

# District Export Action Plan for the district of Thanjavur, Tamilnadu

## Introduction

Tamil Nadu is one of the prime industrial states in India. It accounts for more than 11 per cent of the total exports of the country. On a closer look at the district profile of Tamil Nadu, a very diverse picture with a scope for huge untapped potential can be seen. In the efforts to realize the PM's vision of converting each district into an Export Hub, a detailed action plan is outlined for the district of Thanjavur to harness and enhance the existing export potential in the district and to facilitate in a concerted manner, the promotion & growth of exports from the district.

## District Profile

The district of Thanjavur district lies between 9° 50' and 11° 25' North latitude and 78° 45' and 79° 25' East longitude. It is bounded on the North by Thiruchirapalli and Cuddalore districts, on the East by Tiruvarur and Nagapattinam districts, on the South by Palk Strait and Pudukottai district and on the west by Pudukkottai district and Tiruchirapalli districts. Total geographical area of the district is 3,602.86 sq.km. This constitutes just 2.77 % of the area of the State.

## Administrative profile

The area of the district is 3396.57Sq.km. It consists of three revenue divisions- Thanjavur, Kumbakonam, Pattukottai and the nine Taluks - Kumbakonam, Papanasam, Pattukottai, Peravurani, Orathanadu, Thiruvudaimarudur, Thiruvaiyaru and Budalur. The district headquarters is the town of Thanjavur.



## Demographic Profile

Population			Literacy		
Persons	Male	Female	Persons	Male	Female
2405890	1182416	1223474	1790998	944264	846734
100%	49.14%	50.86%		52.72%	47.28%

## **Districts as Export Hubs –Vision, Goal and Policy framework**

The Hon'ble Prime Minister in his Independence Day Speech on 15<sup>th</sup> August, 2019 had inter-alia, observed that each of our districts has a diverse identity and potential for targeting global markets and there is a need for converting each district into potential export hubs. Department of Commerce through Directorate General of Foreign Trade and the State government is taking various measures to implement the vision of Hon'ble Prime Minister to promote exports and to convert each District into a hub for exports.

### **Goal**

The goal of the programme is to double the exports from the district within the next five years. The District Export Action Plan will include providing the support required by the local industry in boosting their manufacturing and exports with an impetus on supporting the industry from production to exporting stage.

### **Policy framework**

The framework of the 'Districts as Export Hub' policy is based on the Ministry of Commerce and Industry, Government of India 's D.O. No.01/36/218/01/AM-18/TC/Part-I/01 dated 13-11-2019, which had mandated the Regional Authorities of the Directorate General of Foreign Trade (DGFT) to work with the State Governments and District level officers to prepare and implement a District Export Action Plan specific to each district in every State and Union Territory and implement it through an institutional structure at the district level for fulfilling the goals set out for each district in this regard.

Accordingly, DGFT through its Office Memorandum dated 26/12/2020 had notified the action items along with timelines for developing Districts as Export Hubs. Apart from the action items, the composition of District Export Promotion Committee (DEPC) and the terms of reference for plan of action for developing districts as export hubs were suggested. The District Export Promotion Committee (DEPC) will act as a one point facilitator for export promotion at District level along with State Level Export Promotion Committee (SLEPC)

### **Action Plan for Thanjavur**

This **District Export Action Plan** enlists the plan of action and strategies for converting the district of Thanjavur into a district with export potential and as a hub of export for the identified core products. The Aim is to achieve this through the DEPC, as a facilitating body for the purpose and by undertaking constructive district specific initiatives, implementing export oriented schemes & customizing export enhancing programs for the district. **The ultimate goal is to convert Thanjavur district into an Export Hub and double the exports (baseline year being: 2018-19) from the district within the next five years.**

To make the District Export Action Plan relevant, and to achieve its goal of Doubling the exports within the next five years, there needs to be a proper understanding of district's strengths, opportunities and export related challenges

### **Analysis of the Existing Industrial scenario in Thanjavur District :**

To make the District Export Plan successful and to achieve its goal of doubling the exports within the next five years, there needs to be a proper understanding of the district's strengths, opportunities and export related Challenges. The following strength and challenges have been identified in the district:

