Group 2 Mains – Daily Practice: Questions and Model Answers (20 November 2026)

1. Unit I – Modern History of India (Tamil Nadu) · 15 marks · 250 words

Question: Explain the origin, principles and social-reform contributions of the Self-Respect Movement launched by Periyar E.V. Ramasamy in 1925, and assess its lasting impact on the social-justice laws and policies of Tamil Nadu.

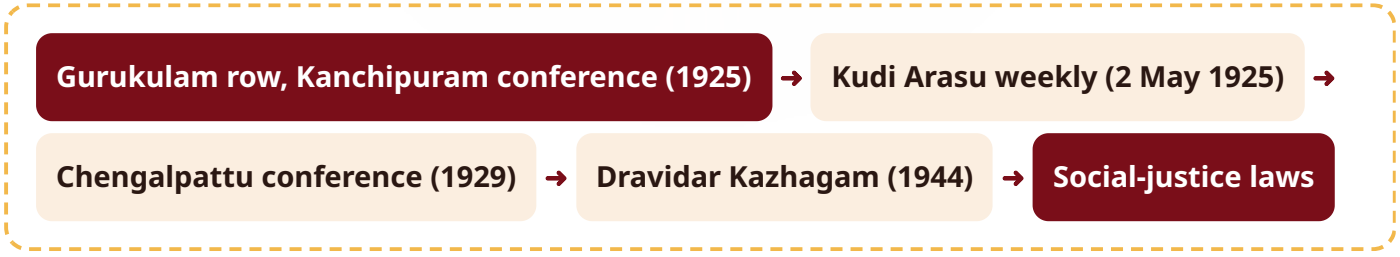
How to write

- Directive verbs "explain" and "assess" – four headings: origin, principles–contributions (table), lasting impact (laws), limits
- draw the flowchart Cheranmadevi Gurukulam, Kanchipuram conference (1925) → Kudi Arasu → Chengalpattu conference (1929) → Dravidar Kazhagam (1944) → laws
- legal data: self-respect marriage – Section 7-A, Hindu Marriage Act (Tamil Nadu amendment, 1967); equal property rights for daughters (1989); 69% reservation (1994, Ninth Schedule)
- write the criticisms (limits) in one balanced paragraph; end in a neutral, historical tone

Model answer

Introduction

When the Kanchipuram Congress conference (November 1925) refused his resolution for communal representation, **Periyar E.V. Ramasamy** left the Congress and launched the **Self-Respect Movement** in 1925. Its core idea: self-respect for every human being and rejection of inequality based on birth. The Cheranmadevi Gurukulam row over separate dining and the Vaikom Satyagraha (1924) formed the background.



A) Principles and contributions

Principle	Contribution in practice
Abolition of caste	Chengalpattu conference (1929) resolved to drop caste titles from names; Periyar himself gave up "Naicker"; demand for temple entry for all.
Rationalism	Campaign against superstition and priestly rituals through Kudi Arasu (1925) and Revolt (1928).
Women's rights	Widow remarriage, right to divorce, property rights, higher marriage age; Moovalur Ramamirtham Ammaiyar's fight against the devadasi system (Act of 1947). The 1938 women's conference conferred the title "Periyar".
Self-respect marriage	Marriage without priest or ritual, by exchange of garlands or rings with a declaration; encouragement of inter-caste marriage.

B) Lasting impact – laws and policies

Law / policy	Impact
Section 7-A, Hindu Marriage Act (Tamil Nadu amendment, 1967)	Legal validity for self-respect marriages – a first in India.
Hindu Succession (Tamil Nadu Amendment) Act 1989	Equal coparcenary rights for daughters – 16 years before the central amendment of 2005.
69% reservation (Act 45 of 1994; 76th Amendment, 1994 – Ninth Schedule)	Hallmark of social-justice politics.
Archakas from all castes (2006 law); **Social Justice Day** – 17 September (since 2021)	Equality even in temple service; state recognition of the movement's ideals.

C) Limits – a critical view

- Benefits went largely to intermediate castes; atrocities against Adi Dravidars continue, critics point out.
- Its atheist stand reduced acceptance among a section of rural people.

Conclusion

The Self-Respect Movement was not a party but a **change in social thinking**. Its ideas later became law and made Tamil Nadu a pioneer of social justice; its goal will be complete only when caste-based honour killings and untouchability end.

Scoring tips (faculty note): "Explain and assess" – origin, principles–contributions, legal impact, limits; without the limits the assessment is incomplete. Years earn marks: 1925, 1929 (Chengalpattu), 1938 (title "Periyar"), 1944, 1967 (Section 7-A), 1989, 1994. Keep the Justice Party (1916) and the Self-Respect Movement (1925) distinct – both merged into the Dravidar Kazhagam in 1944.

About 340 words (including tables, excluding the tip box) · 2 tables + 1 flowchart · time: 12 minutes.

