Group 2 Mains – Daily Practice: Questions and Model Answers (15 November 2026)

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

Question: Discuss the features of the Bhakti movement led by the Nayanmars and Alvars between the 6th and 9th centuries CE, and assess its impact on the religion, language, music and social life of Tamil society.

How to write

- Directive verbs "discuss" and "assess" – three headings for features, impact and limits; give the period and dynasties in the introduction
- draw the flowchart Jain-Buddhist influence → Nayanmars and Alvars → royal patronage → compilation of the canon → temple-centred society, and a Saiva vs Vaishnava comparison table
- cite 63 Nayanmars, 12 Alvars, 12 Tirumurai, about 4,000 pasurams, 276 / 108 shrines and the women saints correctly
- state limits such as the caste hierarchy that did not fully change, and end with "Tamil Nadu's gift to Indian spirituality"

Model answer

Introduction

The **Bhakti movement** that rose in Tamilakam between the 6th and 9th centuries CE, under the Pallavas and Pandyas, placed personal love and surrender to God at the centre of religion. The hymns sung in Tamil by the Saiva **Nayanmars (63)** and the Vaishnava **Alvars (12)**, who travelled from shrine to shrine, reshaped religion, language, music and social life.



A) Features of the movement

Feature	Saivism – Nayanmars	Vaishnavism – Alvars
Leading saints	Appar (Tirunavukkarasar), Tirugnanasambandar, Sundarar, Manikkavasagar; Karaikkal Ammaiyar	Poigai, Bhutam, Pey (the first Alvars), Nammalvar, Tirumangai Alvar, Andal
Texts	Tevaram (Tirumurai 1–7), Tiruvasagam and Tirukkovaiyar (8); first 11 Tirumurai compiled by Nambiyandar Nambi (tradition); Sekkizhar's Periyapuranam (12th Tirumurai, age of Kulottunga II)	Nalayira Divya Prabandham – compiled by Nathamuni; Tiruvaymoli called the "Tamil Veda"; Andal's Tiruppavai (30 verses)
Shrines	276 Padal Petra Sthalams	108 Divya Desams
Women	Karaikkal Ammaiyar, Mangaiyarkkarasiyar, Isaignaniyar – three	Andal – the only woman Alvar

B) Impact on Tamil society

Field	Impact
Religion	Jain and Buddhist influence declined; love (bhakti) over ritual; later Ramanuja's Visishtadvaita and Meykandar's Sivagnana Bodham (Saiva Siddhanta) were built on it.
Language and literature	Tamil became a language of worship on a par with Sanskrit; a simple, emotional style; forms such as the padigam, pasuram and andadi grew.
Music and art	Hymns set to pann (melodic modes) – the Tamil music tradition; the Oduvar and Araiyar traditions.
Society	Devotees from beyond caste and gender lines – Tirunalaippovar (Nandanar), Tiruppan Alvar, Kannappa Nayanar; respect for women devotees.
Polity and economy	The temple became a social and economic centre – land grants, festivals, learning; the base for Chola temple architecture.

C) Limits

- Bitter conflict with Jains and Buddhists (the Madurai impalement story is a tradition, not established history).
- Equality was preached among devotees, but the caste hierarchy in society did not change fully.

Conclusion

The Bhakti movement made Tamil a language of religion and the temple the centre of society, giving life to the continuity of Tamil culture. A later Sanskrit claim that "Bhakti was born in the Dravida land" shows that this was Tamil Nadu's gift to Indian spirituality.

Scoring tips (faculty note): "Discuss and assess" – one heading for the features and field-wise headings for the impact (religion, language, music, society, temple); state the limits in a line. Numbers earn marks: 63 Nayanmars, 12 Alvars, 12 Tirumurai, about 4,000 pasurams, 276 Padal Petra Sthalams, 108 Divya Desams. The comparison table is the backbone; quoting one Tevaram or Tiruppavai line adds value. Write royal conversions and the impalement story as "tradition", not as established history.

About 400 words (including tables, excluding the tip box) · 2 tables + 1 flowchart · time: 12 minutes.