### **Strengths and Opportunities:**

Thanjavur district stands unique from time immemorial for its agricultural activities and is rightly acclaimed as the **granary of South India**, criss-crossed by the river Cauvery and a lengthy network of irrigation canals. The main strength of the district is its existing vibrant rural agricultural economy producing both agricultural and allied products. The total Cultivated Area in the district is 241292 ha. Apart from this, the fisheries sector, the handicraft industry and component making industry for the engineering sector also thrive in the district. Sugar mills situated in the district also have contributed to the growth of sugarcane cultivation. Thanjavur is the only district of Tamil Nadu having the highest number of GI tagged products and its handicraft products are unique with exquisite craftsmanship.

The MPEDA has a presence in the district and has established its regional divisions in Nagapatinam. The Regional Authority of DGFT for the district is located in Chennai. The nearest airport is the Trichy international Airport, which has cargo movement and air customs officials. Tamilnadu's State Industrial Development Corporation (SIDCO) has developed 4 industrial estates in the District at Thanjavur (21.94 acres) Nanjikkottai (26.30 acres) Pillayarpatti (10.96 acres) Thirubuvanam (Kumbakonam) (32.3 acres)

The District is populated with around 11392 registered industrial units, in the MSME sector. MSME-DI, Chennai has identified the following industrial clusters as vital part of Thanjavur's economy.-1) Stainless Steel Cluster, Kumbakonam, 2) Rice Mill Cluster, Thanjavur, 3. Musical Instruments, Thanjavur , 4). Brass Metal Cluster, Nachiyarkoil. 5) Idols and Brass Art Lamps, Swamimalai, Thiruvaidaimarudur, Nachiyarkoil and Kumbakonam, 6) Coir, Pattukotttai, Orathanadu and Peravoorani, 7) Thanjavur Art Plate, Thanjavur, 8) Silk Weaving Cluster, Thirubuvanam, Kumbakonam.

The data from GST-R1 for the year 2018-2019 shows that the district had a combined export turnover to the value of Rs. 55.73 crs.

**Potential Products :** The State Government has notified handicrafts, coir industries, agriculture products, silk, brass work industries as the main products with export potential for the DEPC to patronize and promote as a part of the "Districts as Export Hubs" Program.

**1) Agriculture and horticulture:** The major crops cultivated in Thanjavur district are paddy, pulses, gingelly, groundnut and sugarcane. The minor crops like Maize, soyabeans, redgram are in rice fallows. Paddy is the principal crop grown in three seasons viz. Kuruvai, Samba and Thaladi. Coconut, mango, guava, pulses, cotton, gingelly, groundnut, banana, oil palm, soya bean are also cultivated/ grown, apart from fruit crops such as Banana, Mango, Guava and acid lime .

The setting up of Thiru Arooran Sugar Mills in the late fifties induced a section of the traditionally rice growing farmers to switchover to sugarcane cultivation. The setting up two more sugar factories has further diverted parts of rice growing areas to sugarcane.

To improve the rice production IARI setup the Rice Breeding and Genetics Research Centre (RBGRC) inside the Tamil Nadu Rice Research Institute (TRRI) at Aduthurai. Considering the vital importance of strengthening R&D efforts in the post-harvest processing, preservation and value addition of raw agricultural produce, the Ministry of Food Processing Industries (MoFPI) has set up the Indian Institute of Food Processing Technology (IIFPT) in Thanjavur.

**2) Fisheries:** Thanjavur is one of the 13 maritime districts of Tamil Nadu engaged in marine fishing and its fish production is about 5% of the total catch of the State. It has 27 fishing villages along its coastline. Thanjavur district is also rich in inland fishing due to the presence of the Cauvery river system. The total inland fish production is 11,530 tonnes and the respective figure for the marine fish production is 9,020 tonnes. About 5,000 inland fishermen are engaged in fishing. Fishing rights in rivers, channels, tanks and water bodies of Forest Department are leased out only to Fishermen Co-operative Societies on priority basis and in turn these societies lease out the fishing rights to its members.

