nadu has always been a forerunner in industrial endeavour, both in terms of industrial output and also in terms of encouraging the starting of various new large-scale industrial projects. Having recorded an impressive growth in industry in the short, post-reform span, it is poised for further industrial development and expansion. The strength of Tamil Nadu lies not only in its traditional industries but also in several new emerging industries.


One of the global electrical equipment public company BHEL has manufacturing plants at Tiruchirappalli and Ranipet. The Tamil Nadu state government owns the Tamil Nadu Newsprint and Papers (TNPL). The world's biggest bagasse based paper mills in Karur as well as the world's sixth largest manufacturer of watches together with TATA, under the brand name of "Titan". 40 percent of all wind-generated electricity in India is created by windmills in Tamil Nadu. Renowned Daish wind power company NEG Micon has established its manufacturing unit in Chennai. Tamil Nadu is the leading producer of cement in India.

The region around Salem is rich in mineral ores. Country's largest steel public sector undertaking, SAIL has a special steel plant in Salem, Salem also
has local magnesite factories operated by private and public sectors (Public: Burn Standard and Co; Private: Dalmia Mangesites).

Mettur, a town which is located 50 km north of Erode and West of Salem has a number of notable industries, including JSW Steels, MALCO (which has currently suspended its Aluminium production), Chemplasts, Thermal plant, Hydel power plant.

Some important features of industries in which Tamil Nadu has had traditional strength, are described below:

**Automotive**

Many heavy engineering and manufacturing-based companies are centered in and around the suburbs of Chennai (nicknamed by some, "The Detroit of Asia"). Chennai boasts the presence of global vehicle manufacturing giants like Hyundai, Ford, BMW, Mitsubishi, Komatsu, The TVS Group (TVS), Ashok Leyland, Nissan-Renault, Daimler Trucks, TI Cycles of India, TAFE Tractors, Royal Enfield, Caterpillar Inc., Caparo, Madras Rubber Factory (MRF) and Michelin as well as domestic heavyweights like MRF, TI cycles of India, Ashok Leyland, Royal Enfield, Mahindra & Mahindra, TAFE Tractors and TVS. Heavy Vehicles Factory in Avadi was established in 1965. A large number of auto component industries are present around Coimbatore & Erode cities. Karur is known for its bus body building industries.

**Textiles**

The textile industry plays a significant role in the Indian economy by providing direct employment to an estimated 35 million people, and thereby contributing 4% of GDP and 35% of Gross Export Earnings. The textile sector contributes to 14% of the manufacturing sector. The cities of Erode & Tirupur, in
Tamil Nadu are the largest garment exporters in India and sometimes referred to as Textile valley of India. Madurai and Kanchipuram are very famous for handloom sarees\textsuperscript{16}.

**Electronics**

Electronics manufacturing is a growing industry in Tamil Nadu. Chennai has emerged as EMS Hub of India. Companies like Nokia, Flextronics, Motorola, Sony-Ericsson, Foxconn, Samsung, Cisco, and Dell have chosen Chennai as their South Asian manufacturing hub\textsuperscript{17}. Ericson also has a Research and Development facility in Chennai\textsuperscript{18}. Sanmina-SCI is the latest company to invest in Tamil Nadu to create a state of the art manufacturing facility\textsuperscript{19}. Nokia Siemens Networks has decided to build a manufacturing plant for wireless network equipment in Tamil Nadu\textsuperscript{20}.

The state with a projected population of about 6.65 crores in 2009 has high mobile penetration rate in India with 4.3 crore mobile customers in the beginning of August 2009\textsuperscript{21,22}.

**Fireworks**

The town of Sivakasi is a leader in the areas of printing, fireworks, and safety matches. It was fondly called as *Kutty Japan* or "little Japan" by Jawaharlal Nehru. Sivakasi also is a 100% employed town.

**Mining**

Tamil Nadu has a few mining projects based on Titanium, Lignite, Magnesite, Graphite, Limestone, Granite and Bauxite\textsuperscript{23}. 
Energy

The Tamil Nadu Energy Development Agency (TEDA) is a Tamil Nadu government promoting renewable energy sources and energy conservation activities. The agency has largely been responsible for instigating the tremendous growth of Tamil Nadu in the development of wind power. Tamil Nadu is in the forefront of all other Indian states in installed capacity.

