

DINDIGUL VAASIKKIRATHU

10th - 12th Standard and College



OUR DINDIGUL

Overview and significance of Dindigul district

- Dindigul district was carved out of the composite Madurai District on 15.9.1985
- First District Collector was Thiru.M.Madhavan Nambiar, I.A.S.
- Our present District Collector is Mrs. M.N Poongodi, I.A.S.
- Dindigul District had the names of Dindigul Anna, Quaid-e-Milleth and Mannar Thirumalai.
- The historical Rock Fort of this district was constructed by the famous Naik King Muthukrishnappa Naicker.
- Dindigul town has been associated with Iron locks, Iron safe of good quality and durability.
- Dindigul district has two Universities, viz, Mother Theresa University for Women at Kodaikanal and Gandhigram Rural Deemed University at Gandhigram.
- Dindigul city is an important wholesale market for Onion. Handloom industry at Chinnalapatti for Art –Silk saris and Sungudi saris; also Dindigul is noted for Leather Tanning.
- Dindigul biryani, a culinary masterpiece that has been crafted and perfected over generations, has earned its place as a cherished symbol of the region's rich food heritage.
- Nilakottai Taluk is famous for the growing and marketing of flowers and Grapes ;Oddanchatram is a noted market Centre for vegetables; Batlagundu is an important market Centre for Tomato.
- Kodaikanal, a popular Summer Resort, is located at an altitude of 2133 meters in the Western Ghats. A notable feature of this Hillock is "Kurunji" flowers blooming once in 12 years .
- There are Nine dams viz, Palar Porundalar, Varathanathi, Kuthiraiaru in Palani Block, Parappalar and Nanganchar in Oddanchatram Block, Maruthanathi, Kamarajar Sagar in Athoor Block, Mavoor in Nilakottai Block and Kudaganar in Vedasandur Block

Dindigul's History

Long ago, Dindigul stood at the crossroads of mighty kingdoms like the Pandyas, Cheras, and Cholas. In the 1st century A.D., the great Chola king, Karikal Cholan, conquered the Pandya kingdom, bringing Dindigul under his rule. The Cholas held power until the Pallavas rose in the 6th century. Over time, Dindigul's control shifted between these dynasties until the Pandyas regained it in the 13th century.

In the 14th century, the Madurai Sultanate ruled Dindigul under the Delhi Sultanates. However, the Vijayanagara Empire later drove them out. In 1559, the Madurai Nayaks rose to power, and in 1605, Muthukrishna Nayak built the famous Dindigul Fort, strengthening the town's defence. Under rulers like Thirumalai Nayak, Dindigul thrived, but after a weak leadership, the wise Rani Mangammal restored stability.

In 1742, the Mysore army, led by Venkata Raya, captured Dindigul. Later, Haider Ali became the de facto ruler of Mysore, and in 1777, he appointed Purshana Mirsaheb as governor, who fortified the Dindigul Fort. When the British arrived in 1783, Captain Long took control, though the fort was briefly returned to Mysore before the British seized it again in 1790.

Dindigul became the first part of the Madurai district under British rule. The fort played a key role during the Polygar Wars, where local leaders like Gopal Nayak and Queen Velu Nachiyar resisted British control. Dindigul remained under British rule until India's independence in 1947. Today, the fort stands as a reminder of the town's rich history.

The Tale of the Pillow Rock

Long ago, when the land was ruled by mighty kings and the skies were filled with the songs of warriors, there stood a solitary hill, rising majestically from the earth. The locals, gazing upon this atural wonder, saw in its gentle curves the shape of a giant pillow. They called it "**Thindukkal**" — the Pillow Rock.

DINDIGUL VAASIKKIRATHU



This hill would become the cradle of a fortress, a sentinel that would watch over the land for centuries to come.

As the years passed, the region around the Pillow Rock began to thrive. Villages sprung up, and with them, stories of gods and heroes, of battles fought and won, and of a land that held a special place in the hearts of its people came up.

Landmarks

The Rise of Dindigul Fort

In the 17th century, under the rule of the Madurai Nayak kings, the hill took on a new role. To protect their lands from invading forces and to keep watch over the region, the Nayaks decided to build a fortress atop the Pillow Rock. This fortress, which would come to be known as the Dindigul Fort, was more than just a military stronghold. It was a symbol of power, a beacon of security for the people living in its shadow.

The fort was a marvel of engineering, with massive walls that seemed to grow out of the very rock itself. Inside, it was a bustling hub of activity, with soldiers, craftsmen, and traders going about their business. The fort became a key strategic point in the battles that raged across Tamil Nadu. It changed hands many times, coming under the control of various rulers, including Hyder Ali and his son Tipu Sultan, who recognized its importance and strengthened its defence.