**3) Coconut and Coir :** In the district of Thanjavur, coconut is cultivated on 68,000 acres by nearly 75,000 farmers. Apart from coconut oil, products derived from coconut such as Desicated Coconut, Coconut Milk, Coconut Skimmed Milk, Spray Dried Coconut Milk Powder, Coconut Cream, Coconut Chips, Tender Coconut Water, Coconut vinegar, Coconut squash, Nata-de-coco, Neera, Coconut Jaggery, etc are produced in the district.

Thanjavur is also one of the important coir producing districts of Tamil Nadu. To further accelerate coir production the Coir Board, setup its Regional Extension Centre at Thanjavur. Value added products of coir like coir fibre, yarn, mats, matting, mattress, rugs, geo textiles, coir piths, etc., have a growing international demand in this era of sustainable living.

**4). Handicrafts & silk :** Thanjavur is famous for its traditional handicrafts such as Thanjavur art plates, Icon works, pith works, musical instruments, Thanjavur paintings and Bell metal products. The Thanjavur Doll, Thanjavur Veenai, Thanjavur Netti works, Nachiarkoil Kuthuvilakku are other handicraft products from the district. Silk weaving from the district is also a traditional industry, which has thrived for years and Thirubuvanam Silk

Sarees are famous. These products have immense potential for export, as they have international fame and throw potential for international market penetration.

**5). Tourism:** Thanjavur district has a rich cultural heritage and has tourist attractions such as The Brihadeeswarar temple, Royal museum, Serfoji memorial hall, Rajarajan mani mandapam, Darasuram temple, temples of Kumbakonam, apart from the cluster of Navagraha temples near Kumbakonam. These temples are cultural tourist centres, attracting visitors and pilgrims from all over the world.



6) **Engineering components:** The presence of a major public sector industry -the Bharat Heavy Electricals Limited in the neighbouring Trichy district, had led to the establishment of a lot of component manufacturers in the district of Thanjavur. This potential needs to be harnessed for the export market.

### **Challenges and Bottlenecks**

Even though the district of Thanjavur has a vibrant rural economy, it is not able to increasingly cater to the global market and taste. The rice produced in the district is very popular locally, but not globally. The district needs to harness its assets and turn its entrepreneurs into global players. Some of the challenges for exports found in the district are:

**1) Sea Port infrastructure and connectivity:** The nearest port facility for Thanjavur District is the Karaikal Port, which is part of the UT of Pondicherry. This port started operations in 2009 and has handled cargo such as coal, pet coke, raw sugar, fertilizer, cement, project cargo and construction materials. However, the Port needs to improve its capacity and infrastructure in order to accommodate the agro products exports. Karaikal port has rail connectivity through Thanjavur – Kumbakonam – Mayiladudurai – Peralam - Karaikal line, which is a circuitous route. Direct railroad to the port, will improve the market access of the agro products and reduce the transportation cost. Similarly, Thanjavur's existing identified Industrial Clusters need wider road connectivity.

**2) Cold Storage:** For Agro value addition to takes place, cold storage is important to increase the shelf life of the agro products, especially which it is to be exported. There is lack of cold storage facilities for agro products in the district of Thanjavur resulting in minimal holding capacity.

**3) Lack of exposure and export promotion:** Thanjavur has many exportable products and resources. But the products lack international exposure and marketing. The marine fish from the region will have international demand, but it is untapped and export promotion and exposure of the product is required. Similarly for coir and coir products, there is a potential demand in the international market which is still untapped by the farmers. Even though, Thanjavur is the Rice bowl of Tamil Nadu, there are only minimal rice exports from the area. Cultivating rice for international market would be a new avenue of production and thus will enhance its export potential. Similarly, for the artisans of the handicraft industry, entering

international market needs more training about the nitty-gritties of foreign trade to reap the benefits out of it.

**4) Technology:** Though Thanjavur has export potential agro products, there is no sufficient value addition, with very minimal attention given to branding, packaging, standardisation, etc. For value addition of agro products there is a need for more dissemination of technical know-how from research centres to field. Indian Institute of Food Processing Technology, Thanjavur has state-of-the-art technologies in the field of value addition, standardisation, etc. There is need to transfer these technologies from the labs to farmers and agro producers.

