

**TAMIL DEVELOPMENT- CULTURE AND  
RELIGIOUS ENDOWMENTS DEPARTMENT  
HINDU RELIGIOUS AND CHARITABLE  
ENDOWMENTS ADMINISTRATION DEPARTMENT  
DEMAND NO. 47  
POLICY NOTE  
2006-2007**

**INTRODUCTION**

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- **Thirumoolar**

This Government always strives hard respecting the great principle that 'Service to mankind is service to God'.

This Government recollecting the principles of Saint Thirumoolar that there is "One Community - One God", and bearing in mind the lofty ideals that Almighty can be seen in the smile of the poor, this Department is following the above in the temple administration.

Our temples are the legacy of the ancient tradition and hoary past of our Tamil culture. They are culmination of the intellectual poise, immense capability, mastery in art and architecture, sense of charity and clear vision of pious life of Tamils.

This Government will take effective steps to perform conscreation after due renovations of temples, retriive and safeguard the temple properties, prepare and maintain property registers and augument the income of temples. The Hindu Religious and Charitable Endowments Administration Department is functioning well following the principles profounded in the Thirukural:-

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## **HINDU RELIGIOUS AND CHARITABLE ENDOWMENTS ADMINISTRATION**

The "Hindu Religious Charitable Endowments Board" was constituted in the year 1927 to monitor and coordinate the day-to-day administration of the Temples and Charitable Institutions in Tamil Nadu and the maintenance of their properties. In the year 1951 the Hindu Religious Charitable Endowments Act 1951 was brought in and the Hindu Religious Charitable Administration Board was abolished and the structure of Hindu Religious Institutions was streamlined.

Area Committees were formed to supervise the functioning of the trustees of the Temples. However, since the Act was not able to bring about a complete, and fruitful administrative mechanism in the Temples, the present Act namely 'The Hindu Religious and Charitable Endowments Act 1959' was enacted with significant modifications.

During 1968, the Government headed by Perarignar Anna enacted a legislation removing the Area Committees and, entrusting the complete responsibility to the Commissioner and his subordinate officers. After that, in the year 1971, the hereditary system of appointment of Archakas and poojaris was abolished through an amendment and the appointments of Archakas and the Poojaris was regulated. This move became the seed to high social principle ideology that any one can become Archaka in Temples.

In the year 1996 the Government headed by Dr.Kalaignar scrapped the Temple Administration Board and entrusted the complete responsibility of Temple Administration to the Commissioner and his subordinate Officers. Besides, a State Level Advisory Committee

was constituted to help and guide the Government and the Commissioner. At present, the State Level Advisory Committee is yet to be constituted. The Government will take steps soon to constitute this Committee having suitable dignitaries as members.

The Government headed by Dr.Kalignar which assumed office on 13.05.2006, resolved to implement the socialistic policy that all are equal before God and that there should be no discrimination by caste in performing archana to God. The Government ordered that the people of all castes possessing the required qualifications and training are eligible to become Archakas in Hindu Temples, thus removing the thorn from the heart of Thanthai Periyar. A High Level Committee has been constituted by the Government with Justice Thiru A.K.Rajan, retired Judge of the High Court as the Chairman to offer suitable suggestions and recommendations for the implementation of this order. The following dignitaries have been appointed as the members of the Committee. The Commissioner of Hindu Religious and Charitable Endowments Administration Department is the Member/Secretary of the Committee.

1.	Justice Thiru A.K.Rajan Avargal, Retired Judge of the Madras High Court -- Chairman
2.	Thavaththiru Ponnambala Adigalar Avargal, Thiruvannamalai Adheenam,Kundrakkudi.
3.	Thirukkayilaya Paramparai Meikanda Santhanam Kayilai Gurumani Seervalarseer Santhalinga Ramasamy Adigalar Avargal, Perur.
4.	Sreeranga Narayana Jeeyar Swamigal Avargal, Srirangam.
5.	Sivanerichemmal Dr. Pitchai Sivachariyar Avargal, Pillayarpatti.
6.	Sivagama Sironmani Thiru K. Chandrasekara Bhattar Avargal, Thirupparankundram.

The Committee has been requested to submit its recommendations and advice within two months. The first meeting of this Committee was held on 29.6.2006 at Chennai.

Temple authorities have been instructed to dispense with the practice of offering "Parivattam Honour" to V.I.P's in order to secure the policy of no

discrimination before God in Temples on account of Rich or Poor, Haves and Have-nots, and powerful or the powerless.

## **RELIGIOUS INSTITUTIONS**

There are 38,421 Hindu and Jain Institutions under the administration of this department. These Religious Institutions are administered by the Trustees and Executive Officers appointed as per the Hindu Religious and Charitable Endowments Act, 1959. Majority of the Temples where there is no Executive Officer posted, are managed by the Trustees .

