Group 2 Mains – Daily Practice: Questions and Model Answers (11 November 2026)

1. Unit II – Tamil Society: Culture and Heritage · 15 marks · 250 words

Question: On 22.10.2026 the Union Government announced that the fifth Kashi Tamil Sangamam (28.11.2026 – 12.12.2026) will be held on the theme "Thirukkural Payilvom" (Let us learn the Thirukkural). In this context, examine why the Thirukkural is regarded as a secular and universal work and assess its relevance to present-day social, political and economic life.

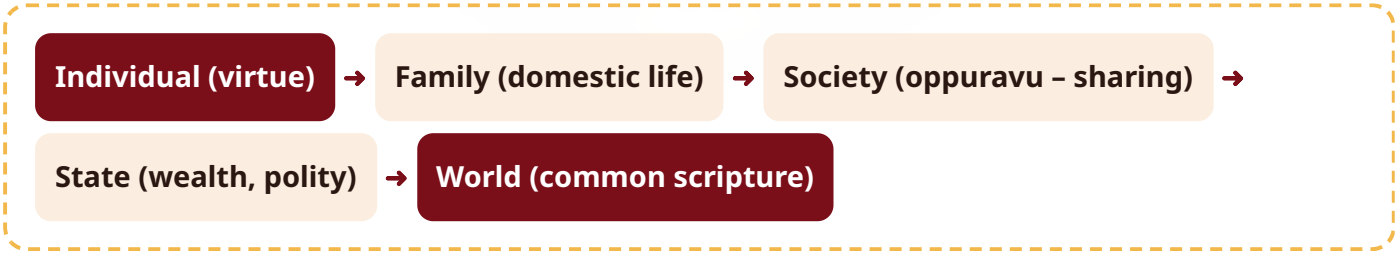
How to write

- Two directive verbs – "examine" (why secular and universal) and "assess" (relevance today); headings for the introduction, reasons for universality, relevance, a balanced view and conclusion
- add the structure – 1,330 couplets, 133 chapters, three parts (38-70-25) – and the flowchart individual → family → society → State → world
- tabulate four fields – governance, economy, society, individual – with couplet numbers (385, 1031, 972, 423)
- end with Tamil Nadu data (₹133 crore for translation, 2025-26; 179 students reciting all couplets, 01.11.2026) and one balancing line on criticism; no party or leader names

Model answer

Introduction

The Thirukkural of Thiruvalluvar is an ethical work of **1,330 couplets** in **133 chapters**, divided into **three parts** (Aram/virtue 38, Porul/wealth 70, Inbam/love 25 chapters); it is hailed as "Ulaga Podhumarai" (the common scripture of the world). The fifth Kashi Tamil Sangamam (28.11.2026 – 12.12.2026) has the theme **"Thirukkural Payilvom"** (Let us learn the Thirukkural), which shows its relevance today.



A) Why secular and universal?

Basis	Explanation
No names	It speaks of ethics for all humans without naming any particular god, religion, king or country.
Equality by birth	*"Pirappokkum ellaa uyirkkum..."* (972) – all are equal by birth; distinction comes only from one's deeds.

Reason	*"Epporul yaaryaarvaai ketpinum..."* (423) – wisdom is to find the truth whoever says it.
World acceptance	English translation by G.U. Pope (1886); Tolstoy's "A Letter to a Hindu" (1908) quoted Kural couplets on non-violence and introduced them to Gandhi.

B) Relevance to life today

Field	Kural idea → relevance today
Governance	*"Iyatralum eettalum kaathalum..."* (385) – raising, earning, protecting and fairly distributing wealth: the idea of a welfare State.
Economy	*"Suzhandrum erp pinnadhu ulagam..."* (1031) – agriculture is the base: food security.
Society	Oppuravu (social obligation), charity, non-killing – social justice, sharing, peace.
Individual	Learning, discipline, knowing the right time – skill development and good conduct.

C) A balanced view

Some couplets (e.g. the chapter on being led by women) are criticised as reflecting the social outlook of their age; they must be read in their context, with the core ethical ideas placed in front.

