

HISTORY OF THIRUVATTAR WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO ADIKESAVA PERUMAL TEMPLE

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ABSTRACT

Thiruvattar occupies an important position from the early period onwards. During the ninth century A D, this place was an important religious centre of Vishnavism. It was buffer state between Panday, Ay kings, Cholas and Venad Kings. The first ruler of Travancore, Marthanda Varma and his able minister Ramayyan Dalawa gave much importance to Thiruvattar temple. During the time of Marthanda Varma Nawab of Arcot invaded Thiruvattar, but with the help of God Adhikesava of Thiruvattar ,the place Thiruvattar was safeguard from foreign invasion.

Key words: Adikesavan, festival, Thiruvattar, Travancore, Temple.

INTRODUCTION

Thiruvattar Adikesava Perumal Temple is a Hindu temple in Tamil Nadu, India. It is surrounded by three rivers called the Kothai, the Pahralli and the Thamirabarani. It is hard to give an exact date and year when this temple was founded but according to Tami hymns it can be dated from the 7th and 8th centuries C.E.

Objectives of the Study

1. To evaluate History of Thiruvattar
2. To analyse history of Thiruvattar Adhikesava Perumal Temple
3. To sketch Festivals of Adikesava Perumal Temple
4. To analyse Speciality of Adikesava Perumal Temple

Research Methodology

The methodology adopted in the present study is analytical, descriptive and interpretative reflection. In the preparation of the present study the following sources including both **primary** and **secondary** sources.

History of Thiruvattar

Marthanda Varma(1729-1758A.D)

Marthanda Varma inherited the throne of Travancore formerly known as Venad, from King Rama Varma, his uncle. He had to face opposition from Ettuveetil Pillamar, they decided to kill him. Marthanda Varma destroyed both the feudal nobles and his cousins six years. He was assisted by his able minister Ramayyan Dalawa. Ramayyan Dalawa was born in Yervadi, a village in the district of Thirunelveli. He was six years old his poor father gave up his native village and came to Aruvikarai, near Thiruvattar when he lived at Aruvikarai, he worshiped the Adhi Keasa of Thiruvattar daily. He was appointed as palace Rayasamarma. Marthanda Varma had to face serious troubles on his eastern frontier. In 1740, Chanda sahib and Arcot invaded and looted temples like Suchindram and Thiruvattar. They invaded Thiruvattar temple and carried away the **Archana Bimba** of the Lord. Later Nawab of Arcot returned the idol and made offering of a gold cap and plate. Associated to this episode, the 21 days **Thiru Allah Pooja** was conducted in this temple.

The Dutch army landed at Colachel on 10th February, 1741. Before moving to the battle at Colachel, Marthanda Varma proceeded on the 10th June to Thiruvattar and placed sword before the deity of Adhi Kesava of Thiruvattar and received it back from the priest of Thiruvattar temple and offered 500 *panams* (cash) as *kanikkai* (donation) to deity. Maharaja appears to have conducted the war in person, the victory of Marthanda Varma raised prestige of Travancore.

Karthika Thirunal Rama Varma(1758-1798)

Karthika Thirunal Rama varma also known as Dharma Raja. Amma Veedu has received great importance from his rule. It was famous as the house of wife of the king. The male members of these families were called *tampi* and women were called *Thakanchi* and *Kochamma*. It indicated the position of the *Tampi* families as relatives of the Royal house of Travancore. Their families never had the fortune to sit on royal throne.

Swathi Thirunal (1829-1847)

Swathi Thirunal was a great lover of music and a musician himself. He composed more than 400 musical compositions. Swathi thirunal also hailed the Adhi keasava Perumal in Thiruvattar temple. He married Thiruvattar ammachi Panapillai amma Srimathi Narayani Pillai Kochamma of the Thiruvattar Amma Veedu family.

