Education Development in Tamil Nadu – Noon Meal to Breakfast Scheme, Higher Education GER, Pudhumai Penn & Tamil Pudhalvan, Naan Mudhalvan, 7.5% Quota | TNPSC Notes

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Education development in Tamil Nadu is the story of how the State moved from a single school **tiffin experiment of the Madras Corporation (1920)** to universal school meals – **Kamaraj's free mid-day meals (1956)**, **M. G. Ramachandran's Nutritious Noon Meal Programme (1982)** and the **Chief Minister's Breakfast Scheme (2022)** – and then to some of the highest higher-education enrolment in India. Recent schemes such as **Pudhumai Penn**, **Tamil Pudhalvan**, **Naan Mudhalvan**, **Illam Thedi Kalvi**, **Ennum Ezhuthum**, the **State Education Policy (2025)** and the **7.5 per cent preferential reservation for government school students** are frequently asked in TNPSC papers.

தமிழில் படிக்க

These notes are written for TNPSC Group 1, 2/2A and 4 aspirants and are meant to be complete on their own. The topic belongs mainly to **Development Administration in Tamil Nadu** (welfare schemes, education and human development indicators). The 1920 Madras Corporation meal and the Justice Party background link to **History, Culture, Heritage and Socio-Political Movements of Tamil Nadu**; reservation and the State–Centre debate on education link to **Indian Polity**; and the latest schemes and survey figures come under **Current Events**. Every number below is given with its source and year, because figures change every year – always quote the year in the exam.

Education Development at a Glance

Year	Milestone	Key person / body
1920 (Nov)	Tiffin for pupils of a Madras Corporation school at Thousand Lights	Madras Corporation council; President P. Theagaraya Chetty
1954–56	Withdrawal of the 1953 Modified Scheme of Elementary Education; free meals spread to primary schools from 1956 (Ettayapuram)	K. Kamaraj, Chief Minister
1 Jul 1982	Nutritious Noon Meal Programme launched at Pappakurichi (Tiruchirappalli district)	M. G. Ramachandran, Chief Minister
Sep 1984	Noon meal extended to children aged 10–15	State Government
Jun 1989	Boiled eggs added once a fortnight	M. Karunanidhi, Chief Minister
2013	Variety meals and masala eggs added	J. Jayalalithaa, Chief Minister
2020	7.5% preferential reservation in medical admission for government school students	Justice P. Kalaiyarasan Commission; Act of 2020
27 Oct 2021	Illam Thedi Kalvi launched at Mudaliarkuppam, Villupuram district	M. K. Stalin, Chief Minister
1 Mar 2022	Naan Mudhalvan launched	M. K. Stalin
13 Jun 2022	Ennum Ezhuthum launched at Azhinjivakkam, Tiruvallur district	M. K. Stalin
5 Sep 2022	Pudhumai Penn launched	M. K. Stalin
15 Sep 2022	Chief Minister's Breakfast Scheme launched in Madurai	M. K. Stalin
9 Aug 2024	Tamil Pudhalvan launched at Coimbatore	M. K. Stalin
8 Aug 2025	State Education Policy (school education) released	Justice D. Murugesan Committee
8 Jul 2026	AISHE 2022-23 and 2023-24 reports released: Tamil Nadu GER 52.3%	Union Ministry of Education

Background: Why Tamil Nadu Invested in Education

Poverty kept many children, especially girls and children of farm and daily-wage families, away from school in the early twentieth century. Leaders of the State saw that a hungry child cannot learn, and that a free meal could bring the child to school and keep the child there. Over a century, three ideas were followed one after another:

- **Access:** a school within reach of every child, free and compulsory elementary education (the Kamaraj years).

- **Nutrition:** a free noon meal, later a breakfast, so that attendance, retention and health improve together.
- **Transition and employability:** monthly assistance, skill training and preferential quotas so that government school students move on to higher and professional education.

The result shows in the indicators: Tamil Nadu's literacy rate was **80.09 per cent as per Census 2011** (male 86.77 per cent), and its higher-education Gross Enrolment Ratio is **52.3 per cent as per AISHE 2023-24**.

The School Meal Story (1920–1982)

1920 – The Madras Corporation experiment

- In **November 1920** the **Madras Corporation council** approved the supply of **tiffin** to the pupils of a Corporation school at **Thousand Lights**, Madras, as an experimental measure (as per The Hindu's report of 17 November 1920, cited in The Hindu and Frontline).
- The council meeting was presided over by **Sir P. (Pitti) Theagaraya Chetty**, the Corporation President and a founder of the **Justice Party**.
- The cost was limited to **one anna per pupil per day**.
- Enrolment rose, but the British government later objected to using education funds for meals and the scheme was stopped; it was revived on a smaller scale afterwards.