D) Tamil Nadu's efforts and the way forward

- Tamil Nadu Budget 2025-26: **₹133 crore** to translate the Thirukkural into more languages (already in 28 Indian and 35 foreign languages).
- Tamil Nadu Day 2026 (01.11.2026): prizes for **179 students** who recited all 1,330 couplets.
- Way forward: a life-skills approach in the curriculum; Kural ethics in administrative training; digital and multilingual content.

Conclusion

Even after two thousand years the Kural stands not merely as a book but as **a way of life and a handbook of governance**; the true tribute is not only to "learn" it but to "live" it.

Scoring tips (faculty note): "Examine" (why it is secular and universal) and "assess" (relevance today) – give each a heading. Quote 3–4 couplets correctly with their numbers (972, 423, 385, 1031); if unsure of the exact words, give the idea rather than a wrong couplet. 1,330 / 133 / 38-70-25, 1886 (Pope), 1908 (Tolstoy) and ₹133 crore (2025-26) earn marks. Show balance with one line on the criticism; keep the news hook (Kashi Tamil Sangamam) to one line; no party or leader names.

About 360 words (including tables, excluding the tip box) · 2 tables + 1 flowchart · time: 12 minutes.

Reference notes

Key facts

- News hook (DD News, 22.10.2026): the fifth Kashi Tamil Sangamam, 28.11.2026 – 12.12.2026, theme "Thirukkural Payilvom – Thirukkural Abhyas Karen"; organised by the Department of Higher Education (Union Ministry of Education) with IIT Madras, Banaras Hindu University, the Central Institute of Classical Tamil and the Governments of Tamil Nadu and Uttar Pradesh; about 1,400 participants from Tamil Nadu in 7 groups of about 200; 8-day programme (Varanasi, Prayagraj, Ayodhya); last date for registration 13.11.2026. Started in 2022; seven categories of participants (DT Next, 04.11.2026).
- Structure: 1,330 couplets in 133 chapters; Aram 38, Porul 70, Kamam/Inbam 25 chapters; each couplet a two-line venba.
- Titles: Ulaga Podhumarai, Muppal, Poyyamozhi, Tamil Marai. English translation by G.U. Pope, 1886. Tolstoy's "A Letter to a Hindu" (1908) quoted the couplets on not doing harm, e.g. couplet 314 (punish wrongdoers by doing them good and so shaming them). 133-ft Thiruvalluvar statue at Kanyakumari opened 01.01.2000.
- Tamil Nadu data: Budget 2025-26 – ₹133 crore to translate the Kural into more languages; already in 28 Indian and 35 foreign languages (The News Minute, 14.03.2025). Tamil Nadu Day 01.11.2026 – prizes and certificates for 179 students who recited all 1,330 couplets (All India Radio, 01.11.2026).
- Couplets to quote: 972 (equality by birth), 423 (reason), 385 (governance), 1031 (agriculture), 322 (sharing).
- Value-add terms: secular ethics, universal humanism, welfare State, oppuravu (social obligation), ethical governance, contextual reading.

2. Unit V – Constitution, Polity and Governance (Tamil Nadu) · 15 marks · 250 words

Question: On 19.10.2026 the Tamil Nadu Government issued an order keeping Special Officers in charge of the rural local bodies of all 37 districts until 19.04.2027. In this context, examine the constitutional mandate for holding timely elections to panchayats and assess the consequences of prolonged administration by Special Officers for grassroots democracy.

How to write

- Two directive verbs – "examine" (constitutional mandate) and "assess" (consequences); headings for the introduction, mandate, the Government's reasons and concerns, the way forward and conclusion
- tabulate Articles 243E, 243K, 243-O and the Kishansing Tomar (2006) judgment
- draw the flowchart term ends (05.01.2025) → Special Officers → reorganisation, delimitation → repeated extensions → democratic deficit
- state the Government's reasons (new panchayats, delimitation) to stay neutral and end with "timeline + State Election Commission autonomy"; no party or leader names

Model answer

Introduction

The 73rd Constitutional Amendment (1992) gave panchayats **constitutional status and a five-year term**. In Tamil Nadu, after the term of rural local bodies in 28 districts ended on 05.01.2025, Special Officers have been in charge; G.O. (Ms) No. 166 of 19.10.2026 keeps Special Officers in charge in **all 37 districts until 19.04.2027** (an extension in 28 districts and fresh appointments in the 9 districts whose bodies' term had ended).