The once-impoverished village of Muppandal benefited from the building of the nearby Muppandal wind farm, a renewable energy source, supplying the villagers with electricity for work. Wind farms were built in Nagercoil making it the largest wind farm in the world. These areas generate about half of India's 2,000 megawatts of wind energy or two percent of the total power output of India.

Nuclear Energy

The Kalpakkam Nuclear Power Plant, Ennore Thermal Plant, Neyveli Lignite Power Plant, Vridhachalam Ceramics and the Narimanam Natural Gas Plants are major sources of Tamil Nadu's electricity. It is presently adding the Koodankulam Nuclear Power Plant to its energy grid.

Hydel Energy

The Mettur Dam is a large dam in India. The Mettur Hydro Electrical power project is also quite large Mettur Dam has a number of industries SISCOL, MALCO, Chemplast, Thermal power plant, Hydel power plant and huge number of chemical industries. There are many other dams that provide irrigation and drinking water, including the Vaigai Dam.
Bio-diesel Energy

Tamil Nadu at this time is the only state to have a formal Bio-Diesel Policy to use jatropha crops as a source of biofuel and to distribute wasteland to the poor farmers for the planting of these crops\(^{31}\).

Solar

In March 2008, Signet Solar Inc.\(^{32}\) signed a memorandum of understanding with the State government to build a INR 20 billion thin-film silicon photovoltaic module manufacturing plant in the Sriperumbudur Special Economic Zone.

In June 2008, Moser Baer inked a MoU with the state government to build INR 20 billion plant for manufacturing of silicon-based photovoltaic thin film modules and allied products in the Oragadam Special Economic Zone which is closer to the Signet Solar’s plant in Sriperumbudur\(^{33}\).

Transportation

Tamil Nadu has a well established transportation system that connects all parts of the state. This is partly responsible for the investment in the state. Though the present transportation system is substantial, it needs to be developed further to keep pace with the rapid increase in use.\(^{34}\) Tamil Nadu is served by an extensive road network in terms of its spread and quality, providing links between urban centers, agricultural market-places and rural habitations in the countryside. There are 24 national highways in the state, covering a total distance of 2,002 km.\(^{35}\) The state is also a terminus for the Golden Quadrilateral project that is 99.2% completed as of July 31st 2010\(^{36}\). The state has a total road length of 167,000 km, of which 60,628 km are maintained by Highways Department. This is nearly 2.5 times higher than the density of all-
India road network. It is currently working on upgrading its road network, though the pace of work is considered slow.

Tamil Nadu has a well developed rail network as part of Southern Railway. Tamil Nadu has a total railway track length of 6,693 km and there are 690 railway stations in the state. Chennai has a well-established Suburban Railway network and is in the process of developing a metro.

Tamil Nadu has a major international airport, Chennai International Airport, that is connected with 19 countries with more than 329 direct flights every day. This is currently the third largest airport in India after Mumbai and Delhi and has a passenger growth of 18%. It also has domestic airports at Coimbatore, Trichy, Tuticorin, Salem and Madurai make several parts of the state easily accessible.

Tamil Nadu has three major ports at Chennai, Ennore and Tuticorin, as well as one intermediate port, Nagapattinam, and seven minor ports, Rameswaram, Kanyakumari, Cuddalore, Colachel, Karaikal, Pamban and Valinokkam. All the minor ports are managed by the Tamil Nadu Maritime Board. Chennai Port is currently being upgraded to have a dedicated terminal for cars capable of handling 400,000 vehicles by 2009 to be used by Hyundai, Ford and Nissan Renault. The volume of cargo in the ports grew by 13 per cent over 2005. The Tuticorin Port is expanding its facilities at the cost of US $1.6 billion.