Many writers therefore call Theagaraya Chetty the pioneer of school meals in Tamil Nadu. In exam options, remember that the 1920 meal was a **Corporation** (local body) initiative in the city of Madras, not a State-wide scheme.

1956 – Kamaraj takes meals to every village school

- As Chief Minister (1954–63), **K. Kamaraj** aimed that no child should stay out of school because of poverty. He withdrew the 1953 **Modified Scheme of Elementary Education** (criticised as "Kula Kalvi Thittam") and opened many new schools.
- From **1956** free mid-day meals were given to poor children in primary schools across the State; the scheme began at **Ettayapuram** (now in Thoothukudi district) and was extended to government and panchayat schools (as per The Hindu; some sources give the 1956–57 budget year or 1957 for the State-wide extension).
- Local people contributed along with the Government, and the US voluntary agency **CARE** later supplied food aid (as per The Hindu and Frontline).
- Free **school uniforms** were also given so that differences of class and caste were not seen in the classroom.
- For these measures Kamaraj is called **Kalvi Thanthai**; his birthday, **15 July**, is celebrated as **Kalvi Valarchi Naal** (Educational Development Day) under a 2006 State Act.

1982 – The Puratchi Thalaivar MGR Nutritious Meal Programme

- **Launch:** Chief Minister **M. G. Ramachandran** launched the Nutritious Noon Meal Programme on **1 July 1982** at **Pappakurichi village, Tiruchirappalli district** (as per the district websites of Karur and Pudukkottai; The Hindu also records the launch at a village in Tiruchi district).
- **First beneficiaries:** children aged **2–5 in anganwadis** and **5–9 in rural primary schools** (as per middaymeal.tn.gov.in).

- **Urban areas:** covered from **15 September 1982** (Anna's birthday).
- **Ages 10–15:** added from **15 September 1984**, so that the meal reached students up to Class 10.
- **Focus shift:** the earlier aim was to raise enrolment; the 1982 programme added the aim of fighting malnutrition. It is now called the **Puratchi Thalaivar M.G.R. Nutritious Meal Programme**.

Later Improvements to the Noon Meal

Year	Change	Source
June 1989	Boiled eggs once a fortnight (M. Karunanidhi government)	The Hindu; Deccan Herald
2013	Variety meals and masala eggs (J. Jayalalithaa government)	The Hindu; Deccan Herald
2007	Double-fortified iodised salt in noon meal cooking (G.O. No. 101 of 20 June 2007)	Karur and Pudukkottai district websites
From 2001	Sweet pongal on the birthdays of Kamaraj (15 July), Anna (15 September) and MGR (17 January)	Karur district website

Implementing department over time (as per the Karur and Pudukkottai district websites): Education Department 1982 – May 1990; Rural Development June 1990 – September 1992; Social Welfare October 1992 – September 1997; Rural Development October 1997 – 19 July 2006; and **Social Welfare from 20 July 2006** (rural) and 23 August 2007 (urban). Today the programme is under the **Social Welfare and Women Empowerment Department**.

Latest official figures: in 2023-24 the programme ran in **43,094 centres** and fed **44,72,479 students** (as per the Performance Budget 2024-25 of the Social Welfare and Women Empowerment Department). The district websites of the State describe Tamil Nadu as the pioneer State for the mid-day meal; the national scheme is now called **PM POSHAN**.

Chief Minister's Breakfast Scheme (2022)

The **Chief Minister's Breakfast Scheme** (Mudhalamaicharin Kaalai Unavu Thittam) gives a free, hot breakfast on school working days to children of **Classes 1 to 5**. Many children come to school without breakfast because parents leave early for work; the scheme aims to prevent hunger, improve nutrition and attendance, and ease the burden on working mothers.

Phase	Date and place	Coverage (as per source)
Launch	**15 September 2022** (Anna's birthday) – Adhimoolam Corporation Primary School, **Madurai**	1,545 government primary schools, about 1.14 lakh children; Rs 12.75 per child per day (as per The News Minute and Deccan Herald, 2022)
Phase 2	**25 August 2023** – Thirukkuvalai, **Nagapattinam district**	All government primary schools – 30,992 centres; 15,75,900 students in 2023-24 (as per SWWE Performance Budget 2024-25)
Phase 3	**15 July 2024** (Kamaraj's birthday)	3,995 government-aided primary schools in rural areas; about 2.23 lakh children (as per PTI and DT Next, 2024)
Phase 4	**26 August 2025**	Government-aided primary schools in urban areas – about 2,430 schools, about 3 lakh children (as per PTI and The South First, 2025)

After the 2025 phase the Chief Minister stated that about **20.59 lakh children** would benefit from the scheme (as per PTI and ETV Bharat, August 2025). Remember the sequence: **Madurai (2022) → Thirukkuvalai (2023) → rural aided schools (2024) → urban aided schools (2025)**.