A) The constitutional mandate

Provision	Content
Article 243E	Five-year term for a panchayat; elections must be completed before the term expires; within six months if dissolved.
Article 243K	State Election Commission – superintendence of electoral rolls and the conduct of elections.
Article 243-O	Bar on interference by courts in laws on delimitation and allotment of seats.
Judiciary	Kishansing Tomar (2006) – elections must not be delayed citing delimitation and the like; Suresh Mahajan (2022) – order to hold elections on time.



Grassroots democratic deficit

B) The Government's reasons and the concerns

Government's reasons	Concerns (consequences)
9 new panchayat unions and 93 new village panchayats; 46 rural bodies to merge with urban bodies; ward delimitation and reservation pending in 23 districts – elections not feasible until these are done (G.O. No. 166).	About 12,525 village panchayats, 388 panchayat unions and 36 district panchayats (TNSEC) have no elected representatives; weaker accountability and Grama Sabha participation; lost leadership chances under reservation for women and SC/ST; bureaucratic centralisation; conflict with the judicial principle that only emergencies justify delay.

C) Way forward

- A **fixed timeline** for reorganisation and delimitation, completed before the term expires.
- More autonomy for the State Election Commission in delimitation and rotation of reservation.
- Since the term of urban local bodies also ends in 2027, a coordinated rural-urban election calendar; meanwhile, hold Grama Sabha meetings without fail.

Conclusion

Administrative reorganisation is needed, but it must not become a substitute for **timely elections, a constitutional mandate**. Time-bound elections are the answer if the elected local body is to remain the base of grassroots democracy.

Scoring tips (faculty note): "Examine" (constitutional mandate) and "assess" (consequences) – give each a heading; state the Government's reasons too to show balance. A table of Articles 243E, 243K and 243-O and the dates 05.01.2025, 19.10.2026 (G.O. No. 166) and 19.04.2027 are what the examiner looks for. Naming Kishansing Tomar (2006) lifts the answer; the TNSEC count (12,525 village panchayats) is your Tamil Nadu data. No party or leader names; end with "timeline + SEC autonomy".

About 360 words (including tables, excluding the tip box) · 2 tables + 1 flowchart · time: 12 minutes.

Reference notes

Key facts

- News hook: Rural Development and Panchayat Raj Department G.O. (Ms) No. 166, 19.10.2026 – Special Officers for rural local bodies in 37 districts from 20.10.2026 to 19.04.2027: 28 districts (incl. Mayiladuthurai) where the Special Officers' tenure ended on 19.10.2026, and 9 districts (Kancheepuram, Chengalpattu, Villupuram, Kallakurichi, Vellore, Ranipet, Tirupathur, Tirunelveli, Tenkasi) where the elected members' term ended on 19.10.2026 (The South First, 21.10.2026).
- Reasons given: 9 new panchayat unions and 93 new village panchayats (excluded from the order); 46 rural bodies to merge with urban bodies; ward delimitation and reservation pending in 23 districts;

Commissioner's letter of 01.10.2026; undertakings in Madras High Court W.P. No. 39526 of 2024.

- Extensions: G.O. No. 1 (06.01.2025) – 06.01.2025 to 05.07.2025 after the 28-district term ended on 05.01.2025; No. 132 (05.07.2025) – to 05.01.2026; No. 4 (06.01.2026) – to 05.07.2026; No. 123 (06.07.2026) – to 19.10.2026; No. 166 – to 19.04.2027.
- Earlier polls: rural – 27 and 30 December 2019 (27 districts), October 2021 (remaining 9 districts); urban – 19.02.2022. The Seventh State Finance Commission's term extended to 31.12.2026; urban polls likely in early 2027 (DT Next, 29.07.2026).
- Constitution: Part IX (Arts. 243–243-O); Art. 243E(3) – election before the term expires, within six months of dissolution; Arts. 243K and 243ZA – State Election Commission. Tamil Nadu Panchayats Act, 1994. TNSEC has conducted local body polls since October 1996; 12,525 village panchayats (99,327 village panchayat ward member posts; 1,06,453 rural posts in all), 388 panchayat unions, 36 district panchayats (TNSEC website).
- Supreme Court: Kishansing Tomar v. Ahmedabad Municipal Corporation (2006, Constitution Bench); Suresh Mahajan v. State of Madhya Pradesh (2022).
- Value-add terms: grassroots democracy, democratic deficit, rule by Special Officers, delimitation, rotation of reservation, decentralisation.