The details of the Hindu and Jain Religious Institutions under the administration of this Department are given below:

1.	Temples	36,381
2.	Mutts	56
3.	Temples managed by Mutts	57
4.	Specific Endowments	1721
5.	Charitable Endowments	189
6.	Jain Institutions	17
	Total	38,421

## CLASSIFICATIONS OF HINDU RELIGIOUS INSTITUTIONS

As per the Hindu Religious Charitable Endowments Act and on the basis of their annual income, the Religious Institutions have been classified as given below:

<b>S. No.</b>	<b>Act Provision</b>	<b>Annual Income of the institution</b>	<b>No. of Institutions</b>
1.	Non Listed Temples <b>Section 49</b>	Below - Rs.10,000/-	34,433
2.	Listed Temples <b>Section 46(i)</b>	From Rs.10,000/- to Rs.2,00,000/-	3,397
3.	<b>Section 46(ii)</b>	From Rs.2,00,000/- to Rs.10,00,000/-	438
4.	<b>Section 46(iii)</b>	From Rs.10,00,000/- and above	153
		<b>Total</b>	<b>38,421</b>

## **ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE OF THE HINDU RELIGIOUS CHARITABLE ENDOWMENTS DEPARTMENT**

At present, there are totally 1698 persons working in this department as against the sanctioned strength of 2359 - in all the cadres such as the Commissioner, Officers, Subordinate Officers, Executive Officers, those employed on Foreign Service basis, Office Assistants, Watchmen and Scavengers.

### **ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE OF THE HEAD QUARTERS**

The administrative Head of The Hindu Religious and Charitable Endowments Administration Department is the Commissioner. An Officer from the Indian Administrative Service is in charge of this post.

To assist the Commissioner at the Head Quarters, an Additional Commissioner, a Joint Commissioner (Head Quarters), a Joint Commissioner (Thiruppani) to speed up thiruppani works, Two Personal Assistants to the Commissioner in the cadre of Assistant Commissioner, an Assistant Commissioner (Legal Cell) to monitor legal affairs, and an Assistant Commissioner

(verification) to appraise the Silver and Gold Jewels and valuables belonging to Religious Institutions, are working.

For assisting the Commissioner in the works such as preparing the estimates for the renovation works in temples, supervision of construction works in Religious Institutions, an Engineering Wing consisting of a Superintending Engineer, a Divisional Engineer, Assistant Engineers and Draughtsmen, is functioning at the Head Quarters. The Officers of this Wing are on deputation from the Department of Public Works or Highways.

To investigate and to identify the properties of the religious institutions, a separate Revenue Wing headed by a District Revenue Officer as the Special Officer is functioning at the Head Quarters. This wing inspects the temple lands, interacts with the District Collectors and officials of the Revenue Department for preparation of the basic registers of lands belonging to Temples. As the workload has since become heavy, the Government has sanctioned an additional post of District Revenue Officer to this wing.

A senior Accounts Officer and an Assistant Accounts Officer belonging to Treasuries and Accounts Department are in charge of the Accounts Branch. An Audit Wing is functioning, with an Officer from the Finance Department of the State as the Chief Audit Officer to audit the accounts of the religious institutions.

### **REGIONAL/DIVISIONAL ADMINISTRATIVE SETUP**

This department has been divided into **11** Regions in the State, each administered by a Joint Commissioner, and **22** divisions, each administered by an Assistant Commissioner. They are detailed as below:

S. No.	Region	Division	Jurisdiction
1.	Joint Commissioner, Chennai	1. Assistant Commissioner, Chennai.	Chennai District, Ambattur, Ponneri, Thiruvallur, Uthukottai Taluks in Thiruvallur District.
2.	Joint Commissioner, Vellore	2. Assistant Commissioner, Kancheepuram.	Kancheepuram District, Gummudipoondi, Poonamalli, Thiruthani Taluks in Thiruvallur District.
		3. Assistant Commissioner, Vellore.	Vellore District

3.	Joint Commissioner, Salem.	4. Assistant Commissioner, Dharmapuri.	Dharmapuri, Krishnagiri Districts
		5. Assistant Commissioner, Salem.	Salem, Namakkal Districts.
4.	Joint Commissioner, Coimbatore.	6. Assistant Commissioner, Coimbatore.	Coimbatore, Nilgiri Districts
		7. Assistant Commissioner, Erode.	Erode District
5.	Joint Commissioner, Thanjavur.	8. Assistant Commissioner, Thanjavur.	Orathanadu, Pabanasam, Peravoorani, Thanjavur, Pattukottai, Thiruvaiyaru Taluks in Thanjavur District. Mannargudi, Needamangalam, Valangaimaan Taluks in Thiruvarur District.
		9. Assistant Commissioner, Nagapattinam.	Keelvelur, Nagapattinam, Thirukuvalai, Vedaranyam Taluks in Nagapattinam District. Thiruvarur Thiruthuraipoondi, Kudavasal, Nannilam, Taluks in Thiruvarur District.

6.	Joint Commissioner, Mayiladuthurai.	10. Assistant Commissioner, Kumbakonam.	Kumbakonam, Thiruvidaimaruthur, Taluks in Thanjavur District. Mayiladuthurai, Sirkali, Tharangam-badi Taluks in Nagapattinam District
		11. Assistant Commissioner, Cuddalore.	In Cuddalore District Chidambaram and Kattumannarkudi Taluks
7	Joint Commissioner, Villupuram.	Assistant Commissioner, Cuddalore.	In Cuddalore District Panruti, Cuddalore, Viruthachalam, Thittakudi Taluks
		12. Assistant Commissioner, Villupuram.	Villupuram District
		13. Assistant Commissioner, Thiruvannamalai	Thiruvannamalai District
8.	Joint Commissioner, Tiruchirappalli.	14. Assistant Commissioner, Tiruchirappalli.	Tiruchirappalli District. Aravakurichi , Karur, Krishnarayapuram Taluks in Karur District.
		15. Assistant Commissioner, Ariyalur.	Perambalur District.
		16. Assistant Commissioner, Pudukottai.	Pudukottai District. Kulithalai Taluk in Karur District. Manapparai Taluk in Trichy Dist.