Reference notes

Key facts

- Period: 6th–9th centuries CE, under the Pallavas (Kanchi) and Pandyas (Madurai); a response to Jain and Buddhist influence after the Kalabhra period.
- 63 Nayanmars and 12 Alvars. Saiva canon – 12 Tirumurai (Tevaram = 1–7; Tiruvasagam and Tirukkovaiyar = 8; Periyapuranam = 12). Vaishnava canon – Nalayira Divya Prabandham (about 4,000 pasurams), compiled by Nathamuni.
- 276 Padal Petra Sthalams; 108 Divya Desams. Women saints: three among the Nayanmars (Karaikkal Ammaiyar, Mangaiyarkkarasiyar, Isaignaniyar) and one Alvar (Andal).
- Legacy: Ramanuja's Visishtadvaita; Meykandar's Sivagnana Bodham (13th c.); Tiruppavai and Tiruvempavai are still sung in the month of Margazhi.
- Syllabus link: Unit II – Tamil society and culture; connect with Pallava art (Mamallapuram), Chola temples and the Tamil music tradition.
- Answer-boosting terms: bhakti, surrender (saranagati), padigam, pasuram, pann, Oduvar, Araiyar sevai, temple-centred society, hagiographic tradition.

2. Unit III – Social Issues (Tamil Nadu) · 15 marks · 250 words

Question: According to NFHS-5 (2019-21), 23.3% of women aged 20–24 in India and 12.8% in Tamil Nadu were married before the age of 18. In this context, examine the causes and consequences of child marriage in Tamil Nadu and evaluate the legal and welfare measures to eliminate it.

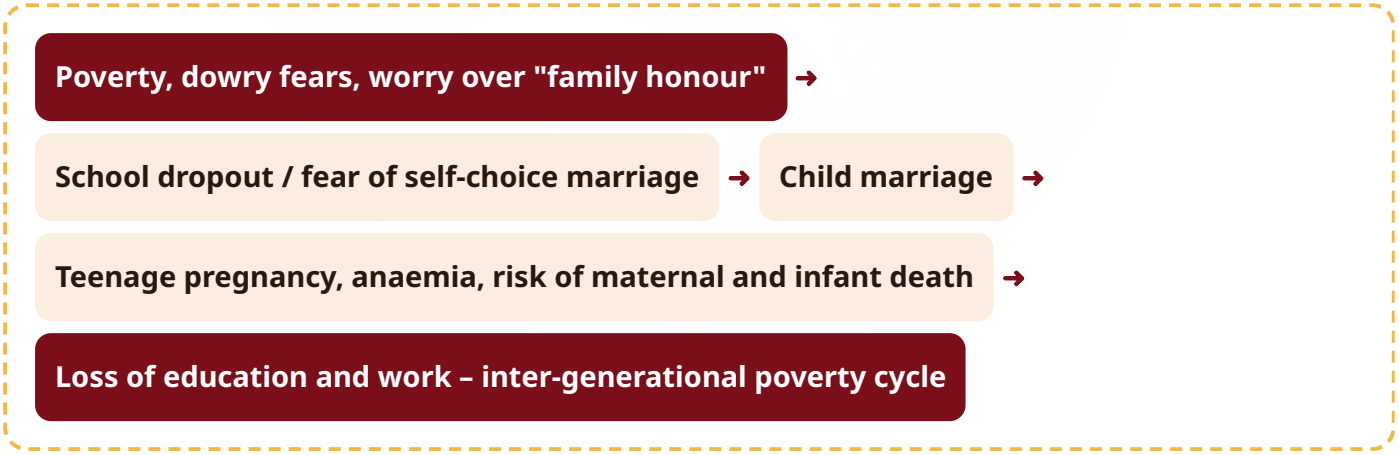
How to write

- Directive verbs "examine" and "evaluate" – four headings for causes, consequences, evaluation of measures and the way forward; give the legal definition in the introduction
- draw the flowchart poverty and honour concerns → dropout → child marriage → teenage pregnancy → poverty cycle, and a measure – details – evaluation table
- cite India 23.3%, Tamil Nadu 12.8% (rural 15.2%); teenage pregnancy 5.0% → 6.3%; the 18.10.2024 judgment and the 27.11.2024 campaign correctly
- end with the way forward – attendance tracking, compulsory marriage registration, economic empowerment of women – and SDG 5.3

Model answer

Introduction

A marriage in which the girl is below 18 or the boy below 21 is a **child marriage** (Prohibition of Child Marriage Act, 2006). According to NFHS-5 (2019-21), the share of women aged 20–24 married before 18 is **23.3%** in India and **12.8%** in Tamil Nadu (16.3% in NFHS-4). Though below the national average, the rural figure of 15.2% and the rise in teenage pregnancy from 5.0% to **6.3%** are causes for concern.



A) Causes

- **Economic**: poverty, migrant wage work, the fear that dowry rises with age.
- **Social**: concern for the girl's safety, "family honour", pressure for marriage within caste; the custom of marriage among close relatives.
- **Education**: dropout at the higher-secondary stage.
- **Administrative**: weak registration of marriages; few complaints because of social acceptance.