**5) Skill Deficiency:** There is huge need to cultivate and enhance the international entrepreneurial skill among the businessmen and the farmers in the district, apart from helping them explore international markets. In addition, in order to sustain in the agro products exports, exporters needs to be well informed about Sanitary and phyto sanitary (SPS) measures of various countries and the Codex Alimentarius international food standards, guidelines and codes of practices, etc which are essential for them to be efficient international players.

**6) Ancillary Infrastructure:** The district has very minimal ancillary infrastructure for exports like testing facilities, certification labs, etc., that are essential in establishing the superior quality of the products produced in this district and are mandatory requirements for exports.

**7) Ease of doing business:** At the district level, ease of doing business has to be ensured, especially for the MSME sector and the agro industry, where compliances are required. This is costly in terms of time and money and the district needs a system, where ease of doing business is ensured for ensuring faster approvals & certifications.

The other challenges for growth of exports in the district can be summarized as follows:

- Hurdles in the availability of raw materials
- Poor infrastructure to attract tourists to the existing tourist centres /temples
- Non-Access to affordable trade finance /credit

### **District Export Action Plan for Thanjavur:**

The aim of the **District Export Promotion Program and its Action Plan** is to maximize export of the identified products from the district and to ensure that the bench mark set for exports is achieved within the time period set for the purpose. The action plan would also work on minimizing and mitigating the challenges enlisted above, in achieving their desired export potential and turnover. The objectives of this District Export Promotion Policy and Action Plan are:

To provide an improved framework of support for the development of exports for the identified sector products, to provide increased and accessible trade support services, to improve public and private dialogue for favouring the development of a district export culture, to thwart the threats posed to the exports from the district. The long-term objective of

this District Export Promotion policy is to develop Thanjavur District into becoming an export hub. To this extent, the DEPC, the central, the state governments and the exporting community, at large have to actively participate in the program and work on a mission mode, so that targets are achieved and the district of Thanjavur is turned into a hub for exports in the next 5 years.

As the first step in converting Thanjavur into an Export Hub, the District Export Promotion Committee (DEPC) has been formed and notified by the Government of Tamilnadu for the district.

### **Notification of DEPC for Thanjavur:**

The Government of Tamil Nadu (GoTN) through its G.O No 16 dated 23-01-2020 and G.O (Ms) 29 dt 16-3-2020 of the Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises Department, has notified the District Export Promotion Committees in 37 districts in the state, along with its potential products for exports. The G.O have also bestowed the power on the Chairpersons of the DEPCs to invite any other department representative or outside expert as a special invitee for the meetings of the DEPC and also to amend the list of potential products for export promotion. Members of DEPC for Thanjavur district notified vide GO (Ms) no 16 dt 23-01-2020 has the following composition:

1. District Collector, Thanjavur - Chairperson
2. The office of Zonal Additional DGFT, Chennai - Co-Chairman
3. GM, District Industries Centre, Thanjavur - Convenor
4. Lead Bank Manager, Indian Overseas Bank, Thanjavur - Member
5. Representative, Coir Board, Gov.of India - Member
6. Representative, APEDA, Gov. of India - Member
7. Representative, Silk Board, Gov. of India - Member
8. Representative, Handlooms, Handicrafts, Textiles & Khadi Department, Govt. of Tamil Nadu - Member
9. Representative, MSME, Chennai - Member
10. Representative, Office of Development Commissioner(Handicrafts), Gov. of India - Member
11. Representative, Department of Tourism, Gov. of Tamil Nadu - Member
12. Representative, Department of Agriculture, Gov. of Tamil Nadu - Member
13. The Manager, NABARD, Tamil Nadu - Member
14. Representative, Thirubuvanam Cholan S.H.W Co-op. P&S Society Ltd. – Member

**The GoTN identified and notified the following products as having potential for export in the district:**

1. Handicrafts
2. Coir Industries
3. Agriculture Products
4. Silk
5. Brass work industries

**1) Functioning of the DEPC:** The DEPC constituted for steering the district towards becoming an Export hub, **will meet once every six months. The Convener's office will be the secretariat of the DEPC** and records and files on the program will be maintained there as per laid down rules and procedures. The DEPC will formulate, co-ordinate and facilitate the implementation of various programs and projects of the District Export Hub Program. The DEPC will monitor projects, and develop systems for exporter facilitation within the district and act as a co-ordination authority with the various state and central Govt agencies and departments. The Committee, with the assistance from the sub-groups, will perform the role of resolution, escalation and monitoring of issues concerning exports from the district. DEPC will act as **one-point facilitator** for export promotion at the district and report to State Export Promotion Committee (SEPC).