9.	Joint Commissioner, Madurai.	17. Assistant Commissioner, Madurai.	Madurai, Theni and Dindigul Districts.
10.	Joint Commissioner, Sivagangai.	18. Assistant Commissioner, Virudhunagar.	Virudhunagar District.
		19. Assistant Commissioner, Paramakudi.	Sivagangai and Ramanathapuram Districts.
11.	Joint Commissioner, Tirunelveli.	20. Assistant Commissioner, Tirunelveli.	Tirunelveli District
		21. Assistant Commissioner, Thoothukudi.	Thoothukudi District
		22. Assistant Commissioner, Nagercoil.	Kanniyakumari District

There are Inspectors to assist the Joint Commissioners and the Assistant Commissioners in the field. An Assistant Commissioner as Personal Assistant to Joint Commissioner/Executive Officer and a Deputy Commissioner are assisting the Joint Commissioner/Executive Officer at Palani, Arulmigu Dhandayuthapaniswamy Temple. Six Verification

Officers in the cadre of Deputy Commissioner are working for appraising Gold, Silver and other valuable articles of the religious institutions. There is an Assistant Commissioner in charge of the Icon Centre at Thiruvavarur. Tahsildhars drawn from Revenue Department are working for preparation of the basic registers relevant to the land of religious institutions, and the Regional Audit Officers and Assistant Audit Officers are auditing the accounts of the religious institutions. Every Joint Commissioner's office has an Additional Divisional Engineer and every Assistant Commissioner's office has an Assistant Engineer for preparation of estimates and supervision of the Thiruppani works.

## **EXECUTIVE OFFICERS**

Depending on the significance of the temples, their revenue, assets and the activities, posts of Executive Officers in various cadres have been created for the administration of the temples. The details of such posts of Executive Officer sanctioned are given below:

<b>S. No.</b>	<b>Cadre</b>	<b>Nos.</b>
1	Joint Commissioner/ Executive Officer	6
2	Deputy Commissioner/ Executive Officer	14
3	Assistant Commissioner/ Executive Officer	27
4	Executive Officer-Grade I	66
5	Executive Officer-Grade II	112
6	Executive Officer-Grade III	250
7	Executive Officer-Grade IV	154
	Total	629

## **ADMINISTRATION OF MUTTS**

At present in Tamil Nadu, there are 56 Mutts and 19 Specific Endowments attached thereto, under the control of this department. To ensure proper administration of these mutts and to assist the Commissioner in this regard, a separate Audit Section consisting of a Regional Audit Officer, one Superintendent, two Audit Inspectors and three Assistants is functioning at the Head Office.

## **APPOINTMENT OF TRUSTEES**

Provisions have been made for the appointment of Trustees for every temple to administer the temple according to the provisions of the Hindu Religious and Charitable Endowments Act.

The Government had constituted District Committees having a Chairman and 4 members for every District under Section 7-A of the Hindu Religious and Charitable Endowments Act. Three Trustees have to be appointed for every Temple from the panel of Trustees recommended by these District Committees. The Government will appoint two more Trustees.

Accordingly, Non Hereditary Trustees have been appointed for 93 Temples under section 46(iii) Category, for 217 Temples under section 46(ii) category, for 1507 Temples under 46(i) category and for 11431 Temples under section 49(1) of the Act. As the system of District Committees was not functioning properly, the Government have decided to change the same. Besides, the Government have decided to remove the maximum age limit restriction for appointment as Trustees and to make appointment of women in the Board of Trustees

mandatory. Pursuant to this decision, Tamil Nadu ordinance 5/2006 which was promulgated by His Excellency the Governor of Tamil Nadu came into effect from 16.7.2006. According to this ordinance, the District Committees have been abolished and the powers have been given to the Government, Commissioner, and the Joint Commissioners. Also, the term of office of the Trustees has been reduced to one year.

### **DETAILS OF LANDS, BUILDINGS AND SITES BELONGING TO RELIGIOUS INSTITUTIONS**

There are 4,78,961.46 acres of Dry, Wet and Manavari lands belonging to all the religious institutions as detailed below:

Nature of the land	Temple Lands		Mutt Lands		Total Extent	
	Acre	Cents	Acre	Cents	Acre	Cents
Wet	1,83,768	68	21,282	05	2,05,050	73
Dry	2,18,612	68	34,543	15	2,53,155	83
Maanavari	20,754	90	--	--	20,754	90
Total	4,23,136	26	55,825	20	4,78,961	46

In all 1,23,729 leaseholders are cultivating on lands belonging to religious institutions. There are 22,599 buildings and 33,627 sites belonging to temples having 25,187 and 59,390 tenants respectively.

## **REVENUE COURT**

In order to collect the dues, fixing fair rent and to enquire into cases related to such arrears relating to cultivable lands and to evict the defaulters, Revenue Courts have been setup at the following places presided by the Special Deputy Collectors.