B) Consequences

- Teenage pregnancy, anaemia, pre-term birth and low birth weight; higher risk of maternal and infant death.
- Loss of education and jobs; exposure to domestic violence; violation of Article 21 (life) and Article 21A (education).

C) Legal and welfare measures – an evaluation

Measure	Details	Evaluation
Prohibition of Child Marriage Act, 2006	Section 3 – marriage voidable at the option of the child; Sections 9, 10 – rigorous imprisonment up to 2 years and fine up to ₹1 lakh; Section 13 – injunctions; Section 16 – Child Marriage Prohibition Officers (CMPOs)	A strong law, but convictions are few and social acceptance is a barrier
POCSO and the Supreme Court	Independent Thought (11.10.2017) – intercourse with a wife below 18 is rape; Society for Enlightenment and Voluntary Action (18.10.2024) – guidelines putting "prevention before penalisation"; personal laws cannot hinder the Act	The judiciary has laid a strong base; implementation rests with district administration
Union campaign	"Bal Vivah Mukt Bharat" (27.11.2024) – target below 5% by 2029; portal for complaints and CMPO details	More awareness and monitoring
Tamil Nadu	₹1,000 a month for girls who studied Classes 6–12 in government schools and join higher education – Pudhumai Penn (Moovalur Ramamirtham Ammaiyar Higher Education Assurance Scheme, 05.09.2022); Childline 1098, women's helpline 181	Keeping girls in education delays marriage – a strong preventive strategy

D) Way forward

- Track school attendance – inquire at once into girls who stop attending; a "child-marriage-free village" drive at panchayat level.
- Compulsory registration of marriages with age-proof checks; accountability for marriage halls, printers and priests.
- Economic independence for women through skills and jobs; adolescent health education.

Conclusion

Tamil Nadu is better placed than the national average, but "low" is not "nil". By combining law, education and economic empowerment, the State can become a model towards SDG target 5.3 (eliminating child marriage).

Scoring tips (faculty note): "Examine and evaluate" – four headings: causes, consequences, evaluation of measures, way forward. NFHS numbers are the strength of this answer: India 23.3%, Tamil Nadu 12.8% (rural 15.2%, urban 10.4%); teenage pregnancy 5.0% → 6.3% – say "NFHS-5

(2019-21)". Sections of the Act (3, 9, 10, 13, 16) and the dates of the two judgments earn extra marks. Write the causes as social factors without blaming any caste or religion; no names of parties or leaders.

About 470 words (including tables, excluding the tip box) · 1 table + 1 flowchart · time: 12 minutes.

Reference notes

Key facts

- News hook: the "Bal Vivah Mukt Bharat" campaign launched by the Union Ministry of Women and Child Development on 27.11.2024 completes two years this month; target – child marriage below 5% by 2029.
- The Supreme Court issued guidelines on 18.10.2024 (Society for Enlightenment and Voluntary Action v. Union of India) for implementing the Prohibition of Child Marriage Act, 2006 – "prevention before protection, protection before penalisation".
- NFHS-5 (2019-21), Tamil Nadu: women 20–24 married before 18 – 12.8% (rural 15.2%, urban 10.4%; NFHS-4 16.3%); India 23.3% (NFHS-4 26.8%). Men 25–29 married before 21 – 4.5% (NFHS-4 9.0%). Women 15–19 already mothers or pregnant – 6.3% (NFHS-4 5.0%); India 6.8%. Women with 10+ years of schooling – 56.6%.
- Law: PCMA 2006 – Sections 3 (voidable), 9 and 10 (up to 2 years RI and ₹1 lakh fine), 13 (injunction), 16 (CMPOs); Independent Thought v. Union of India (11.10.2017); the Prohibition of Child Marriage (Amendment) Bill, 2021 (age 21 for women too) lapsed with the dissolution of the 17th Lok Sabha.
- Tamil Nadu: Pudhumai Penn (05.09.2022) – ₹1,000 a month for girls from government schools in higher education; Childline 1098; women's helpline 181.
- Answer-boosting terms: voidable marriage, CMPO, prevention before penalisation, teenage pregnancy, inter-generational poverty cycle, SDG 5.3.

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

Question: On 24.10.2024 the Tamil Nadu Government notified heatwaves as a "State-specific disaster". Explain the criteria followed by the India Meteorological Department to declare a heatwave, and assess the reasons for rising heat stress in Tamil Nadu and the measures needed to tackle it.