3. Unit VI – Geography, Environment, Disaster Management · 15 marks · 250 words

Question: Within a single week two severe cyclones – "Arnab" (28.10.2026) and "Murasu" (03.11.2026) – struck the east coast, and Murasu brought warnings of squally winds and heavy rain to the north Tamil Nadu coast. In this context, examine why the Tamil Nadu coast is highly vulnerable to tropical cyclones during the northeast monsoon season and assess the State's cyclone preparedness.

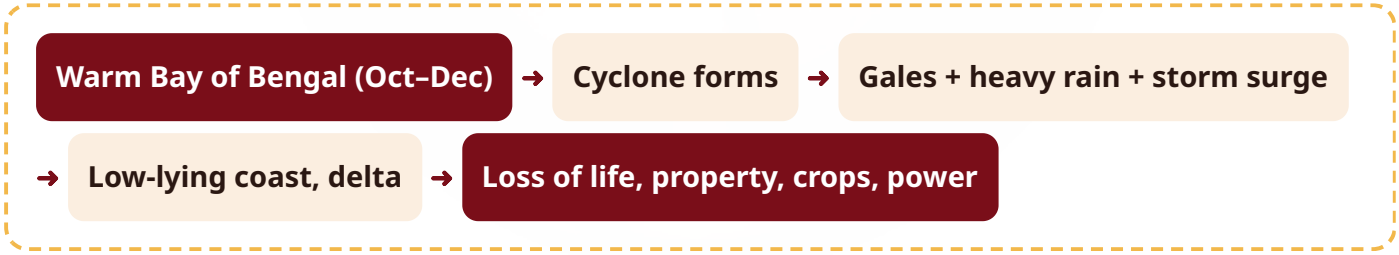
How to write

- Two directive verbs – "examine" (causes of vulnerability) and "assess" (preparedness); headings for the introduction, causes, assessment, the way forward and conclusion
- tabulate the causes under season, terrain, human factors and history, and draw the flowchart warm sea → cyclone → gales + rain + storm surge → low-lying coast → losses
- use Thane (2011), Vardah (2016), Gaja (16.11.2018) and Fengal (30.11.2024), the CDRRP, TN-Alert and the death data (14 in 2020, 4 in 2022)
- add the balancing line "deaths have fallen, economic losses continue" and end with mangroves, underground cabling and insurance as the way forward

Model answer

Introduction

Two cyclones struck the east coast in a single week – the very severe cyclonic storm **"Arnab"** (28.10.2026) and the severe cyclonic storm **"Murasu"** (03.11.2026, landfall near Ongole). For Murasu, IMD (01.11.2026) warned of squally winds of 55–65 km/h gusting 75, rising to 60–70 km/h gusting 80 and heavy rain along the north Tamil Nadu coast. India's coast is exposed to about **10%** of the world's tropical cyclones (NCRMP).



A) Why is the Tamil Nadu coast vulnerable?

Factor	Explanation
Season	Bay of Bengal cyclones peak during the northeast monsoon (Oct–Dec); over 58% of those in Oct–Nov approach or cross the east coast (NCRMP).
Terrain	Low, flat coast; the Cauvery delta; shallow sea – risk of storm surge.
Human factors	Dense coastal population, fishing hamlets, kutcha houses, urban sprawl as in Chennai; long-gestation crops such as coconut.
History	Thane (2011, Cuddalore), Vardah (2016, Chennai), Gaja (16.11.2018, Nagapattinam–Vedaranyam), Nivar (2020), Mandous (2022), Fengal (30.11.2024, near Puducherry).