### **Regular Courts:**

- 1.Thanjavur
- 2.Tiruchirappalli
3. Mayiladuthurai
- 4.Thiruvavarur
- 5.Cuddalore
6. Madurai

### **Camp Courts:**

- 1.Mannargudi
- 2.Kumbakonam
- 3.Salem
- 4.Thenkasi

32,885 cases have been filed before these Courts to collect arrears of Rs.35.09 crores due. By the disposal of 15764 cases, an amount to the tune of

Rs.13.05 crores have been ordered to be paid up to the temples, steps are taken to collect the same. A balance of Rs.22.04 crore arrears of rent is involved in the 17121 number of cases pending before the Revenue Courts.

## **THIRUPPANI**

Tamil Nadu has the pride of having temples of historic and archaeological significance and temples sung by Alwars and Nayanmars. It is essential to do periodic repair and renovation in order to protect and maintain these ancient, historic and archaeologically important temples. Preference is given to the above Institutions while selecting temples for renovation. Temples requiring immediate renovation and temples where as per Agamic Rules Kumbabishegam is due are taken up first. Apart from this, renovation work is being taken up in small temples located in villages in the Adi Dravidas and Backward Class habitations.

The following are the sources of fund for the temple renovation work.

- i) Public Donations
- ii) Funds of the respective temples..

- iii) Diversion from the surplus funds of the affluent temples.
- iv) Government Grant.
- v) The Commissioner's Common Good Fund.
- vi) Temple Development Fund.
- vii) Village Temples Renovation Fund.
- viii) Temple Renovation and Charitable Fund.
- ix) Donor works.

**a) Diversion from the surplus funds of affluent temples**

Under Section 36 of Tamilnadu Hindu Religious and Charitable Endowments Act, funds may be diverted to the needy temples from the surplus funds of affluent temples for undertaking renovation works.

**b) Government Grant**

Every year, an amount of Rs.45,00,000/- was given as Government Grant for renovation works in Temples. During the year 1998-99, this budget allocation was raised to Rs.75,00,000/- and this amount is released every year and renovation works are undertaken.

### **c) Commissioner's Common Good Fund**

A Common Good Fund has been created under section 97 of the Hindu Religious and Charitable Endowments Act in the official designation of Commissioner with the voluntary donations received from individuals and contributions from religious institutions. Financial assistance is given from the above fund to the financially not sound temples for repair and renovation.

### **d) Temple Development Fund**

An amount of Rs.5 crore was set apart as Corpus by pooling from the surplus funds of financially affluent temples. Keeping this Corpus as fixed deposit, the interest accrued from the deposit is used with the previous permission of the Government to provide financial assistance to the temples of ancient, historical, archaeological importance and temples visited and praised by Alwars and Nayanmars.

### **e) Village Temples Renovation Fund**

A Corpus of Rs.2 crore has been created by pooling from the surplus funds of Palani Arulmighu

Dhandayuthapaniswamy temple. From the interest earned through this corpus, financial assistance of Rs.25,000/- each is given every year for the renovation of 100 small village temples under the control of this department.

#### **f) Temple Renovation and Charitable Fund**

“The Temple Renovation and Charitable Fund” has been created out of the donations received from the philanthropists and the general public. Under this scheme, financial assistance is given for the renovation of ancient temples, temples of historical and archaeological importance and also for the “Oru Kala Pooja Scheme”.

#### **g) Renovations for the temples situated in the habitations of Adhi Dravida and Backward Class people**

This scheme has been launched with the funds diverted from the surplus funds of the affluent temples, for the renovation of small temples located at the habitations of Adhi Dravidas and the temples which are under the control of this Department in Backward Class habitations.

## **GOLDEN CAR THIRUPPANI**

Golden Car is in use presently in the following 25 temples:

1. Arulmigu Dandayuthapaniswamy Thirukkivil, Palani.
2. Arulmigu MeenakshiSundareswarar Thirukkivil.  
Madurai.
3. Arulmigu Subramaniaswamy Thirukkivil,  
Thiruchendur.
4. Arulmigu Mariyamman Thirukkivil, Samayapuram.
5. Arulmigu Subramaniaswamy Thirukkivil,  
Maruthamalai.
6. Arulmigu Swaminathaswamy Thirukkivil,  
Swamimalai.
7. Arulmigu Vaidhyanathaswamy Thirukkivil,  
Vaitheeswaran kovil.
8. Arulmigu SankaraNarayanawamy Thirukkivil,  
Sankarankoyil.
9. Arulmigu Ramanathaswamy Thirukkivil,  
Rameswaram.
10. Arulmigu Devi Karumariyamman Thirukkivil,  
Thiruverkadu .
11. Arulmigu Kapaleeswarar Thirukkivil, Mylapore .
12. Arulmigu Kanthaswamy Thirukkivil, Park Town,  
Chennai.
13. Arulmigu Vadapalaniyandavar Thirukkivil,  
Vadapalani.
14. Arulmigu Kamatchiyamman Thirukkivil, Mangadu
15. Arulmigu Kamatchiyamman Thirukkivil,  
Kanchipuram
16. Arulmigu Subramnya Swamy Thirukkivil,  
Thiruththani.

17. Arulmigu Balamurugan Thirukkovil, Raththinagiri.
18. Arulmigu Vinayagar Thirukkovil, Eechanari.
19. Arulmigu Subramaniaswamy Thirukkovil,  
Sivanmalai
20. Arulmigu Deivanayakapperumal Thirukkovil,  
Nanguneri.
21. Arulmigu Mariyamman Thirukkovil, Bannari
22. Arulmigu Arunachaleswarar Thirukkovil, Thiruvannamalai.
23. Arulmigu Mathurakaliyamman Thirukkovil,  
Siruvachchur
24. Arulmigu Maruntheeswar Thirukkovil,  
Thiruvanmiyur
25. Arulmigu Velayuthaswamy Thirukkovil,  
Thindalmalai, Erode.