Kodaikanal : A Town of Mist and Mystery

Long ago, nestled in the Western Ghats of Tamil Nadu, a hill station named Kodaikanal was born. Known as the "Princess of Hill Stations," it became a place where people escaped the heat to enjoy cool breezes, misty mountains, and serene lakes. The British built this town in the 19th century. Surrounded by pine forests and beautiful waterfalls, Kodaikanal soon became a favourite spot for nature lovers and adventurers alike.

At the heart of Kodaikanal lies its most famous attraction: Kodaikanal Lake. This star-shaped lake is

the very soul of the town, a place where locals and visitors alike come to relax, reflect, and revel in the beauty of nature. The lake, created artificially in 1863 by **Sir Vere Henry Levinge**, a former collector of Madurai, has since become the centerpiece of Kodaikanal's tourism. Beyond the lake, Kodaikanal's landscape unfolds in a series of breathtaking vistas and hidden trails, each offering a unique adventure.

The **Kodaikanal Solar Observatory**, one of the oldest in India, offers a unique opportunity to explore the mysteries of the universe. The observatory, established in 1899, is a centre for astronomical research, and visitors can learn about the stars, planets, and other celestial phenomena.

Sirumalai Hills: A Refuge of the Royals

Once known for its rich forests and medicinal plants, the hills also served as a sanctuary, a place where the royals could escape the pressures of court life and find peace in nature. Legends say ancient sages lived here. With its cool weather, fruit orchards, and lush greenery, Sirumalai remains a hidden gem, offering visitors a serene retreat away from the busy world below.

Biodiversity Park in Sirumalai Hills

The Government of Tamil Nadu is developing a biodiversity park in the Sirumalai Hill Range in the Dindigul district. The main objective is to create awareness for the sustainable management of the ecologically sensitive area. This park is a nature reserve that harbours the natural heritage of the area and has conservation, education and cultural values and will enhance the quality of the environment. Various biodiversity components such as mammals, birds, reptiles, amphibians, etc, have been showcased here. Different types of flowering plants have been planted all around the park and necessary irrigation facilities have been provided.

Assemblage of nectar plants to attract butterflies and host plants has also been planned. These are some of the salient aspects of the biodiversity park of Sirumalai.

DINDIGUL VAASIKKIRATHU



Some important pilgrim sites in Dindigul

- Thadikombu Perumal Temple: A Blend of Art and Devotion
- Begumpur Mosque: A Symbol of Harmony
- St. Joseph's Church - an architectural marvel
- Palani Hills: The Sacred Abode

GI Tagged Products from Dindigul

1. Dindigul Lock

In 2019, Dindigul Lock got a well-deserved GI Tag from the Geographical Indications Registry. These locks are renowned throughout the world for their superior quality and durability, so much so that even the city (Dindigul) is called Lock City. Government institutions such as prisons, godowns, hospitals, and even temples use these locks instead of other machine-made ones

2. Sirumalai Hill Banana

The pristine hills of Sirumalai is a home to a unique GI tagged Sirumalai Hill Banana. These bananas are typically smaller in size when compared to the traditional bananas. The sweet pulp caters to the making of the famous Palani Panchartham.

3. Sungudi Sarees

Sungudi sarees though its GI tag is pertinent to Madurai, it is widely manufactured in Chinnalapatti on the outskirts of Dindigul. Sungudi sarees are made by tying knots in the fabric, according to the desired design and then dyeing them. This unique method of production is why they are called Sungudi sarees.

4. Palani Panchartham

The Palani Panchartham prasadam from the Murugan temple in Palani, Tamil Nadu has been granted a Geographical Indication (GI) tag. It was the first temple prasadam in Tamil Nadu to receive this prestigious honour. The GI tag was awarded in 2019-2020.

5. Kodaikanal Malai Poondu

Kodaikanal Malai Poondu (Garlic) has pungent taste and odour. Kodaikanal Malai Poondu is an excellent herbal medicine as it is rich in antioxidants and organo sulphur compounds. Poondu rasam is

prepared with pepper and kodaikanal malai poondu to cure digestive issues.

The Rivers of Life

Flowing through this landscape, like veins through a body, are the rivers that have nourished the land for centuries. The **Kodaganar** and **Nanganji** rivers, born in the nearby hills, wind their way through Dindigul, bringing life to the fields and providing water to the people. These rivers, fed by the monsoon rains, have always been more than just waterways—they are lifelines, the sources of prosperity and growth. During the rainy season, when the rivers swell with water, the plains of Dindigul turn a vibrant green. The fields, rich with crops, seem to dance in the breeze, their bounty a testament to the land's fertility. This is the gift of Dindigul's geography—a land that provides, nurtures, and sustains.