How to write

- Three parts – the IMD criteria (explain), the causes and the measures (assess); give the 2024 Tamil Nadu heat data in the introduction
- draw the IMD criteria table and the flowchart IMD alert → TNSDMA / district authority → water, ORS, shifted work hours → SDRF 10% → fewer deaths
- cite 40 / 37 / 30°C; 4.5°C; 45 / 47°C; 24.10.2024; ₹4 lakh; Erode 31 days exactly
- end with the way forward – heat action plans, cool roofs, urban forests – and "from relief to preparedness"

Model answer

Introduction

A **heatwave** is a spell of abnormally high temperature over a region. In April–May 2024 the temperature crossed 40°C on 31 days in Erode, 26 in Karur and 23 in Vellore. Following this, the Tamil Nadu Government on **24.10.2024** notified heatwaves as a **"State-specific disaster"** and announced relief of **₹4 lakh** to the family of each person who dies of it.

A) India Meteorological Department (IMD) criteria

Criterion	Heatwave	Severe heatwave
Basic condition	Maximum temperature – plains ≥ 40°C; coastal stations ≥ 37°C; hills ≥ 30°C	Same
Departure from normal	4.5°C – 6.4°C	More than 6.4°C
Actual temperature (plains)	≥ 45°C	≥ 47°C
Declaration rule	At least 2 stations in a meteorological sub-division for 2 consecutive days – declared on the second day	Same

B) Why heat stress is rising in Tamil Nadu

- **Geography**: tropical location; clear skies and near-vertical sun in April–May; dry heat in interior districts far from the sea (Erode, Karur, Vellore).
- **Coastal humidity**: in places like Chennai, humidity raises the "feels-like" heat (heat index) even at lower temperatures.

- **Urban heat island**: concrete, roads, vehicle exhaust, air conditioners and little green cover; nights stay hot.
- **Climate change**: more frequent and intense heatwave days; water bodies dry up.

IMD forecast – yellow / orange / red alert →

TNSDMA and District Disaster Management Authority (Collector as chair) →

Drinking-water kiosks, ORS, heat wards in hospitals; shifted work hours →

State Disaster Response Fund (SDRF) – up to 10% → **Fewer deaths – ₹4 lakh relief**

C) Significance of the "State-specific disaster" notification

- Heatwave is not among the 12 disasters notified by the Union as eligible for SDRF / NDRF assistance; on the Fifteenth Finance Commission's recommendation, States may spend **up to 10%** of the SDRF on State-specific disasters – the notification opens that fund.
- Tamil Nadu had already notified sea erosion, lightning and gale winds in this way.

D) Way forward

Phase	Action
Preparedness	District heat action plans (on NDMA guidelines), vulnerability maps, SMS and radio alerts.
During the heat season	Midday rest, shade and water for outdoor workers; focus on the elderly, children and pregnant women.
Long term	Cool roofs, urban forests, revival of water bodies; heat-sensitive building rules; link with the climate change action plan.

Conclusion

A heatwave is a "silent disaster" – unlike floods or cyclones it takes lives, labour and output unseen. Against the ILO (2019) estimate that India will lose 5.8% of working hours to heat by 2030, Tamil Nadu's notification is the right first step in moving from relief to **preparedness**.

Scoring tips (faculty note): Three parts are asked – the IMD criteria (explain), the causes and the measures (assess): give each a heading. The IMD criteria table (40 / 37 / 30°C; 4.5°C; 45 / 47°C) is the core – write the numbers exactly. Tamil Nadu data earn extra marks: 24.10.2024, ₹4 lakh, SDRF 10%, Erode 31 days. Terms like "urban heat island", "heat index", "heat action plan" and "cool roof" earn marks.

About 420 words (including tables, excluding the tip box) · 2 tables + 1 flowchart · time: 12 minutes.

Reference notes

Key facts

- News hook: on 24.10.2024 the Revenue and Disaster Management Department of Tamil Nadu notified heatwaves as a "State-specific disaster" in the Gazette; ₹4 lakh for each death, subject to certification of the cause of death by the competent authority.
- Days above 40°C in April–May 2024: Erode 31, Karur 26, Vellore 23, Tirupattur 21, Chennai 6.
- IMD criteria: basic condition – plains 40°C, coastal stations 37°C, hills 30°C; heatwave – departure 4.5–6.4°C (severe: above 6.4°C) or actual 45°C (severe: 47°C) in the plains; at least 2 stations in a sub-division on 2 consecutive days, declared on the second day.
- Finance: States may use up to 10% of the SDRF for State-specific disasters (Fifteenth Finance Commission); the Union share of the SDRF is 75% for general-category States. Tamil Nadu had earlier notified sea erosion, lightning and gale winds.
- ILO (2019): India could lose 5.8% of working hours to heat stress by 2030.
- Answer-boosting terms: heat index, urban heat island, heat action plan, cool roof, State-specific disaster, impact-based forecast, SDG 13.