Higher Education: Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER)

The **Gross Enrolment Ratio** in higher education is the total enrolment in higher education, of any age, expressed as a percentage of the population in the **18–23 age group**. It is published in the **All India Survey on Higher Education (AISHE)** of the Union Ministry of Education.

Indicator	Tamil Nadu	India	Source
GER 2023-24 (18–23 years)	**52.3%**	30.0%	AISHE 2023-24 of the Union Ministry of Education, released 8 July 2026 (Tamil Nadu figure also in the Ministry's Lok Sabha reply of July 2026, as reported by The South First)
GER 2022-23	–	29.5%	AISHE 2022-23 (released with 2023-24)
Female GER 2023-24	–	31.2%	AISHE 2023-24
Literacy rate	80.09%	–	Census 2011 (Department of Economics and Statistics, Tamil Nadu)

Tamil Nadu's GER is well above the national average and above the target of 50 per cent by 2035 set in the National Education Policy 2020. The State links this to its long investment in school meals, scholarships and colleges in every district. Exam tip: always write **"52.3 per cent as per AISHE 2023-24"**; older papers may quote earlier AISHE rounds with lower figures.

Pudhumai Penn and Tamil Pudhalvan (Monthly Assistance for Higher Education)

Feature	Pudhumai Penn	Tamil Pudhalvan
Official name	**Moovalur Ramamirtham Ammaiyar Higher Education Assurance Scheme**	Tamil Pudhalvan scheme
Launched	**5 September 2022**, Chennai	**9 August 2024**, **Coimbatore**
For	Girls	Boys
Benefit	Rs 1,000 a month into the bank account until the first degree, diploma or ITI course is completed	Rs 1,000 a month into the bank account
Eligibility	Studied Classes 6–12 in government schools (also girls who studied Classes 6–8 in private schools under RTE and Classes 9–12 in government schools); first higher-education course in a recognised institution in Tamil Nadu	Studied Classes 6–12 in government schools (and in Tamil medium in government-aided schools, as per The Tribune)
Department	Social Welfare and Women Empowerment	–
Figures	2,09,365 girls in 2022-23 and 2,73,596 in 2023-24 (as per SWWE Performance Budget 2024-25)	About 3.28 lakh students expected in 2024-25 (as per The Tribune); Rs 360 crore allotted (as per The Tribune and ETV Bharat, 2024)

- Pudhumai Penn **replaced** the earlier Moovalur Ramamirtham Ammaiyar Marriage Assistance Scheme, shifting support from marriage to higher education (as per the Government press release of 29 July 2023).
- Its aims include reducing early marriage, improving enrolment and retention of girls in higher education, and building a skilled women workforce.
- In December 2024 Pudhumai Penn was extended to girls who studied Classes 6–12 in Tamil medium in government-aided schools (as per Deccan Herald, 30 December 2024).
- Correspondence (distance) courses and unrecognised institutions are not covered under either scheme.

Naan Mudhalvan (2022) – Skilling for Employability

- **Launched: 1 March 2022**, on the birthday of Chief Minister M. K. Stalin, who called it his "dream scheme" (as per the Tamil Nadu Skill Development Corporation website).
- **Target:** to improve the education, knowledge, talent and efficiency of about **10 lakh youth every year** (as per The Free Press Journal, 2022).
- **What it does:** career guidance, industry-aligned courses and certifications in colleges, language and technical skills, and placement support – to close the gap between what colleges teach and what employers need.
- **Agency:** coordinated by the **Tamil Nadu Skill Development Corporation (TNSDC)**.

Illam Thedi Kalvi (2021) – Education at the Doorstep

- **Why:** schools were closed for many months during the COVID-19 lockdowns, causing a **learning gap** among young children.
- **Launched: 27 October 2021** by Chief Minister M. K. Stalin at **Mudaliarkuppam**, **Villupuram district** (as per The Hindu and DT Next).
- **For:** students of **Classes 1 to 8** in government schools.
- **How:** trained **volunteers** took classes near the children's homes for about one to two hours after school, in the evening.
- **Rollout:** began as a pilot in 12 districts, to be extended to other districts later.
- **Department:** School Education Department.