Apart from the above, making of Golden Car is in progress in the following temples:

1. Arulmigu Thandumariyamman Thirukkovil, Coimbatore.
2. Arulmigu Kottaimariyamman Thirukkovil, Dindigul.
3. Arulmigu Mundakakanniyamman Thirukkovil, Mylapore.
4. Arulmigu Anjaneyaswamy Thirukkovil sub temple of  
Arulmigu Narasimmaswamy Thirukkovil, Namakkal.
5. Arulmigu Akhilandeswari Udaturai Jambukeswarar  
Thirukkovil, Thiruvanaikkaval, Trichirappalli.
6. Arulmigu Sugavaneswarar Thirukkovil, Salem.
7. Arulmigu Subramnyaswamy Thirukkovil,  
Thirupparankundram.
8. Arulmigu Arthanareeswarar Thirukkovil,  
Thiruchengodu.
9. Arulmigu Vanapathrakaliyamman Thirukkovil,  
Thekkampatti.
10. Arulmigu Masaniyamman Thirukkovil, Aanaimalai.

## **RENOVATION OF WOODEN TEMPLE CARS**

Steps have been taken to repair and renovate the Wooden Cars in Temples and to revive the Car festivals wherever it ceased. Nearly 309 temple cars belonging to temples require repairs. Among these, in the first place, 16 temple cars are being renovated from the funds of the respective temples at an estimated cost of Rs 83.85 lacs. Out of the remaining temple cars, the Government have issued orders to renovate 225 temple cars at an estimate of Rs 10.84 crores, funds for which will be got by diversion from the surplus funds of the affluent temples.

## **RENOVATION OF TEMPLE TANKS**

There are 2235 temple tanks belonging to 1552 temples under the control of this department. In order to fight the drought through rain water harvesting measures and to enable conduct float festivals, steps have been taken to desilt and renovate the temple tanks. 1665 temple tanks have been repaired and are in good condition. Instructions have been issued that all the remaining temple tanks should be renovated in the coming years with the assistance of the District

Collectors, Voluntary Organizations and through allocations from the District Development funds.

### **ORU KALA POOJA SCHEME**

This scheme is implemented for providing assistance to the temples whose fund position is too little to carry out even a single kala pooja every day. In order to encourage the general public to participate in this scheme, if a contribution of Rs.2,500 is made by the public for a particular temple, an assistance of Rs.22,500 (Rs.1300/- from the Temple Renovation & Charitable Fund, Rs.1,200/- from the Temple Development Fund and Rs.20,000/- diverted from the funds of the affluent temples ) is provided by the department and the amount of Rs.25,000/- is put in Fixed Deposit in the name of the temple. From the interest thereof, Oru Kala Pooja is arranged to be performed everyday in that temple. So far 10,447 temples have been benefited by the scheme.

### **BASIC AMENITIES FOR THE DEVOTEES AT TEMPLES**

Steps have been taken to provide Cloak Rooms, Cottages and rooms for the stay of devotees and to improve further the existing facilities in temples. Steps

have also been taken for provision of protected drinking water to all devotees visiting the temples.

Steps have also been taken to provide modern toilet amenities at temples for men and women devotees separately. Safe custody of foot wears and availing toilet amenities have been made free of charge at affluent temples.

### **SAFETY OF ICONS AND OTHER VALUABLES**

To safeguard the icons and other valuable articles of temples, measures have been taken which include installation of burglar alarms, tell-tale clocks, inner locking, fixing iron gates, appointment of night watchmen, and engaging Temple Protection Force.

Icon Centers have been opened at five places for ensuring safe custody of priceless icons of such temples where safety and security are inadequate. Provision has also been made to take the idols from this Icon Centre to their respective temples during festival seasons and to bring them back to these Icon Centers. The icons are also offered daily poojas at these Centers.

Following Icon Centres are presently functioning :

1. Thiruvarur Icon Centre  
(Arulmigu ThiyagarajaSwami Temple premises )
2. Arulmigu Akilandeswari udanurai Jambukeswarar Temple Thiruvanaikkaval, Trichirappalli.
3. Arulmigu Meenakshi Sundareswarar Temple, Madurai.
4. Arulmigu Gandhimathi Udanurai Nellaiyappar Thirukkovil, Thirunelveli.
5. Arulmigu Sugavaneswar Thirukkoyil, Salem.

Such icon centers will soon be opened at Kumbakonam, Kanchipuram, Thiruvannamalai, Vellore and Cuddalore.

Construction of Icon Centers at Coimbatore, Pudukkottai, Madurai, Sivagangai and Thirunelveli are nearing completion. During this year construction of Icon Center at Tirunelveli will be completed.

### **KARUNAI ILLAMS**

Karunai Illams have been opened in Temples to provide care for orphan children. There are 31 temples having 34 Karunai Illams functioning in which 668 boys and 330 girls, totaling 998 children are benefited. The expenses of Karunai Illams were fully borne by the respective temples. But, from the year 1998-99, Government provides grant at the rate of Rs.467/- per

child (food Rs.200 + administrative expenses Rs.267) towards the expenditure for the Karunai Illams.