Overview of the district's agriculture

In Dindigul, agriculture is more than a profession—it's a way of life, a tradition passed down through generations. The Western Ghats, with their towering peaks, catch the monsoon rains, sending water flowing into the district's fields. This water transforms the land into a green, thriving patchwork that feeds families year after year.

Farmers rise early, walking through mist-covered fields, the scent of wet earth and crops filling the air. They tend to the rice paddies, where young plants sway in the breeze, deeply rooted in the waterlogged soil. Rice has always thrived in Dindigul, and farmers nurture it with care and ancient knowledge.

But Dindigul's fertile soil produces more than just rice. Sugarcane fields stretch across the district, the tall stalks swaying like soldiers. Skilled farmers harvest the cane, knowing the sweet juice will become jaggery and sugar, essentials for every household. This deep connection to the land sustains both the community and its traditions.

Flowers of Nilakottai

In the peaceful town of Nilakottai, nestled in Dindigul, flower cultivation flourishes, creating a

DINDIGUL VAASIKKIRATHU



vibrant world of color and fragrance. The town's rich soil and ideal climate make it a hub for flower farming. Jasmine fields, with their tiny white blooms, blanket the green landscape like stars, filling the air with a sweet scent that defines the essence of Tamil Nadu.

On one side, bright yellow marigolds dominate the fields. These flowers, with their ruffled petals, hold deep cultural significance in festivals and religious ceremonies. Farmers tend to them with great care, knowing their value in local traditions.

Nearby, deep red roses bloom, their velvety petals prized for their beauty and fragrance. The roses of Nilakottai are renowned for their rich color and scent, making them highly sought after in markets far and wide. This flourishing floral landscape brings both beauty and livelihood to the community.

Slender Loris Sanctuary

The Kadavur Slender Loris Sanctuary is India's first sanctuary for slender lorises, and is located in the Dindigul and Karur districts of Tamil Nadu.

Environmental Threats

In Dindigul, once blessed with clear rivers and lush forests, nature began to suffer as the town grew. The Kodaganar River, once a source of life, became polluted by waste from factories, harming fish and crops. The Sirumalai and Palani hills, once dense with forests, were deforested, leaving animals without homes. Tanneries, while producing high-quality leather, polluted the soil and water with chemicals, making groundwater unsafe. As factories and cars increased, air pollution worsened, making it hard to breathe. The once-thriving environment of Dindigul faced serious challenges, threatening both nature and its people's health. But even as these problems grew, the people of Dindigul didn't give up. They knew that they needed to take care of their town's environment, just as their ancestors had done. Some people started cleaning up the river, organizing groups to pick up trash and stop pollution. Farmers began to learn about organic farming, using

natural methods to grow crops without harming the soil or water. Schools taught children about the importance of planting trees and protecting the forests, and families began to use less plastic and recycle more.

The people of Dindigul also began to think about how they could improve their air. They planted more trees, which helped clean the air and provide shade. They encouraged each other to use bicycles or walk instead of driving, which helped reduce pollution. And some of the factories started using cleaner technology to reduce the smoke they produced.

The story of Dindigul's environmental problems is a lesson for all of us. It shows how important it is to take care of the world around us. Even though Dindigul faces challenges, the people are working together to protect their town's natural beauty. They know that if they take care of their environment today, they will leave a better, healthier world for the children of tomorrow.

Hence, due to the continuous efforts from people, NGOs and Government, the quality of air has improved and the winds blowing out from Kodaikanal and Sirumalai hills had made them easier. Today Dindigul has been placed in the 7th rank, among all the cities in India, the only city from TamilNadu having good air quality index

A short notes, on how we could save and make a better greener, cleaner dindigul. Here are some simplified and practical points for school children to help maintain the city clean

- Always throw trash in dustbins, whether at school, home, or in public places. Keep your surroundings tidy.
- If you don't find a bin, keep the waste with you until you find one.

DINDIGUL VAASIKKIRATHU



- Avoid using plastic bags or bottles. Use reusable items like cloth bags, metal water bottles, and lunch boxes.
- Separate waste at home and school into dry (paper, plastic) and wet (food waste) categories. This helps in recycling.
- Join or help organize cleanliness drives in your neighborhood, school, or park with friends and family.
- Treat public places like parks, roads, and playgrounds as you would treat your home. Don't throw wrappers or food in these areas.
- Use eco-friendly alternatives like paper or cloth instead of plastic bags. Encourage your family and friends to do the same.
- Plant trees or take part in gardening activities. This helps keep the air clean and makes your surroundings greener.
- Tell your friends and family about how important it is to keep the city clean. You can even make posters or talk about it at school.
- Learn about recycling, reducing waste, and saving water at school. Share this knowledge with others.
- Use public and school toilets properly. After using them, make sure you leave them clean for the next person.
- If the toilets are dirty, tell your teacher or parents to inform the authorities.
- Use both sides of a sheet of paper to save paper and reduce waste.
- Collect old newspapers and notebooks for recycling instead of throwing them away.
- When you visit a park, beach, or any public place, always remember to throw any wrappers or waste into the bins.
- Respect public property by not scribbling or damaging walls or benches.
- Carry your own cloth bag when going shopping with your family.
- Set a good example by practicing cleanliness in your daily life.