Ennum Ezhuthum (2022) – Foundational Literacy and Numeracy

- **Meaning:** "Ennum Ezhuthum" = numbers and letters.
- **Launched: 13 June 2022** at the Panchayat Union Middle School, **Azhinjivakkam**, **Tiruvallur district** (as per DT Next and The Times of India).
- **For:** children of **Classes 1 to 3** in government and government-aided schools.
- **Aim:** to make every child able to read with understanding and do basic arithmetic, and to close the learning loss of the COVID period by **2025**.
- **Method:** level-based workbooks and teaching materials in Tamil, English and Mathematics.

State Education Policy (2025)

- **Committee:** a committee headed by retired judge **Justice D. Murugesan**, constituted in **2022**, submitted its report in **2024** (as per Deccan Herald and The Week).
- **Release:** Chief Minister M. K. Stalin released the State Education Policy for **school education** on **8 August 2025** in Chennai (as per The Week and The Free Press Journal).
- **Two-language policy:** Tamil and English only, continuing the State's policy since 1968, instead of the three-language formula of the National Education Policy 2020.
- **Class 11 public examination:** dropped (as per The Free Press Journal and Deccan Herald).
- **Learning:** stress on understanding, creative and critical thinking instead of rote learning.
- **Transition goal:** 100 per cent of students who complete Class 12 to move on to higher education (as per The Week and Deccan Herald).

7.5 Per Cent Reservation for Government School Students (2020)

After NEET became the basis of medical admission, very few government school students were getting MBBS seats. The State appointed a commission headed by retired **Justice P. Kalaiyarasan**, which found that government school students were at a disadvantage because of social and economic factors that short-term coaching could not remove.

- **Law:** the **Tamil Nadu Admission to Undergraduate Courses in Medicine, Dentistry, Indian Medicine and Homoeopathy on Preferential Basis to Students of Government Schools Act, 2020**.
- **Bill passed:** unanimously by the Assembly on **15 September 2020**.
- **Assent:** Governor **Banwarilal Purohit** gave assent in late October 2020, about 45 days after the Bill was passed and a day after the State issued a Government Order to implement the quota.
- **Nature: horizontal** reservation of 7.5 per cent within each category of the State's 69 per cent vertical reservation, from 2020-21.
- **Who is eligible:** students who studied **Classes 6 to 12 in government schools** (including local body schools) and qualified in NEET.

- **Courses:** undergraduate medicine (MBBS), dentistry (BDS), Indian medicine and homoeopathy – State seats only.
- **Court:** the **Madras High Court upheld** the Act in **April 2022**.
- **2021 extension:** on the recommendation of a committee headed by Justice (retd.) D. Murugesan, a Bill tabled on 26 August 2021 gave a similar 7.5 per cent preferential quota in **professional courses** such as engineering, agriculture, fisheries and law, from 2021-22.

Key People Involved

Person	Role in education development
Sir P. Theagaraya Chetty	Madras Corporation President; backed the 1920 tiffin scheme at Thousand Lights
K. Kamaraj	Chief Minister 1954–63; free and compulsory elementary education, new schools, free meals (1956) and uniforms
N. D. Sundaravadivelu	Director of Public Instruction who helped Kamaraj spread the meal scheme
M. G. Ramachandran	Chief Minister; Nutritious Noon Meal Programme, 1 July 1982
M. Karunanidhi	Chief Minister; eggs in noon meal from 1989
J. Jayalalithaa	Chief Minister; variety meals and masala eggs, 2013
M. K. Stalin	Chief Minister; Illam Thedi Kalvi, Naan Mudhalvan, Ennum Ezhuthum, Pudhumai Penn, Breakfast Scheme, Tamil Pudhalvan, State Education Policy
Justice P. Kalaiyarasan	Headed the commission behind the 7.5% medical quota (2020)
Justice D. Murugesan	Headed the committee on the 7.5% quota in professional courses (2021) and the State Education Policy committee (2022–24)

Outcomes and Significance

- **Enrolment and retention:** meals, uniforms and nearby schools brought poor children, especially girls, into classrooms and kept them there.
- **Nutrition and health:** the noon meal and breakfast address hunger and malnutrition among school children.
- **Working mothers:** easing the burden on working women was one of the stated aims of the Breakfast Scheme.
- **Pioneer State:** Tamil Nadu began school meals long before the national mid-day meal scheme (now PM POSHAN).
- **Higher education:** GER of 52.3 per cent (AISHE 2023-24) against 30.0 per cent for India.
- **Challenges:** learning levels after COVID, quality of teaching, employability of graduates, and the State–Centre differences over NEET and the language formula.