Sri Moolam Thirunal(1885-1924)

Sri Moolam Thirunal has record of many sided progress of Thiruvattar. He focused keen interest upon the development of education, communication. He has introduction of important departments in Thiruvattar. A magistrate court was constructed; it functioned from 1897 due to the lack of facilities it was shifted to another place. A middle school was established in 1897 at Thiruvattar, it is Malayalam Medium School. The police

station at functioned from 1897. The construction of a bridge was registered in 1897. In 1898 .Sri Mulam Thirunal appointed Krishna Swamy Rao as Diwan of Travancore W.Jopp was appointed as the chief engineer and P.Subramania Iyer was appointed as the assistant engineer for the construction of Thiruvattar bridge, completed in the year 1900. Maharaja arrived at Thiruvattar on 11th February 1900.

On 23rd June, regulation was made for opening a British Post Office. Diwan Krishnamurthy Iyer has forwarded his request to Maharaja’s command. Maharaja sanctioned the opening of a British Post Office on 25th June 1900.

History of Adikesava Perumal Temple

The word “Adikesava” literally means “the foremost friend” and according to one of the legends Swami Adikesava defeated a demon called Kesi whose wife decided to pray to two rivers: the Ganges and the Thamirabarani. And this prayer created a huge destruction. The demon’s wife surrendered to the Lord in the end but the formation of the three rivers had already made a circle which is known under the name of Thiruvattaru.



ADHIKEASA PERUMAL TEMPLE



Another legend depicts this story in a bit different way: It says that Kesi, who saw her brother defeated, wanted to avenge the defeat along with her friend Kothai, who took the form of a river and surrendered the river on all sides with an intention to submerge it but the mother earth named as Goddess hoomi upheld the temple, which is why the temple is found located at a height of about 55 feet from sea level.

The rivers were cursed by Perumal but since they repented for their action, Perumal forgave them and then took a dip at the place where the rivers meet the Arabian Ocean, which is still celebrated even today as the “Painguni Utsavam” where Perumal comes and enact this act of forgiveness for his curse.

Speciality of Adikesava Perumal Temple

Thiruvattar Adikesava Perumal Temple is an excellent specimen of artistry from the Kerala blend, it epitomizes the will power. The Udaya Marthanda hall which is found in front of the temple illustrates the very sophisticated marriage procession of Lord Ganesha, which is vividly described in various Puranas. The speciality of this temple is that the two idols of Adikeshava and Padmanabha faces each other. The Supreme Lord, who is actually Vishnu or Narayana and is one of the trinities of the Hinduism, is seen resting on his snake couch. Even Lord Shiva can be seen present at that place.

Festivals of Adikesava Perumal Temple

Though there are several festivals associated with this temple, the most famous ones are the ones which are called *Perunthamirthu, Kalapa Poojai*. This takes place in the month of Thai is celebrated for about 12 days. The other most famous festival is in the month of Punguni, the festival is widely known as *Punguni festival* and it is celebrated for about 10 days. Apart from all these big celebrations, there are some other smaller ones all through the year which sees a lot of visitors. Saturdays festival in the month of *Puratassi*. The festival of *Thiruvonom* in the month of Avani is worth mentioning. The most attractive of them all is the “*Vaikutha Ekadasi*” festival during which Milk Kheer and other such types of delicious dishes are made as part of the Prasadam. This festival is known as *Corkkavazhal* and it usually takes place in the month of Markhazi.

Adikesava Perumal Temple Visitation Time

Since there are plenty of festivals and rituals going on through the year, visiting the temple anytime of the year is a real joy. Adikesava Perumal Temple is opened for visitors every day at 4.30 am. – 12.30 pm. and 5.00 pm. – 8.00 pm.

Adikesava Perumal Temple Dress Code

Below general statement as per high court order *Men should wear a “dhoti or pyjama with upper cloth or formal pants and shirts” to temples and women should wear “a sari or a half sari or churidhar with upper cloth.” Children could wear “any fully covered dress.”*

Requesting the entire tourist to abide the dress code rules to avoid disappointment.

Adikesava Perumal Temple Phone Number

Contact the temple using this number **04652 241270**

Adikesava Perumal Temple Address

ArulmiguAdikesavaPerumalTemple,
Tiruvattar,Thiruvattar,
Kalkulam(TK),
Kanniyakumari(dt)-629171,
Tamilnadu.

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