The Unity in Diversity

Dindigul is a special town where people of different cultures, religions, and languages live together happily. The unity in Dindigul extends beyond festivals and daily interactions; it is deeply embedded in the town's approach to life. In schools, children of different faiths study side by side, learning not only their lessons but also the importance of respect and understanding. In the temples, mosques, and churches, prayers are offered not just for one's own community but for the well-being of all. When someone is in need, the people of Dindigul do not ask which god they worship or which language they speak—they simply come together to help. It is a place where diversity is not just tolerated but embraced, where differences are celebrated, and where the true essence of humanity is found in the unity that binds people together. In Dindigul, unity in diversity is not just a concept—it is a way of life, a living, breathing reality that has been passed down through generations.

As the sun sets behind the Rock Fort, casting long shadows over the town, the sounds of prayer from a distant mosque mingle with the ringing of temple bells and the chimes of a church. It is a moment that captures the soul of Dindigul—a place where many voices rise together in harmony, creating a symphony of unity that resonates through the ages.

Importance of reading books

Reading books holds immense importance for people of all ages, offering numerous benefits that shape personal and intellectual growth. First and foremost, reading enhances vocabulary and language skills. Exposure to various writing styles, sentence structures, and new words helps improve communication, comprehension, and expression.

Books also stimulate the mind, fostering critical thinking and problem-solving abilities. Through stories or factual content, readers are challenged to analyze information, form opinions, and engage with complex ideas. This mental exercise strengthens

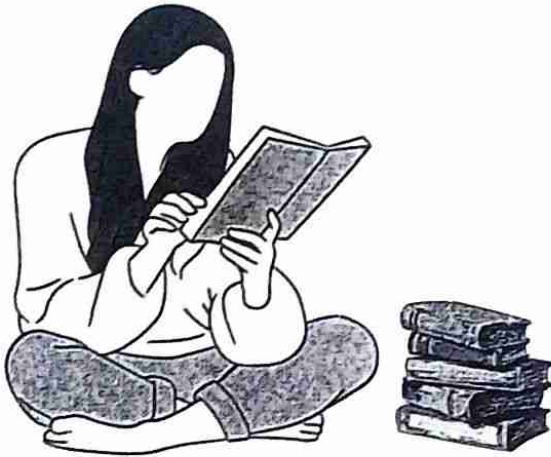
DINDIGUL VAASIKKIRATHU



cognitive functions and promotes lifelong learning. Additionally, reading expands one's imagination and creativity. Books allow readers to explore different worlds, characters, and scenarios, broadening their horizons and inspiring innovative thinking. This imaginative journey is particularly important for young readers, as it nurtures creativity and curiosity. Moreover, reading books promotes empathy by exposing individuals to diverse perspectives, cultures, and experiences. Through narratives, readers can step into someone else's shoes, deepening their understanding of human emotions and social issues. This builds emotional intelligence and encourages tolerance.

Finally, reading serves as a stress-reliever, offering an escape from the pressures of daily life. It provides mental relaxation, enhances focus, and improves concentration.

In a fast-paced digital world, books remain a timeless source of knowledge, inspiration, and self-reflection. Whether for personal enjoyment, education, or growth, reading books enriches the mind and spirit.



Dindigul Book Fair

The Tamil Nadu government's book fairs are renowned for promoting a culture of reading and offering access to a wide range of literature. Held annually in major cities like Chennai, these fairs are massive gatherings featuring publishers, authors, and book lovers. They offer an array of books, from academic texts and children's literature to fiction, non-fiction, and regional Tamil works. This makes it an invaluable platform for readers to discover new authors and genres.

The fairs also offer significant benefits. Visitors can purchase books at discounted rates, making literature more affordable and accessible. Additionally, the fairs often feature stalls by government agencies that provide textbooks and educational materials for students, supporting their academic growth. The wide variety of Tamil literature available also helps preserve and promote regional language and culture. For aspiring writers and literature enthusiasts, book fairs offer opportunities to attend literary discussions, meet authors, and participate in workshops, enhancing their understanding and passion for writing.

To fully benefit from these fairs, visitors should explore different stalls, engage with authors and publishers, and take advantage of the discounted prices. These fairs not only foster a love for reading but also encourage lifelong learning and cultural exchange.

Dindigul district celebrates its annual book fair this year (2024) from October 10 to 20 at Dudley School Ground.