DEPC will review the export performance of the district once in six months during its sitting and take necessary action to ensure that the desired export performance from the district is achieved and take remedial measures so that exports from the district is accelerated.

**2) Creation of subgroups :** As a part of implementation of the District Export Action Plan, subgroups/sub-committees of each identified potential export product or for specific projects, will be created by the DEPC. The Subgroups will be tasked for working comprehensively on a project or a product. The sub-groups will comprise of Industry heads, implementing departmental officials, artisans and will mostly be chaired by the District collector or his representative. The Sub-groups have to not only frame proposals (*vis-à-vis*) the product or project assigned to them, but would also follow-up and monitor the implementation of the approved proposals. The various sub –groups proposed for the district are: sub-group on agro products, sub-group on coir product, subgroup on handicrafts & silk, Sub-group on infrastructure, Sub-group on grievance redressal, sub-group on training, etc. **The sub-groups will meet frequently (at least once every two months) directly or over video – conferencing and work on their agenda.** The sub-groups will be the main drivers of the DEPC's agenda & action plan and will be implementing the tasks assigned to it.

A suggestive composition of the sub-groups can be as follows:

**Sub-group on Handicrafts**

- The District Collector- Chairperson / DC's representative
- O/o Zonal Additional DGFT, Chennai
- District Industries Centre, Thanjavur
- Representative from MSME, Government of India, Chennai
- Representative from Handlooms, Handicrafts, Textiles & Khadi Department, Govt. of Tamil Nadu
- Representative from Office of Development Commissioner(Handicrafts), Gov. of India
- Representative from Handlooms Handicrafts Export Promotion Council, Chennai

**Sub-group on Agriculture Products**

- The District Collector- Chairperson /DC's Representative
- O/o Zonal Additional DGFT, Chennai
- District Industries Centre, Thanjavur
- Representative from Department of Agriculture, Gov. of Tamil Nadu
- Representative, APEDA, Gov. of India
- Representative, Department of Agriculture, Gov. of Tamil Nadu

2) The detailed **Export Action Plan** proposed for converting the district into a hub for exports, after taking into consideration the needs, challenges identified above is given table below:

Sl. No	Challenges Addressed	Implementing agency /department	Action Plan	Timeli ne
1.	Identification of base line exports	DIC along with DGFT, MSME	<b>Data analytics</b> - The base line export for the district is the exports of the year 2018-19 originating from the district and the target is to double the same within the next five years. The DEPC of the district will clearly identify and quantify the base-line benchmark for <b>each identified product/</b> sector and set timelines for achieving the desired export performance over a period of 5 years. Data obtained from the GST, District Industries Centre, Thanjavur, MSME, Govt of India, Chennai, APEDA, Govt of India, Coir Board, Govt of India can be analyzed to understand the export trends in the district and undertaking targeted approach to resolve issues and increase export competitiveness.	6 months
2.	Comprehensive database on exporters from the district	DIC Thanjavur	<b>Comprehensive database on exporters from the district-</b> There is a need to create a database of exporters from the district. As a part of the District Export Action Plan, the General Manager of DIC, along with the officials of the APEDA, Coirboard, will cull out comprehensive data base of exporters for publication and administrative use. The DIC will be the Custodian of this data base. It will be electronically maintained and will be dynamic, with constant updating of new IECs. The Exporter data can also be a public document and if the DEPC desires, can be published in various portals for more visibility for the exporters and their products.	6 months
3.	Single window system at the district level	District administration & DIC Thanjavur	<b>Single window system at the district level-</b> In order to address the numerous approvals and licenses required for manufacturing or setting up an export business, a Single Window System at the District Industries Centre needs to set up for any export related approvals or clearances at the district level. The Action Plan envisages setting-up of such a system for the ease of doing export business in the district and plan to operationalize it in two years. <b>The district administration will work and operationalize the proposal under the leadership of the Chairperson of the DEPC.</b>	1 year
4.	Creation of an online on-stop portal	NIC, Thanjavur	<b>Creation of an online portal:</b> In this digital era, creation of digital facilitation is essential. The action plan envisages that the DEPC will create an online portal, which will be a give a one stop access to all the links for all the digital requirements and compliances for any exporter. The Portal can also develop over the time to monitor the district's	1 year

