Physical features and geography: Erode district is surrounded by Karnataka state in the North West, Coimbatore district in the West, Dindigul district in the south and Namakkal and Karur districts in the north east and east respectively. The district is a long plain area gently sloping towards the river Cauvery in the southeast, the long stretch of mountains in the north and by the three major tributaries of river Cauvery, viz. Bhavani, Noyyil and Amaravathy. The headquarters of the district is Erode. The district covers an area of around 8162 sq. kms, with an extensive forest area of around 2,3 lakh ha., which is about 28 per cent of the total area. These are enriched with commercially significant produces items teak, sandalwood, rosewood, vogai, pillai maruthu, etc. The soils of the district are mostly red sand and gravel with moderate amounts of red loam and occasional black loam tracts congenial for coconut cultivation. It has a population of around 23.2 lakhs as per the 2001 Census.