

## **CHAPTER III**

### **PROFILE OF THE STUDY AREA**

#### **3.1. LOCATION**

It is situated in the extreme south-eastern corner of Tamil Nadu state and bounded on the north by the districts of Tirunelveli, Virudhunagar and Ramanathapuram, on the east and south-east by Gulf of Mannar and on the west and south-west by the district of Tirunelveli. Total area of this district is 4621 sq. kms. and the administrative headquarters is an Urban agglomeration and also one of the taluk headquarters within the district. Thoothukudi District was derived from Tirunelveli District in 1986.

#### **3.2. ECONOMY**

The economy of Thoothukudi revolves around shipping, fishing, salt-pan, and agricultural industries. Thoothukudi has a host of other industries including power, chemicals and IT. The availability of skilled labour, electricity generating plant, a container facility and a major port has made Thoothukudi an important centre for industry and business. The Sethusamudram project, the airport at Vagaikulam, Koodankulam Nuclear Power plant, improved road and rail infrastructure and Nanguneri special economic zone are expected to make Thoothukudi an attractive choice for business investment. Tata Steel recently announced plans to set up a titanium dioxide project in Thoothukudi. Four national brand products are made in Thoothukudi: VVD Coconut oil, Agsar Paints, BIO Food Ltd Hip Tea & Genkii Tea (herbal Teas) and Venus Water Heaters.

### **3.3. DEMOGRAPHICS**

Tamil is the main language spoken here, whilst English is also widely used. As per the 2011 census, the total population of the district was 17, 38,376. Hindus form the majority of the population (78.58%), followed by Christians (16.71%), Muslims (4.63%) and others (0.08%).

### **3.4. THOOTHUKUDI DISTRICT**

Thoothukudi District carved out of the erstwhile Tirunelveli District in 1986 has certain rare features. The mixed landscape of the sea and their (waste) lands has imbibed some special traits in the character of the sons of the soil. Valour and devotion with burning patriotism are the watch words of the people here.

The story of our country's freedom struggle cannot be complete without mentioning the supreme sacrifices of the illustrious sons of the district like V.O.Chidambaram Pillai who brought the first swadeshi ship "Galia" to the Thoothukudi, Poet Subramania Bharathi and the revolutionary Vanchinathan were also the proud sons of the soil.

### **3.5. AREA AND POPULATION**

The area of the district is 4621 Sq.k.m. and the population is 17, 38,376. The district has three revenue divisions, eight taluks, twelve blocks, three municipalities, nineteen town panchayats and 480 revenue villages. Seven constituencies and one Loksabha are in the district.

### 3.6. LITERACY RATE

The district of Thoothukudi had an average literacy rate of 86.6% which is higher than the national average literacy rate. The male literacy is 91.40% and female literacy of 81.80%.

**Table 3.1**  
**LITERACY RATE: THOOTHUKUDI DISTRICT**

<b>Year</b>	<b>Parameters</b>	<b>Male</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>2001</b>	<b>Population</b>	<b>786976</b>	<b>805793</b>	<b>1592769</b>
	<b>Literate</b>	<b>595413</b>	<b>548520</b>	<b>1143934</b>
	<b>% of Literacy</b>	<b>85.9</b>	<b>77.4</b>	<b>81.3</b>
<b>2011</b>	<b>Population</b>	<b>858919</b>	<b>879457</b>	<b>1738376</b>
	<b>Literate</b>	<b>706087</b>	<b>650477</b>	<b>1356564</b>
	<b>% of Literacy</b>	<b>91.4</b>	<b>81.8</b>	<b>86.6</b>

Source: Census of India 2001 and 2011

### 3.7. AGRICULTURE

Agriculture is the main occupation on which 70% of the people depend on it .The main food crop in this district is paddy. Out of the total area of 470724 hectares, 178083 hectares are brought under the cultivation of different crops which is nearly 38% of total area of the district. The important food crops in the district are paddy, cholam, kambu, ragi, varagu, samai and commercial crops like cotton, chilly, sugarcane and groundnut.

### 3.8. IRRIGATION

The climate is hot and dry. The district has a coastal line of 163.5Kms.and territorial waters covering thousands of hectares. Thoothukudi is the major salt producer in the state and contributes 30% of the total salt production of the country. The different sources of

irrigation are channel, tanks and wells which covers 45673 hectares in the district. Out of this, 19493 hectares were covered by wells.

### **3.9. INDUSTRY**

The boom in the industrial sector has put the district prominently in the country's industrial map. Heavy industries like Sterlite, SPIC, TAC, HWP and National Thermal Power Plant promise hope for a bright future. Hundreds of ancillary units have also sprung up. Textile units and match industries crowded the Kovilpatti belt. The fast growing Thoothukudi port in the changing economic scenario has added pep to the development of the district.

### **3.10. THOOTHUKUDI PORT**

Thoothukudi Port is garnering an important position in the southern part of India. During this year 1414 vessels entered this port and cargos to the tune of 19.49 million tones are handled. Exports of certain raw materials and finished products are shipped to twenty foreign countries. Thoothukudi port has been issued the prestigious ISO 9001:2008, ISO 14001:2004 certificate for the port operation services and had joined the group of world ports by becoming the first Indian major port to get such certificate.