

2. Thiruvalluvar Day- History

PM Modi pays homage to Tamil poet-philosopher Thiruvalluvar, urges people to read Tirukkural. Prime Minister Modi paid homage to the Tamil poet-philosopher Thiruvalluvar, a cultural icon whose birth anniversary is celebrated on Thiruvalluvar Day. He is best known for authoring the Tirukkural, a classic Tamil text on ethics, statecraft, and love, consisting of 1,330 couplets divided into three sections (Aram, Porul, Kamam).

Introduction

On the occasion of Thiruvalluvar Day, Prime Minister Narendra Modi paid homage to the legendary Tamil poet and philosopher, Thiruvalluvar. He is revered as a towering cultural icon of Tamil civilization, whose contributions to ethics and literature remain timeless.

1. Life and Background of Thiruvalluvar

Identity and Stature

Cultural Icon- Thiruvalluvar is celebrated as one of the most significant figures in Tamil history, known for his wisdom and poetic genius.

Philosophical Role- He was a Siddha (a perfected spiritual adept), poet, and philosopher who transcended religious and caste boundaries to offer universal truths.

Community Links and Lineage

Etymology of the Name

1. He is commonly known as Valluvar or Thiruvalluvar.
2. The name signifies "the devotee of the Valluva caste."

Traditional Occupation- The Valluvas were a community traditionally tasked with proclaiming royal orders by beating drums. They were historically associated with the Pariah community (referred to in modern times as Harijans).

Parentage Legends- According to traditional accounts, Thiruvalluvar was born to an inter-caste couple- Bhagavan, a Brahmin father, and Adi, a Pariah woman.

Sub-Caste Theory- The term "Valluvar" also refers to a sub-caste group who served as priests to the **Pallava kings** prior to the dominance of Brahmins.

Note- While this historical group exists, there is no clear evidence confirming that the poet Thiruvalluvar belonged to this specific priestly sub-caste.

Period and Birthplace

Birthplace- Traditions generally place his birth in Madurai, the ancient capital of the Pandyas and a hub of Tamil Sangam literature.

Debate on Chronology- Historians and scholars have proposed varying time periods for his life, ranging from the 4th century BCE to the early 6th century CE.

Key Estimates

1. Maraimalai Adigal- A prominent Tamil scholar who dated Thiruvalluvar's birth to 31 BCE.
2. Kamil Zvelebil- A renowned linguist who suggested a later period, between 500-600 CE.

Official Recognition- In January 1935, the Government of Tamil Nadu officially recognized 31 BCE as the birth year of Thiruvalluvar. This date is used to calculate the "Thiruvalluvar Year" in the Tamil calendar.

2. The Tirukkural- A Literary Masterpiece

Overview of the Text

Authorship- Authored by Thiruvalluvar, the text is a classic of Tamil literature, often referred to as the "Tamil Veda."

Subject Matter- It is a comprehensive treatise on ethics, politics, economy, and love.

Structural Composition

Total Couplets- The text contains 1,330 couplets (Kurals).

Organization- These couplets are arranged into 133 chapters (athikarams), with each chapter containing exactly 10 couplets.

The Three Books (Mu-paal)

The *Thirukkural* is divided into three distinct sections, each addressing a fundamental aspect of human existence.

Book Name (Tamil)	Translation	Focus Area
Aram	Virtue / Righteousness	Deals with moral conduct, asceticism, and domestic virtue. It lays the ethical foundation for an individual's life.
Porul	Wealth / Statecraft	Focuses on politics, economy, and society. It offers guidance to kings, ministers, and citizens on governance, defense, and wealth accumulation.
Kamam (or Inbam)	Love / Pleasure	Explores human emotions and personal relationships, describing the nuances of love, separation, and union.

Thematic Range and Significance

Holistic Guidance- The text covers a vast spectrum of life, including social justice, statecraft, economic management, and personal intimacy.

Practicality- Unlike abstract philosophical texts, the *Thirukkural* offers practical guidance applicable to everyday life for people from all walks of life.

Literary Style

1. Aphoristic- The couplets are written in a concise, "Venpa" meter.
2. Universality- The language is poetic yet direct, making the verses memorable and easily quotable.
3. Secular Nature- The text is celebrated for its secular tone, focusing on human values rather than specific religious dogmas.

Source- <https://ddindia.co.in/2026/01/pm-modi-pays-homage-to-tamil-poet-philosopher-thiruvalluvar-urges-people-to-read-tirukkural/>