## **EDUCATIONAL AND OTHER INSTITUTIONS MANAGED BY TEMPLES**

While religious and spiritual activities are being developed in temples, the temples also involve themselves in other social welfare activities for the poor and the middle class people. Education, medicine, music, the betterment of the handicapped and welfare of the aged are a few areas which the temples render their valuable services.

1.	Colleges	5
2.	Polytechnics	1
3.	Higher Secondary Schools	12
4.	High Schools	10
5.	Middle Schools	3
6.	Primary Schools	10
7.	Matriculation School	1
8.	Schools for Nagaswaram and Thavil	3
9.	Vedha Aghama Padasalas	2
10.	Thevara Padasalas	5
11.	Divya Prabhandha Padasalas	1
12.	Schools for the Deaf and Dumb	1
13.	Sidhdha VaidyaSalas	8
14.	Allopathy Hospitals	2
15.	Karunai Illams	34
16.	Home for the Aged	2
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100</b>

## TAMIL ARCHANA

Azhwars and Nayanmars sang hymns in Tamil in praise of the Sacred Shrines and worshipped through Archanas only in Tamil, in all temples visited by them. The Tamils have clearly appreciated that worshipping God in Tamil is the best form of worship in tune with God's Love towards mankind and there is a growing interest in favour of worshipping in their mother tongue. It is but natural that the Tamils perform their worship only in their mother tongue in the temples of Tamil Nadu. Responding to public demand, Tamil Archana books were prepared and published in the year 1997 for streamlining the worshipping in Tamil. They are:

1. Arulmigu Vinayagar Potri
  2. Arulmigu Murugavel Potri
  3. Arulmigu Sivan Potri
  4. Arulmigu Thirumal Potri
  5. Arulmigu Umayammai Potri
  6. Arulmigu Natarajar Potri
  7. Arulmigu Thenkugha kadavul Potri
  8. Arulmigu Gothandaramar Potri
  9. Arulmigu Thayar Potri
  10. Arulmigu Thurkhaiyam man Potri
  11. Arulmigu Kaliyamman Potri
  12. Arulmigu Mariyamman Potri
  13. Arulmigu Hanuman Potri
  14. Arulmigu Navakolkal Potri
  15. Arulmigu Vinayagar Potri
- 108  
'Potris'
- 1008 'Potris'

These books were distributed free of cost to Archakas serving in temples. They were also sold to the public at a cheaper price. Steps have been taken to reprint and release these books – both 108 ‘Potris’ and the 1008 ‘Potris’ – again and to fulfill the wish of the Tamil people by encouraging and ensuring the Tamil Archana in temples.

## **FESTIVALS FOR THE TAMIL SAINTS OF HINDUISM AND SAVANTS**

### **(1) Sekkizhar Festival**

“Divine-Sekkizhar’s” birthday is celebrated as a Government function every year at Kundrathur, his birth place, on behalf of the Hindu Religious and Charitable Endowments department. For this purpose, a Corpus of Rs.15,00,000/- has been created, and from the interest accrued thereon, Sekkizhar festival is celebrated every year. The Government has ordered this festival to be celebrated at Chennai also in addition to Kunrathur.

### **(2) The Music Festival in honour of Thirugnana Sambandhar**

In memory of Thirugnanasambandhar, one of the four Tamil Saints of saivism, Thirugnanasambandhar Music festival is celebrated every year on behalf of

the Hindu Religious and Charitable Endowments Department at Arulmighu Vedhaghiriswarar Temple, Thirukkazukundram. The expenses for this festival is met from the Commissioner's Common Good Fund.

### **(3) Avvai festival**

In Honour of the great Tamil Savant Avviyar, Avvai Festival is celebrated in a grand manner every year at Arulmighu Avvayar and Vishwanathaswamy Temple, Thulasiyapattinam, Vedharanyam Taluk, Nagapattinam District.

### **(4) 'Thayumanavar' Festival**

His holiness Thayumana Adigal, known for his supreme philosophy in Bhakthi Cult as seen from his works, was attracted towards His Holiness Mauna Guru, a descendent of Thirumoolar School on his way back after worshipping Lord Dakshinamoorthy at Arulmighu Thayumanaswamy Temple at the Rockfort , Trichy. In memory of Thayumana Adigal's contribution to the Tamil world by his Tamil poems of spiritual wisdom, Thayumanavar festival is celebrated every year at Arulmighu Thayumanaswamy Temple, Rockfort, Thiruchirapalli.

## **‘THALAVARALARU’ AND ‘THALAPURANAM’**

Temples publish booklets such as Thalavaralaru and Thalapuram to enable the public to know the salient features like the history, purana, architecture, the messages found as inscriptions in these temples, and the speciality of worshipping at those temples. For temples having none as above, pamphlets revealing their specialities are arranged to be published.

## **AGAMA SCRIPTURES IN TAMIL**

It was decided to translate the rules of *Agamas* pertaining to temples from Sanskrit to Tamil and to publish them. In the year 1999 such a translation work named “Uththara Kamika Agama” was published first. After that, “Aalaya Nirmana Pimbhalatsha” a book on sculpture and “Kumara Thanthram” have been published in Tamil. Steps have been taken to translate the Sanskrit books relating to Temples into Tamil and to publish them.

## **ANNADHANA THITTAM**

Annadhana Thittam was launched on 23.3.2002 at 63 temples. This scheme was gradually extended to many temples and is now implemented in 360 temples providing free noon meals everyday.