Writing Mains Answers on Education Development in Tamil Nadu (Group 1 / Group 2)

Descriptive questions usually ask you to trace the evolution of school meals or to assess the recent schemes. Use a short introduction, dated facts with sources, a table or flowchart, and a balanced conclusion.

Evolution of the school meal programme in Tamil Nadu (about 200–250 words)

- **Introduction:** Tamil Nadu pioneered feeding school children; the aim moved from enrolment to nutrition to learning.
- **1920:** Madras Corporation tiffin at Thousand Lights; Theagaraya Chetty; one anna per pupil.
- **1956:** Kamaraj – free meals in primary schools across the State from Ettayapuram; CARE aid; people's contribution.
- **1982:** MGR – Nutritious Noon Meal Programme, 1 July 1982, Pappakurichi; anganwadi and primary children; urban areas from 15 September 1982; ages 10–15 from 1984.
- **Additions:** eggs 1989; variety meals 2013.
- **2022:** Chief Minister's Breakfast Scheme for Classes 1–5, extended in 2023, 2024 and 2025.
- **Figures:** 43,094 noon meal centres and 44.72 lakh students in 2023-24 (SWWE Performance Budget 2024-25).
- **Conclusion:** a century-long, cross-party policy; challenge now is quality of food and of learning.

Assess Tamil Nadu's recent schemes for higher education access (about 200 words)

- **Context:** GER 52.3% (AISHE 2023-24) vs India 30.0%; gap remains between government and private school students.
- **Financial support:** Pudhumai Penn (girls, 2022) and Tamil Pudhalvan (boys, 2024) – Rs 1,000 a month.
- **Access to professional seats:** 7.5% preferential quota in medical (2020) and professional courses (2021).
- **Employability:** Naan Mudhalvan (2022) – target of 10 lakh youth a year.
- **Strengths:** direct benefit transfer, focus on government school students, reduced early marriage risk for girls.
- **Gaps:** quality of colleges, job outcomes, need for independent evaluation of learning and placement.
- **Way forward:** outcome tracking, industry tie-ups, faculty quality, and counselling from Class 12.

State Education Policy 2025 – key features (about 150 words)

- Justice D. Murugesan committee (2022); report 2024; released 8 August 2025 for school education.
- Two-language policy (Tamil and English); Class 11 public examination dropped.
- Focus on understanding and critical thinking over rote learning.
- Aim: every Class 12 student to enter higher education.
- Conclusion: reflects the State's view on language and examinations; implementation and funding will decide its impact.

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Practice: Match the Following

Item	Match
Thousand Lights, Madras	Corporation school tiffin, 1920
Ettayapuram	Start of Kamaraj's free meal scheme, 1956
Pappakurichi (Tiruchirappalli)	MGR Nutritious Noon Meal Programme, 1 July 1982
Adhimoolam Corporation Primary School, Madurai	Breakfast Scheme launch, 15 September 2022
Thirukkuvalai (Nagapattinam)	Breakfast Scheme for all government primary schools, 25 August 2023
Mudaliarkuppam (Villupuram)	Illam Thedi Kalvi, 27 October 2021
Azhinjivakkam (Tiruvallur)	Ennum Ezhuthum, 13 June 2022
Coimbatore	Tamil Pudhalvan, 9 August 2024
Justice P. Kalaiyarasan	7.5% medical quota commission
Justice D. Murugesan	State Education Policy committee

Common Mistakes to Avoid

- **1920 vs 1956 vs 1982:** 1920 = Madras Corporation (Theagaraya Chetty); 1956 = Kamaraj, State-wide in primary schools; 1982 = MGR, nutritious meal.
- **MGR launch place:** Pappakurichi in Tiruchirappalli district – not Madurai or Chennai.
- **Breakfast Scheme places:** launch in **Madurai** (2022); State-wide expansion at **Thirukkuvalai** (2023).
- **Breakfast classes:** Classes 1 to 5 only – not up to Class 8.
- **Pudhumai Penn vs Tamil Pudhalvan:** girls (2022) vs boys (2024); same Rs 1,000 a month.
- **Two Murugesan committees:** Justice D. Murugesan headed both the 2021 professional-course quota committee and the State Education Policy committee; the 2020 medical quota commission was headed by Justice P. Kalaiyarasan.
- **Horizontal, not vertical:** the 7.5% quota cuts across the existing 69% communal reservation categories.
- **GER age group:** 18–23 years – not 18–25.
- **Always give the year:** "52.3 per cent as per AISHE 2023-24", "80.09 per cent as per Census 2011".