Services

Chennai is the second largest software exporter in India, next to Bangalore. India's largest IT park is housed at Chennai. Software exports from Tamil Nadu during 2008-09 rose 29 per cent to touch 36,680 crore, involving a workforce of 2.8 lakh. Chennai is a hub for e-publishing, as there are 47 e-
publishing units registered with the STPI in Chennai and 25 in Bangalore. Companies such as HCL, Wipro, TCS, Satyam, Infosys, Cognizant Technology Solutions, Covansys, Ford Information Technology, Xansa, Verizon, iSoft, iNautix, Electronic Data Systems, Bally and many others have offices in Chennai. Infosys Technologies has set up India's largest software development centre to house 25,000 software professionals at an estimated investment of 12,500 million ($270 million) in Chennai.\(^4^6\) India's largest IT park is housed at Chennai, jointly made by Ascendas India Ltd, a Singapore-based company engaged in providing business space solutions, and Tamil Nadu Industrial Development Corporation (TIDCO).\(^4^7\)

**Business Process Outsourcing Services:**

Chennai is now emerging as the most preferred destination for high-end BPOs in financial services, healthcare and other back-office services for multinational companies. In the recent surveys, Chennai has been rated as the most attractive city for Offshoring Services\(^4^8\).

**Knowledge Process Outsourcing:**

Chennai is also the preferred destination for companies outsourcing their high-end knowledge intensive operations. Testimony to this is the presence of major market research companies such as Frost & Sullivan and equity research companies such as Irevna in Chennai. This is the next high growth area that Chennai is witnessing.

**Economy of Tamil Nadu**

Tamil Nadu has been ranked No 1 by the Economic Freedom Rankings for the States of India\(^4^9\) Possessing the fifth largest economy (2004-2005) among
Tamil Nadu is also the third most industrialised state next only to Maharashtra and Delhi. It ranks second in per capita income (2004-2005) among large states. It ranks third in foreign direct investment approvals (cumulative 1991-2002) of 225,826 million ($5,000 million), next only to Maharashtra 366,024 million ($8,100 million) and Delhi 303,038 million ($6,700 million). Unlike many other states, the economic resources are quite spread out, rather than concentrated in a small industrialised area. According to the 2001 Census, Tamil Nadu has the highest level of urbanization (43.86%) in India, accounting for 6% of India’s total population and 9.6% of the urban population and is the second most industrialized state in India. Tamil Nadu has a network of about 110 industrial parks and estates offering developed plots with supporting infrastructure. Also, the state government is promoting other industrial parks like Rubber Park, Apparel Parks, Floriculture Park, TICEL Park for Biotechnology, Siruseri IT Park, and Agro Export Zones among others. Tamil Nadu has the largest number of Small and medium enterprises (SMEs) in India.

BANKING AND FINANCIAL SECTOR

Banking

There are 5775 branches of scheduled commercial banks in the state. Of these more than one third of the offices are in rural areas with the remaining offices located in semi-urban and urban metropolitan areas.

Foreign Banks

Tamil Nadu has 28 branches of foreign banks out of which 18 are in Chennai. They have enhanced competition, especially as regards attracting large loan/deposit customers and offering innovative banking facilities. Some of the foreign banks having offices in Tamil Nadu are Citibank, Bank of America,
ANZ Grindlays, American Express, Hongkong Bank, Century Kopell and Standard Chartered.

**External Trade Scenario**

Tamil Nadu occupies the pride of place in the foreign trade scenario. The state has been a forerunner in adapting itself for entry into the global market subsequent to the liberalization policy announcements.

For example the textiles export turnover from Tirupur alone in 2004 was at ₹50,000 million amounting to 56% of India's total knitwear export. It was the third largest economy (2007-2008) among all states in India, and also the most industrialized state in India. It ranks third in foreign direct investment. Tamil Nadu is the second largest software exporter by value in India, second only to Karnataka. Software exports from Tamil Nadu grew from ₹76 billion ($1.6 billion) in 2003-04 to ₹207 billion ($5 billion) by 2006-07 according to NASSCOM AND TO ₹366 billion in 2008-09 which shows 29% growth in software exports according to STPI.

The exports from Tamil Nadu are valued at about US $762 million which accounts 42 per cent of leather exports.

Tamil Nadu enjoys a leading position with 40% share in India's export. Leather exports by the end of the year 2001-2001 were ₹ 9000 crores.

The increasing population and small scale industries make many parents to send their children to work. In order to prevent child labour and to remove literacy Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan has been introduced. In the next chapter the functioning of Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan can be seen.
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