A bank account has been opened specially for *Annadhana* Scheme in the Commissioner's office and Rs.3.27 crores has been received as donations in that account. By diverting Rs.21.83 crores from the surplus funds of the affluent temples, a special corpus has been created for this scheme. From the accrued interest of Rs.6.16 crores, Rs.2.78 crores has been disbursed to temples found deficit to run this scheme.

### **SPIRITUAL AND MORAL CLASSES**

In 485 temples including the Temples where *Annadhana* Scheme is in force, spiritual and moral classes are conducted by scholars on every Sunday evening to inculcate morality in the children.

### **ELEPHANT SPECIAL HEALTH CAMP**

A special health camp was organized at Mudhumalai Wild Life Sanctuary for 55 elephants belonging to temples, mutts, and private persons, in the year 2003 for a period of 30 days from 16.11.2003 to 15.12.2003. In the year 2004, the camp was conducted for a period of 48 days for 65 elephants, from 18.11.2004 to 04.01.2005, and in the last year 2005-2006 for a

period of 48 days for 63 elephants from 21.11.2005 to 07.01.2006. A balanced diet daily and modern medical treatment by Veterinary Doctors are provided to the Elephants in this Camp. The entire expenditure for this camp was borne by the Government.

### **TEMPLE PROTECTION FORCE**

A separate force namely “Temple Protection Force” has been organized for protecting the icons, jewels, hundials and the other precious articles in the temples. 1000 Grade II constables and 3000 Ex-service men have been deployed to this force. Presently 2674 temples have 3687 men drawn from this force.

### **‘THIRUKKOIL’ MAGAZINE**

A monthly magazine named Thirukkoil is being published since 1958 as the publication of the Hindu Religious and Charitable Endowments Department. Articles on Hindu Religion and philosophy, temple history, festivals etc., contributed by eminent Tamil scholars and writers are published in this Monthly.

## **“E-POOJA” - WEBSITE**

This department has a website [www.tntemple.org](http://www.tntemple.org), containing information about various schemes and activities of the department. A website known as ‘*E-pooja*’ enables any person, at any time, from any part of the world, to book specified *Poojas* in advance on any date and time of his choice to be performed at important temples.

As this website has been hyperlinked to the home page of various temples’ websites, information such as temple history, *purana*, the developmental activities of the temple, the attractive and sacred pictures of the Deities and festivals can be viewed with best audio visual effect.

## **STHAPATHIS**

In order to ensure that the Temple renovations are undertaken as per Agama and Silpa Sasthra, professional and skilled persons who practice this art through their hereditary Sculptural knowledge and who possess a degree or a diploma in the art of Sculpture are made to undertake renovation works after formal approval as Sthapathis. Five sthapathis having a

diploma or degree in sculpture have been appointed departmental sthaphathis at five regions to scrutinize the drawings and estimates pertaining to temple renovations, thereby ensuring such renovations are executed according to Silpa Sasthras. A Sthapathy Advisory Committee has been constituted to render advice for the renovations to be executed in temples according to the structure of particular temples, silpa sashtra and aesthetic art and design.

## **SPECIAL WORSHIP AND COMMON FEAST**

On the Independence Day and on the Arignar Anna Memorial day, a special worship and common feast is organized in all temples involving all classes of people without discrimination to participate and have food together.

## **REFRESHER TRAINING**

All the daily and special Worships and Festivals in temples conform to the Regulations formulated by our ancestors. Our Agamas and Sashtra Scriptures of Hinduism state these more descriptively.

A short term of Refresher Training was started to enable the temple employees such as Archakas, Bhattachariars, Ulthurai servants, Othuvans, and others like Executive Officers, Subordinate Officers of the department to render their services effectively. This scheme will be revived with renewed vigour under the auspices and assistance of eminent fraternity of Tamil Scholars and experts from Saivism and Vaishnavism and the short term Refresher Training courses will be organized to be conducted on the following subjects.

1. 'Saiva Agamas'
2. Festivals in saivaite Temples
3. History of 'Saivism'
4. 'Saiva Siththandha'
5. 'Panniru Thirumurai'
6. 'Shaktham'
7. 'Kaumaram'
8. Festivals in 'Vaishnavaite' Temples
9. History of 'Vaishnavism'
10. The Structure and beauty of 'Nalayira Divya Prabhandham'
11. Speciality of 'Sthala Puranas'
12. The structure of temples and the method of worship

## **APPOINTMENT OF NAGASWARA MUSICIANS IN TEMPLES**

Playing tunes on “Nagaswaram”, praised as the “Sacred Music” during all festivals and pooja times, is customary in all the ancient and historic temples, hailed by Alwars or Nayanmars. But many temples cannot afford to have this “Sacred Music” owing to paucity of funds. Therefore, measures have been taken to employ the Nagaswara, Thavil, and Thaala musicians in select temples at a monthly salary of Rs.1,500/-, Rs.1000/-, and Rs.750/- respectively. Rs.1 crore has been deposited separately as a corpus for the implementation of the scheme, the interest earned will be used to pay salaries for these Artistes.

## **WELFARE MEASURES FOR THE TEMPLE EMPLOYEES**

Employees of various levels and grades are serving in the religious institutions in Tamil Nadu. They receive their salary as cash and grains. The following schemes are implemented for the welfare of these employees.