Quick Revision Table

Scheme / indicator	Year	Key fact
Madras Corporation tiffin	1920	Thousand Lights school; one anna per pupil
Kamaraj free meals	1956	Primary schools State-wide; began at Ettayapuram
MGR Nutritious Noon Meal	1 Jul 1982	Pappakurichi; ages 2–9 first; urban 15 Sep 1982; 10–15 from 1984
Eggs in noon meal	1989	Once a fortnight
Noon meal coverage	2023-24	43,094 centres; 44,72,479 students (SWWE PB 2024-25)
7.5% medical quota	2020	Govt school students Classes 6–12; Kalaiyarasan Commission; HC upheld 2022
7.5% professional courses	2021	Engineering, agriculture, law etc.; Murugesan committee
Illam Thedi Kalvi	2021	Classes 1–8; volunteers; Mudaliarkuppam
Naan Mudhalvan	2022	1 March; 10 lakh youth a year; TNSDC
Ennum Ezhuthum	2022	Classes 1–3; target 2025; Azhinjivakkam
Pudhumai Penn	2022	5 September; girls; Rs 1,000 a month; 2,73,596 girls in 2023-24
CM's Breakfast Scheme	2022	15 September, Madurai; Classes 1–5; 15,75,900 students in 2023-24
Tamil Pudhalvan	2024	9 August, Coimbatore; boys; Rs 1,000 a month
State Education Policy	2025	8 August; two-language; no Class 11 public exam
Higher education GER	2023-24	Tamil Nadu 52.3%; India 30.0% (AISHE)
Literacy	2011	Tamil Nadu 80.09% (Census 2011)

TNPSC Key Points (PYQ-style facts)

- First school meal in the Madras region: Madras Corporation school, Thousand Lights, November 1920; Corporation President P. Theagaraya Chetty.
- Kamaraj extended free meals to primary schools in 1956 (start at Ettayapuram); CARE gave food aid.
- MGR Nutritious Noon Meal Programme: 1 July 1982, Pappakurichi, Tiruchirappalli district.
- Urban areas covered from 15 September 1982; children aged 10–15 from 15 September 1984.
- Eggs: once a fortnight from June 1989; variety meals and masala eggs from 2013.
- Noon meal now under the Social Welfare and Women Empowerment Department.
- Breakfast Scheme: 15 September 2022, Madurai; Classes 1–5; Rs 12.75 per child per day at launch.
- Breakfast expansions: 25 August 2023 (Thirukkuvalai), 15 July 2024 (rural aided schools), 26 August 2025 (urban aided schools).
- AISHE 2023-24: Tamil Nadu GER 52.3%; India 30.0%; age group 18–23.
- Pudhumai Penn = Moovalur Ramamirtham Ammaiyar Higher Education Assurance Scheme (5 September 2022).
- Tamil Pudhalvan: 9 August 2024, Coimbatore; boys from government schools.

- Naan Mudhalvan: 1 March 2022; skill development; 10 lakh youth a year.
- Illam Thedi Kalvi: 27 October 2021; Mudaliarkuppam, Villupuram; Classes 1–8.
- Ennum Ezhuthum: 13 June 2022; Classes 1–3; foundational literacy and numeracy by 2025.
- State Education Policy: released 8 August 2025; Justice D. Murugesan committee; two-language policy.
- 7.5% horizontal reservation: Bill passed 15 September 2020; Justice P. Kalaiyarasan Commission; upheld by Madras High Court in April 2022.

Frequently Asked Questions

When and where did the school meal programme begin in Tamil Nadu?

It began in November 1920, when the Madras Corporation council, presided over by P. Theagaraya Chetty, approved tiffin for pupils of a Corporation school at Thousand Lights, at not more than one anna per pupil a day. K. Kamaraj spread free meals to primary schools across the State from 1956 (the first centre being at Ettayapuram), and M. G. Ramachandran launched the Nutritious Noon Meal Programme on 1 July 1982 at Pappakurichi in Tiruchirappalli district.

What is the Chief Minister's Breakfast Scheme?

It gives a free hot breakfast on school working days to children of Classes 1 to 5. It was launched on 15 September 2022 at Adhimoolam Corporation Primary School, Madurai, for 1.14 lakh children in 1,545 schools, extended to all government primary schools on 25 August 2023 (Thirukkuvalai, Nagapattinam district), to government-aided primary schools in rural areas on 15 July 2024, and to aided primary schools in urban areas on 26 August 2025.

What is Tamil Nadu's Gross Enrolment Ratio in higher education?

As per AISHE 2023-24 (released by the Union Ministry of Education on 8 July 2026), Tamil Nadu's GER for the 18-23 age group is 52.3 per cent, against the all-India figure of 30.0 per cent.