Reference notes

Key facts

- 1924: Vaikom Satyagraha (Travancore) – Periyar hailed as "Vaikom Veerar"; Cheranmadevi Gurukulam row over separate dining (1924–25).
- 1925: Kudi Arasu weekly (2 May); walk-out from the Kanchipuram Congress conference (November); Self-Respect Movement begins. 1928: Revolt (English journal).
- 1929: First Provincial Self-Respect Conference, Chengalpattu (February) – resolutions to drop caste titles, give women property rights, permit widow remarriage.
- 1938: Tamil Nadu Women's Conference, Madras (13 November) – title "Periyar". 1944: Salem conference (27 August) – Justice Party renamed Dravidar Kazhagam.
- 1947: Madras Devadasis (Prevention of Dedication) Act. 1967: Section 7-A added to the Hindu Marriage Act for Tamil Nadu – self-respect marriages valid.
- Later: Hindu Succession (TN Amendment) Act 1989; 69% reservation Act (Act 45 of 1994) placed in the Ninth Schedule by the 76th Amendment (1994); 17 September observed as Social Justice Day (announced 2021).
- Answer-boosting terms: rationalism, communal representation, inter-dining (samapanthi), inter-caste marriage, gender equality, social justice.

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

Question: Examine the socio-economic causes of female infanticide and sex-selective abortion in Tamil Nadu, and evaluate the measures taken to improve the child sex ratio.

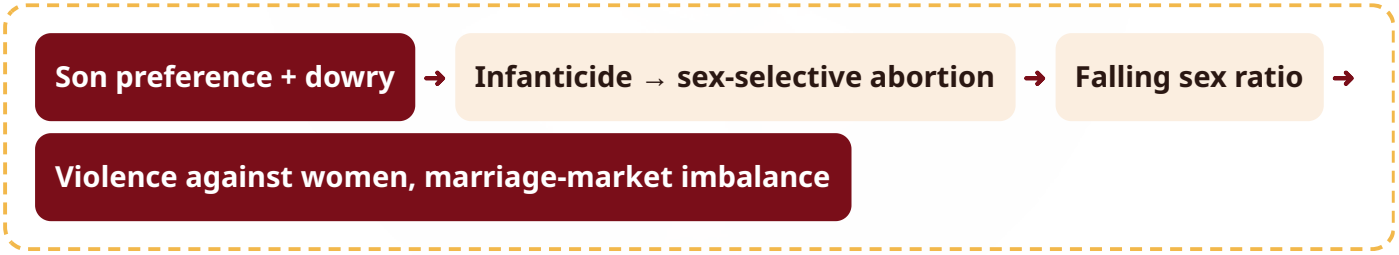
How to write

- Directive verbs "examine" and "evaluate" – four headings: scale (data), causes, measures–evaluation (table), way forward
- draw the flowchart son preference + dowry → sex selection → falling sex ratio → imbalance in the marriage market
- data: child sex ratio (0–6) – Census 2011 TN 943 (India 918); NFHS-5 sex ratio at birth 878 (NFHS-4: 954); CRS 2020: 939
- the Cradle Baby Scheme (1992, Salem) is TN's pioneering model; explain the data gap (sample survey vs registration) in one line

Model answer

Introduction

Reports of female infanticide from the Usilampatti area of Madurai district shocked the country in the 1980s. In the 2011 Census Tamil Nadu's **child sex ratio (0–6 years) was 943** – above the national 918, but below its own 948 of 1991. NFHS-5 (2019–21) shows a **sex ratio at birth of 878** (NFHS-4: 954), while the State's Civil Registration System gives 939 for 2020 – the gap between a sample survey and full registration; either way, a ratio below 950 is a concern.



A) Causes

Type	Cause
Economic	Dowry and wedding costs; the daughter seen as a "cost", the son as "old-age security".
Social	Male heir for funeral rites and inheritance; small-family preference combined with son preference sharpens selection.
Technology	Cheap ultrasound – infanticide declined but shifted to "selection in the womb".

B) Measures – evaluation

Measure	Details	Evaluation
Cradle Baby Scheme (1992, Salem; extended 2001)	Unwanted babies can be handed to the State; adoption	Saves lives; does not remove the cause
Girl Child Protection Scheme (1992)	Deposit in the girl child's name	Tries to make the girl an "asset"
PCPNDT Act 1994 (amended 2003)	Revealing foetal sex is a crime; registration of scan centres	Low conviction rate
Beti Bachao Beti Padhao (2015)	Awareness in low-ratio districts	Attitude change is slow
Girls' education, higher-education support	TN leads in women's higher-education enrolment	Long-term solution

C) Way forward

- Online monitoring of scan centres, decoy operations, fast-track trials.
- Monthly publication of sex ratio at birth by district and block; focus on low-ratio pockets.
- Strict enforcement of the Dowry Prohibition Act 1961; real property rights for women.
- "Daughter – pride" campaigns through self-help groups and schools.

Conclusion

The cradle stopped infanticide; discrimination in the womb can be stopped only by law combined with **change in attitude**. The lasting answer is a society that sees the girl child not as a burden but as a citizen with rights.

Scoring tips (faculty note): "Examine and evaluate" – causes (economic, social, technological) plus a measures–evaluation table; without the evaluation column you lose half the marks. Pointing out the data gap (NFHS-5 878 vs CRS 939) shows depth. "Child sex ratio (0–6)" and "sex ratio at birth" are different – do not mix them.