1. Family Benefit fund
2. Special Provident Fund and gratuity
3. Temple Employee's Welfare Fund
4. Pension for Archakar, Othuvar, Isaikalaingar, Vedhaparayanar only
5. Ex-gratia Payment
6. Marriage Advance
7. Vehicle Advance
8. Medical Allowance
9. Washing Allowance
10. Festival Advance
11. Leave concessions
12. House Rent Allowance
13. Special Pay for Typists
14. Pay Increase for those getting consolidated payment
15. City Compensatory Allowance
16. Selection Grade and Special Grade pay fixation
17. Appointment on compassionate grounds
18. Raise in Dearness Allowance

### **Family Benefit Scheme**

This scheme was introduced to help the family members of the temple employees who die in harness. As per this scheme the legal heir receives Rs.75,000/- as assistance. A corpus of Rs. 5 Crores has been created and the scheme is implemented from the interest accruing thereof.

## **Special Provident Fund**

This scheme is implemented for the Employees of the Temples which have an annual income of Rs.1 lakh and above. A corpus of Rs.8 lakhs has been created for this schemes by pooling from the surplus funds of affluent Temples. At the time of retirement, every temple employee will receive back the total subscription made during his service along with interest and Rs.1000/- in addition as gratuity.

## **Temple Employee's Welfare Fund**

Temple Employees drawing a monthly salary of less than Rs.400/-employed in Temples which have an annual income less than Rs.40,000/-, have their salary arrears paid under a scheme named 'Temple Employees' Welfare Fund' if balance of payment of salary occurs. A corpus of Rs.5 crores has been created from the surplus funds of Arulmigu Dhandayuthapaniswamy Temple, Palani. Salary arrears up to 31.12.2004 have been paid so far.

## **Appointment on Compassionate Grounds**

In order to provide job opportunities to the legal heirs of the Temple Employees who die in harness, and when a suitable vacancy arises in Temples, these legal heirs are considered for appointment on Compassionate grounds.

## **PENSION SCHEMES**

### **Pension for Archakar, Othuvar, Vedhaparayanar, Musicians, Arayar etc**

Archakar, Othuvar, Vedhaparayanar, Musicians, Arayar ,and persons reciting *Divya Prabhandham* in Temples who have completed 20 years of service and attained 60 years of age receive a monthly pension of Rs.750/- through the scheme implemented by this Department sanctioned strength of 1000, so far, 767 persons have been provided with this pension.

### **Village Poojaris' Pension**

The Government has sanctioned a monthly pension scheme of Rs.750/- for village poojaris who have served over 20 years and have attained 60 years of age in village Temples which are not under the direct

governance of the department. Under this scheme, as against a sanctioned strength of 4000, so far 2,621 village poojaris have been benefited.

### **Pension Scheme for all employees serving in Temples**

Earlier, a Contributory Provident Fund Scheme had been implemented in the Temples having an annual income above Rs.10,000/- with a deduction of 12% from the employee's salary and an amount equal to that from the Temple funds every month. This amount was put in a separate account under this scheme and the accrued amount along-with interest was disbursed to the employee at the time of his retirement. The Government has ordered to close this scheme and in its place to introduce the Employees Provident Fund Scheme of the Central Government for the employees already covered by the C.P.F. scheme and other qualified regular and permanent employees serving in temples where the funds position is better. Accordingly, steps have been taken to induct the qualified Temple Employees into the E.P.F. scheme so that they will receive the benefit of a

regular monthly pension when they retire on superannuation.

For those Regular and Permanent Temple Employees of temples which cannot afford to subscribe for the Employees Provident Fund scheme because of the less resources of the temples and those employees who even though are enrolled in the Employees Provident Fund scheme but are deprived of pension because of non completion of 10 years' service period since their joining the Employees Provident Fund scheme, steps have been taken to start a separate "Departmental Pension Scheme" providing a monthly pension of Rs.750/- for those Temple Employees retiring from 01.01.2006.

## **PART - II SCHEMES**

Funds have been sanctioned to carry out the following works under Part II Scheme during the year 2006-2007

Sl. No.	Scheme	Amount allotted (Rupees in lakhs)
1.	Completion and construction of additional floor to the office of the Joint Commissioner office Tanjavur.	35.00
2.	Purchase of Computers and Accessories with Printers to the office of the Commissioners, 8 Joint Commissioners Office and CAO office	13.30
3.	Purchase of Fax machine and Accessories to the office of the Commissioner, 9 Joint Commissioners officers and 18 Assistant Commissioners Offices.	4.00
4.	Purchase of Xerox machine and Accessories to the office of the Commissioners and the Joint Commissioners Office and Assistant Commissioners Office and CAO office.	18.00
5.	Purchase and installation of Generator Machine for power supply for the Commissioner's office	16.50
6.	Purchase and Installation of Water purification unit for the Commissioner Office	1.10
7.	Purchase of books, journals, periodicals, news magazines, C.D, and other forms of publications on Religion, legal and other subjects related to the administration of this department for the use of office of the commissioner and for the reference for all institutions (temples) and the public.	3.00
	Grand Total	90.90

## **CONCLUSION**

As described above, the Hindu Religious and Charitable Endowments Administration Department has determined to function earnestly following the righteous path shown by our saints and noble persons and to march ahead implementing renovations and the functions of the religious institutions effectively.

**KR. PERIAKARUPPAN,  
MINISTER FOR HINDU RELIGIOUS  
AND CHARITABLE ENDOWMENTS.**