What is the difference between Pudhumai Penn and Tamil Pudhalvan?

Both pay Rs 1,000 a month into the bank account of students from government schools who join higher education. Pudhumai Penn (Moovalur Ramamirtham Ammaiyar Higher Education Assurance Scheme, launched 5 September 2022) is for girls; Tamil Pudhalvan (launched 9 August 2024 at Coimbatore) is for boys.

What is the 7.5 per cent reservation for government school students?

It is a horizontal, preferential reservation of 7.5 per cent of State seats in undergraduate medicine, dentistry, Indian medicine and homoeopathy for students who studied Classes 6 to 12 in government schools, based on the Justice P. Kalaiyarasan Commission. The Bill was passed on 15 September 2020 and received the Governor's assent in late October 2020; the Madras High Court upheld it in April 2022. In 2021 a similar 7.5 per cent quota was extended to professional courses such as engineering, agriculture and law.

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Tamil PYQ book. For classroom and online TNPSC coaching at Gandhipuram, Coimbatore and Anna Nagar, Madurai, see our TNPSC course page or call 99941 46662 (Coimbatore) / 73059 47122 (Madurai).

Practice questions

1. In 1920 the Madras Corporation first gave tiffin to pupils of a school in which area?

A. Mylapore
B. Thousand Lights
C. Perambur
D. Triplicane

2. Which Corporation President backed the 1920 school tiffin scheme of the Madras Corporation?

A. T. M. Nair
B. Raja of Panagal
C. P. Theagaraya Chetty
D. C. Natesa Mudaliar

3. What was the maximum cost allowed per pupil per day under the 1920 tiffin scheme?

A. One anna
B. One rupee
C. Four annas
D. One pie

4. Which US voluntary agency gave food aid to the school meal scheme of the Kamaraj period?

A. UNICEF
B. CARE
C. World Bank
D. Red Cross

5. On which date was the MGR Nutritious Noon Meal Programme launched?

A. 15 September 1981
B. 1 July 1982
C. 17 January 1983
D. 15 July 1982

6. Pappakurichi, where the MGR Nutritious Noon Meal Programme was launched, is in which district?

A. Madurai
B. Tiruchirappalli
C. Thanjavur
D. Salem

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7. From 15 September 1984 the noon meal was extended to which age group?

A. 2–5 years
B. 5–9 years
C. 10–15 years
D. 15–18 years

8. When eggs were first added to the noon meal in June 1989, how often were they served?

A. Daily
B. Twice a week
C. Once a fortnight
D. Once a month

9. Match: (a) 1920 (b) 1956 (c) 1982 (d) 2013 — (1) Variety meals (2) Corporation tiffin (3) Nutritious Noon Meal Programme (4) Kamaraj's free mid-day meal

A. a-2, b-4, c-3, d-1
B. a-4, b-2, c-3, d-1
C. a-2, b-3, c-4, d-1
D. a-2, b-4, c-1, d-3

10. In which city was the Chief Minister's Breakfast Scheme launched on 15 September 2022?

A. Chennai
B. Madurai
C. Coimbatore
D. Tiruchirappalli

11. The Chief Minister's Breakfast Scheme is for children of which classes?

A. Classes 1–3
B. Classes 1–5
C. Classes 1–8
D. Classes 6–10

12. Thirukkuvalai, where the Breakfast Scheme was extended to all government primary schools (25 August 2023), is in which district?

A. Tiruvarur
B. Nagapattinam
C. Mayiladuthurai
D. Thanjavur

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13. On 15 July 2024 the Breakfast Scheme was extended to which schools?

A. Government-aided primary schools in rural areas
B. All high schools
C. Private schools in urban areas
D. Central government schools

14. As per AISHE 2023-24, what is Tamil Nadu's Gross Enrolment Ratio in higher education?

A. 30.0%
B. 47.0%
C. 52.3%
D. 58.5%

15. The higher-education GER is calculated on the population of which age group?

A. 17–22
B. 18–23
C. 18–25
D. 15–24

16. What is the official name of the Pudhumai Penn scheme?

A. Dr. Muthulakshmi Reddy Higher Education Scheme
B. Moovalur Ramamirtham Ammaiyar Higher Education Assurance Scheme
C. E. V. R. Maniammaiyar Education Scheme
D. Annai Theresa Higher Education Scheme

17. When and where was the Tamil Pudhalvan scheme launched?

A. 9 August 2024, Coimbatore
B. 5 September 2022, Chennai
C. 15 July 2024, Tiruvallur
D. 1 March 2023, Madurai

18. Who are the beneficiaries of the Tamil Pudhalvan scheme?

A. Boys who studied Classes 6–12 in government schools and join higher education
B. All postgraduate girl students
C. Private school students only
D. Unemployed youth

19. On which date was the Naan Mudhalvan scheme launched?

A. 1 March 2022
B. 15 September 2021
C. 13 June 2022
D. 27 October 2021

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20. Mudaliarkuppam, where Illam Thedi Kalvi was launched, is in which district?