			DEPC projects and disseminate exporter data. <b>NIC of the district can be tasked with this project to be implemented in a year and report to the DEPC.</b>	
5	Training on Value addition, For Agricultural Products	IIFPT	<b><u>Transfer of Technologies</u></b> -The Action Plan envisages taking necessary steps to transfer these technologies from labs to the field by utilizing the existing skill development initiatives of Government in coordination with IIFPT, Thanjavur. A sub-group will study and evolve a program	Within two years
6.	Skill enhancement programs on EXIM	DGFT, DIC-MSME and Government Fine Arts College, Kumbakonam	<b><u>Training about EXIM</u></b> - The action plan proposes to utilize the existing infrastructure of Government Fine Arts College, Kumbakonam to impart import-export business training to artisans, students, women entrepreneur etc., in coordination with DIC-Thanjavur and MSME-Chennai.	Once every year
7.	Training on SPS, Codex Alimentarius standards	APEDA and IIFPT, Thanjavur	<b><u>Training about SPS, Codex Alimentarius and other Trade Regulations</u></b> - APEDA can impart training to Farmers and Agro Exporters regarding Sanitary and phyto-sanitary (SPS) measures, The Codex Alimentarius international food standards, guidelines and codes of practices, and other regulations to boost exports from Thanjavur.	Once every year
8.	Port infrastructure – for agro products	sub-group for the purpose	<b><u>Improve capacity of the port</u></b> - Port needs to improve its capacity to accommodate the agricultural products for export purposes. Through this Plan, the aim is to start an assessment to find out the bottlenecks for agro products in port infrastructure and to evolve a strategy to address the identified bottlenecks. <b>A subgroup/sub-committee will be tasked with this project.</b>	3 years
9.	Road Connectivity	Sub-group	<b><u>Improve capacity of the Road</u></b> – The existing Road connectivity are not sufficient for seamless movement of goods. Through this Plan, Widening the roads to the existing industrial Clusters of Thanjavur, connecting the Handicrafts Centres with GI tags with at least one State Highway and Connecting Thanjavur to Karaikal Port with National Highway will be attempted. <b>A sub-group will be constituted to study and steer the road infrastructure initiatives</b>	5 years
10	Rail Connectivity	Sub-group	<b><u>Karaikal to Thanjavur Railway line</u></b> – The existing Railway line from Thanjavur to Karaikal is longer and not well connected with the industrial clusters of Thanjavur. This Plan aims to explore better railway connectivity to the district and <b>a subgroup will work on it along with the Indian railways.</b>	5 years

11	Cold Storage Facilities	Sub-group	<b><u>Establishing Cold Storage Facilities</u></b> – The existing cold storage facilities are not enough for the development of Agro value addition. The DEAP will work on establishing and increasing the Cold storage capacity in the district. <b>The Sub-group</b> , with all stake holders can be formed and tasked with studying and implementing it in the district	3 years
12	Advertisement	District Administration	<b><u>Market Promotion</u></b> - To increase the market reach for Thanjavur's rich Heritage sites, there is a need for market promotion in International Destinations. The action plan aims to have market promotion advertisement for Thanjavur, as a tourist destination	2 years

The above District Export Action Plan for the district of Thanjavur is not conclusive and is tentative. The District Export Promotion Committee has to adopt and finalize the plan after consultation with all stake holders. The DEPC has the rights and powers to amend the District Export Action Plan according to the needs of the times and the prevailing contexts during the next 5 years. But the main focus will be to **double the exports from the district** and to facilitate the growth of the identified sectors in the in such a way that the new infant district of Thanjavur moves towards SELF-RELIANCE and transforms itself into a HUB FOR EXPORTS from India.

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