

DISTRICT GAZETTEERS

Gazetteers are the publications of the Government of Tamil Nadu on the districts. They are written, as per the uniform guidelines prescribed by the Government of India, by an Editorial team headed by an Editor (Gazetteers). A District Gazetteer which contains about 19 chapters, is a single source of comprehensive and authentic information about the district from its geographical, demographical, social and cultural, historical, economic, administration and developmental aspects. The Gazetteer is considered an encyclopaedia of the district.

District Manuals

After acquiring the territory in the South, the English East India Company carved out districts and placed them under the administration of the Collectors. In the absence of any comprehensive guidebooks on districts, the Government ordered for the preparation of the Manuals for the districts. The District Manuals are the precursors of the District Gazetteers. Starting from the publication of Madras District Manual by J.H.Nelson in 1868, manuals were brought out for the then districts of South Arcot (J.H.Garstin 1878), Tiruchirappalli (Lewis Moore 1878), Chengalpattu (C.S.Crole 1879), Tirunelveli (A.J.Stuart 1879), The Nilgiris (H.B.Grigg 1880), North Arcot (Arthur F.Cox 1881), Salem (H.LeFanu 1883), Thanjavur (T.Venkataswamy 1883), Coimbatore (F.A.Nicholson 1887) and North Arcot (Revised)(H.H.Stuart 1895).

Pre-Independent District Gazetteers

When the District Manuals became out of date, they were revised and retitled as District Gazetteers. The first such District Gazetteer by W.Francis for Madurai District was published in 1906 followed by Thanjavur (F.R.Hemingway 1906), South Arcot (W.Francis 1906), Tiruchirappalli (F.R.Hemingway 1906), The Nilgiris (W.Francis 1908), Tirunelveli (H.R.Pate, 1917), and Salem (F.J.Richards 1918).

Post - Independent District Gazetteers

The work of revising and rewriting the district Gazetteers has begun in Tamil Nadu in 1954. Dr.B.S.Baliga, the then Curator of the Madras Record Office was entrusted the work of revision of the Gazetteers. The district Gazetteers published in Tamil Nadu, after Independence are: Thanjavur (Dr.B.S.Baliga,1957), Madurai (Dr.B.S.Baliga ,1960), South Arcot (Dr.B.S.Baliga,1962), Coimbatore, (Dr.B.S.Baliga 1966), Salem (Dr.A.Ramasamy,1967) and Ramanathapuram (Dr.A.Ramasamy, 1973), Pudukkottai (Gopalakrishna Gandhi, IAS., 1983), Dharmapuri (P.Pulney Andy Senji, 1995), Kanniyakumari, (M.Gopalakrishnan,1995),The Nilgiris, (M.Gopalakrishnan 1995), Composite Tiruchirappalli, (Tiruchirappalli, Karur and Perambalur) (Dr.K.S.K.Velmani.,1998), Kancheepuram&Thiruvallur (Erstwhile Chengalpattu) (M.Gopalakrishnan, 2000). Tirunelveli (Dr.K.S.K.Velmani, 2002), Thoothukudi (R.Sinnakani, 2007) and Erode (N.Govindaraju, 2016).

Translation in to Tamil

The District Gazetteers are written in English as they are the international reference books of the districts. Then, the English version of the gazetteers are translated into Tamil and published subsequently. So far, Pudukkottai and Ramanathapuram and Kanniyakumari District Gazetteers have been translated into Tamil and published. The Nilgiris District Gazetteer has been published in 2016.