B) Preparedness – an assessment

Strengths	Gaps
Accurate IMD warnings and fishermen alerts; TNSDMA (Disaster Management Act 2005); TN-Alert app; World Bank-aided Coastal Disaster Risk Reduction Project (CDRRP – US$236 million, about 150 villages). **Result:** cyclone deaths in Tamil Nadu 14 in 2020 and 4 in 2022 (Ministry of Earth Sciences, 03.08.2023).	Deaths have fallen but economic losses remain high – Gaja destroyed coconut groves and power infrastructure; poor urban drainage; kutcha houses; coastal erosion and thin mangrove cover; low crop and house insurance; last-mile communication.

C) Way forward

- **Natural buffers:** expand mangroves and casuarina / palmyra shelterbelts.
- **Infrastructure:** underground power cables in coastal towns, cyclone-resistant houses, multi-purpose cyclone shelters.
- **Community and finance:** impact-based forecasting, trained community volunteers, crop insurance including coconut, a disaster-risk fund.

Conclusion

Through early warning Tamil Nadu has crossed the first stage of "reducing deaths"; the next goal is **"reducing losses and recovering fast"** (resilience) – possible when green buffers and strong infrastructure work together.

Scoring tips (faculty note): "Examine" (causes of vulnerability) and "assess" (preparedness) – give each a heading; both strengths and gaps are a must. Cyclone name, year and landfall place in one line (Gaja, 16.11.2018, Nagapattinam–Vedaranyam) earn extra credit in a geography answer; mark them on a coastal sketch map if you can. The contrast "deaths have fallen (14 in 2020 → 4 in 2022) but economic losses continue" is the heart of the assessment. The term "green–grey infrastructure" lifts the answer; keep the news hook (Arnab, Murasu) to one line.

About 380 words (including tables, excluding the tip box) · 2 tables + 1 flowchart · time: 12 minutes.

Reference notes

Key facts

- IMD National Bulletin No. 7 (01.11.2026, 1430 IST): cyclonic storm "Murasu" about 480 km east-southeast of Chennai; to intensify into a severe cyclonic storm by the morning of 02.11.2026 and cross the south Andhra Pradesh coast between Nellore and Narsapur on the night of 02/03.11.2026; winds 100–110 km/h gusting 120; storm surge 1.0–1.5 m. North Tamil Nadu–Puducherry coast: squally winds 55–65 km/h gusting 75, then 60–70 gusting 80; heavy to very heavy rain at isolated places; fishermen not to venture out until the morning of 04.11.2026.
- Murasu crossed near Ongole as a severe cyclonic storm between 3.30 and 5.30 am on 03.11.2026; the very severe cyclonic storm "Arnab" had made landfall further north on the same coast on 28.10.2026 (Down To Earth, 03.11.2026).

- IMD classes (km/h): Depression 31–49; Deep Depression 50–61; Cyclonic Storm 62–88; Severe 89–117; Very Severe 118–166; Extremely Severe 167–221; Super Cyclonic Storm 222 and above.
- NCRMP: India's coast is exposed to about 10% of the world's tropical cyclones; 13 coastal States/UTs, 84 coastal districts; over 58% of Bay of Bengal cyclones in Oct–Nov approach or cross the east coast, against only 25% of Arabian Sea cyclones approaching the west coast.
- Ministry of Earth Sciences, Rajya Sabha Q. 161 (03.08.2023): Nivar (2020, VSCS, TN–Puducherry), Burevi (2020, Pamban area), Mandous (2022, north TN–Puducherry–south AP); cyclone deaths in Tamil Nadu – 14 in 2020, 4 in 2022.
- CDRRP (World Bank): approved 20.06.2013; US$236 million; about 150 coastal villages; multi-hazard resilient houses and siren warning systems. TN-Alert app – weather warnings in Tamil.
- Past cyclones: Thane 30.12.2011 (Cuddalore–Puducherry); Vardah 12.12.2016 (near Chennai); Gaja 16.11.2018 (Nagapattinam–Vedaranyam; coconut and power damage in the delta); Nivar November 2020 (near Puducherry); Michaung 05.12.2023 (landfall near Bapatla, AP, but Chennai floods); Fengal 30.11.2024 (near Puducherry).
- Value-add terms: storm surge, landfall, impact-based forecasting, bio-shield, green–grey infrastructure, resilience, last-mile connectivity.