About 330 words (including tables, excluding the tip box) · 2 tables + 1 flowchart · time: 12 minutes.

Reference notes

Key facts

- Child sex ratio (0–6), Census 2011: TN 943 (2001: 942; 1991: 948); India 918. Overall sex ratio 2011: TN 996; India 943.
- Sex ratio at birth, NFHS-5 (2019–21): TN 878 (NFHS-4: 954); India 929. State CRS figure: 939 (2020).
- Women aged 20–24 married before 18, NFHS-5: TN 12.8% (NFHS-4: 16.3%); India 23.3%.
- PCPNDT Act 1994 (Pre-Conception and Pre-Natal Diagnostic Techniques (Prohibition of Sex Selection) Act) – the 2003 amendment added pre-conception sex selection. Dowry Prohibition Act 1961.
- Cradle Baby Scheme – 1992, Salem; extended to other districts in 2001. Girl Child Protection Scheme – 1992. Beti Bachao Beti Padhao – 22 January 2015, Panipat.

- Answer-boosting terms: son preference, missing women, sex selection, decoy operation, gender equality.

3. Unit VII – Indian Economy (Tamil Nadu) · 15 marks · 250 words

Question: Evaluate the role of the women's self-help group movement in rural poverty reduction and the economic empowerment of women in Tamil Nadu, and state the challenges they face and the way forward.

How to write

- Directive verbs "evaluate" and "state" – four headings: evolution, role (table), challenges, way forward
- draw the flowchart savings → internal lending → bank linkage → enterprise → income, empowerment
- data: 1983 – TNCDW; 1989 – first groups in Dharmapuri (IFAD-assisted); 1997–98 – Mahalir Thittam statewide; today 5.23 lakh groups, 60 lakh women, cumulative bank credit ₹2,62,311 crore
- close with current data – bank-credit target of ₹38,000 crore for 2026-27

Model answer

Introduction

Tamil Nadu pioneered the **self-help group** model, in which 10–20 women save together, lend among themselves and then borrow from banks. Begun in Dharmapuri in 1989 with IFAD support, the movement today links **about 60 lakh women in 5.23 lakh groups**, which have received cumulative bank credit of **₹2,62,311 crore** (State data, 3 November 2026).



A) Evolution

- 1983 – Tamil Nadu Corporation for Development of Women (TNCDW); 1989 – first groups in Dharmapuri.
- 1997–98 – **Mahalir Thittam** statewide; from 2011 the National Rural Livelihoods Mission (DAY-NRLM) – panchayat-level federations (PLFs).

B) Role – evaluation

Dimension	Contribution	Evaluation
Access to finance	Freedom from usurious moneylenders; collateral-free loans	Strong – 2026-27 target ₹38,000 crore (4,18,673 groups)
Livelihoods	Dairy, tailoring, food processing, the "Mathi" brand	Mostly low-value activities
Social empowerment	Say in household decisions, Grama Sabha participation; complements 50% reservation for women in panchayats	Leadership growth
Delivery of schemes	Roles in nutrition, awareness and survey work	Risk of overburden

C) Challenges

- Multiple lenders – debt stress from microfinance institutions.
- Weak market access, branding and quality certification; limited digital-business skills.
- Dormant groups, poor book-keeping and audit; limited reach to urban poor women.

D) Way forward

- Move from "credit linkage" to "enterprise" – producer companies, cluster marketing hubs.
- Link to e-commerce platforms (ONDC, GeM); digital book-keeping training.
- Link with credit bureaus to prevent over-lending; group-level insurance.

Conclusion

Self-help groups gave Tamil Nadu's women **not just credit but a voice**. Raising them into production and marketing enterprises is the next stage of the rural economy.

Scoring tips (faculty note): "Evaluate and state" – the role table must have an evaluation column; challenges and way forward as separate headings. Current data: 5.23 lakh groups, 60 lakh women, ₹2,62,311 crore; 2026-27 target ₹38,000 crore. The historical note "1989 Dharmapuri – IFAD" shows Tamil Nadu's pioneering role.

About 260 words (including tables, excluding the tip box) · 1 table + 1 flowchart · time: 12 minutes.

Reference notes

Key facts

- Data announced at the Erode event, 3 November 2026 (as reported by DT Next): 5.23 lakh women's SHGs with about 60 lakh members; cumulative bank credit ₹2,62,311 crore; 2026-27 target ₹38,000 crore for 4,18,673 groups, of which ₹16,560 crore to 1,70,624 groups had been extended by early November.
- Erode event (3 November 2026): ₹3,000 crore bank-credit programme for 26,000 groups; ₹1,110 crore handed to 9,000 groups that day.

- 1983 – TNCDW set up; 1989 – IFAD-assisted Tamil Nadu Women's Development Project in Dharmapuri forms the first SHGs; 1992 – NABARD SHG–Bank Linkage pilot; 1997–98 – Mahalir Thittam statewide; 2011 – National Rural Livelihoods Mission (later DAY-NRLM).
- Answer-boosting terms: financial inclusion, collateral-free credit, joint liability, social capital, panchayat-level federation, livelihood diversification.