A. Cuddalore
B. Villupuram
C. Chengalpattu
D. Tiruvannamalai

21. Which of the following about Illam Thedi Kalvi is/are correct? 1. It was started to reduce the COVID-period learning gap. 2. It is for students of Classes 1 to 8. 3. Classes are held only by teachers during school hours.

A. 1 only
B. 1 and 2 only
C. 2 and 3 only
D. 1, 2 and 3

22. Ennum Ezhuthum covers children of which classes?

A. Classes 1–3
B. Classes 1–5
C. Classes 4–8
D. Classes 6–8

23. Which of the following about the State Education Policy 2025 is/are correct? 1. It is based on the Justice D. Murugesan committee. 2. It continues the Tamil–English two-language policy. 3. It drops the Class 11 public examination.

A. 1 and 2 only
B. 2 and 3 only
C. 1 and 3 only
D. 1, 2 and 3

24. Who headed the commission behind the 7.5% quota for government school students in medical admission?

A. Justice D. Murugesan
B. Justice A. K. Rajan
C. Justice P. Kalaiyarasan
D. Justice K. Chandru

25. Which of the following about the 7.5% medical quota for government school students is/are correct? 1. It is a horizontal reservation. 2. The student must have studied Classes 6 to 12 in government schools. 3. It also applies to All India Quota seats.

A. 1 only
B. 1 and 2 only
C. 2 and 3 only
D. 1, 2 and 3

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Answers with explanations

1. **B) Thousand Lights** – It began at a Corporation school at Thousand Lights in November 1920.

2. **C) P. Theagaraya Chetty** – P. Theagaraya Chetty, a Justice Party founder, was then Corporation President.

3. **A) One anna** – The cost was capped at one anna per pupil per day.

4. **B) CARE** – The US agency CARE supplied food aid.

5. **B) 1 July 1982** – M. G. Ramachandran launched it on 1 July 1982.

6. **B) Tiruchirappalli** – Pappakurichi is in Tiruchirappalli district.

7. **C) 10–15 years** – Children aged 10–15 were added from 15 September 1984.

8. **C) Once a fortnight** – The M. Karunanidhi government served a boiled egg once a fortnight.

9. **A) a-2, b-4, c-3, d-1** – 1920 Corporation; 1956 Kamaraj; 1982 MGR noon meal; 2013 variety meals.

10. **B) Madurai** – It was launched at Adhimoolam Corporation Primary School, Madurai.

11. **B) Classes 1–5** – Breakfast is served to children of Classes 1 to 5.

12. **B) Nagapattinam** – Thirukkuvalai is in Nagapattinam district.

13. **A) Government-aided primary schools in rural areas** – On Kamaraj's birthday it reached 3,995 government-aided primary schools in rural areas.

14. **C) 52.3%** – AISHE 2023-24 gives Tamil Nadu 52.3% against India's 30.0%.

15. **B) 18–23** – AISHE uses the 18–23 age group.

16. **B) Moovalur Ramamirtham Ammaiyar Higher Education Assurance Scheme** – It is the Moovalur Ramamirtham Ammaiyar Higher Education Assurance Scheme.

17. **A) 9 August 2024, Coimbatore** – The Chief Minister launched it at Coimbatore on 9 August 2024.

18. **A) Boys who studied Classes 6–12 in government schools and join higher education** – Boys from government schools who join higher education get Rs 1,000 a month.

19. **A) 1 March 2022** – It was launched on 1 March 2022, the Chief Minister's birthday.

20. **B) Villupuram** – It was launched on 27 October 2021 at Mudaliarkuppam, Villupuram district.

21. **B) 1 and 2 only** – Volunteers hold classes in the evening after school, so statement 3 is wrong.

22. **A) Classes 1–3** – Foundational literacy and numeracy for Classes 1–3, with 2025 as the target.

23. **D) 1, 2 and 3** – All three are correct; it was released on 8 August 2025.

24. **C) Justice P. Kalaiyarasan** – Justice P. Kalaiyarasan; the Murugesan committee was for professional courses in 2021.

25. **B) 1 and 2 only** – It applies only to State seats, not to All India Quota seats.

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