

Palmyra Palms: The Guardians of Tradition, Perspective of Different Religious Groups in Tamilnadu

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Abstract: *Tree veneration was a pursuit of interest and a system of practice followed in the distant. Trees are the primitive temple of God in South India. The construction of the temple structure led to the trees' disappearance. This article surveys the background and present status of Palmyra palm on temple premises and as stand-alone trees. The study aims to document the present status of trees in temple premises, whether as an association of the tree with the tutelary god or as a stand-alone tree or only with their religious practices. Fortunately palmyra palm connects diverse religious groups. The traces are also documented in this paper. Insights are gathered from existing literature, journals, printed material, and from local communities and the experts in the field. The descriptive analysis of the gathered content explicates the mutualism between the tree and the community that are binded with the tree. The beliefs, ritual practices, historical background, and mythological stories amplify the tree's chances of survival. Further, the finding reveals that the destination and practices are on edge to sustain and enhance authenticity. Finally, the paper proposes some suggestions to engage, empower and support the community economically and socially so that they aim to safeguard the tree and their rooted culture from extinction.*

Keywords: Palmyra Palm, Tree Veneration, Cultural Practices, Scientific Benefits, Religious studies

INTRODUCTION

"I can think of many things less deserving of worship,'. 'Look at how long some trees have been alive. Think of what they have seen. Why, there are yew trees in churchyards that may be more than a thousand years old; older still than the ancient church nearby. Their roots are in one millennium and their branches in another.'" – (Chris Priestley, 2007)

Trees are one of the oldest living organisms existing on the earth; they silently witness human evolution. The trees that held medicinal plants, nests of birds, dens, huts of tribes, and many more slowly disappeared in the late 1980s due to disastrous human interruptions who considered themselves superior among other species. But ancient humans believed trees sacred and honoured them through veneration. Trees are sacred because of their shape, size, age and offering. Trees serve as a mediator and connect with religious domains across the world. Not surprising it finds its traces in every religion and in every part of the country. Trees that are several times greater than humans were respected and worshipped in ancient civilisations across the world (Dafni, 2006). This meaningful social practice is considered to be the art of valuing trees (Duque, 2022). In the book "The Sacred Tree, or The Tree in Religion and Myth," the author traces tree worship in ancient civilizations, from Egypt, Africa, and India to Greek and Roman. The author also discusses God and the tree, the tree as an Oracle, the tree as a spirit being, paradise and trees, and the tree's role in celebration (Philpot, 2004).

The present study focuses on a specific tree species, Palmyra palm scientifically known as *Borassus flabellifer* belonging to the Arecaceae (Palmae) family. *Borassus* palms are delicious and have separate flowing patterns (Davis & Johnson, 1987). The multipurpose tree with extensive utility found across Tamil Nadu is also recorded as *thala maram* (sacred tree) in nine major Shiva temples and association with other folklore or tutelary deities. They are Thiruppanandal, Tiruppurawar Panangatur, Tiruppanayur, Thirumalabadi, Thiruvothur, Thiruvannarparthan Panangsattoor, Thiruvallampuram, Tiruppalaithura, and Thirukanapuram (Aanmeegam report, 2020). In Tamil Nadu, the power of the king or certain privileged groups played a role in constructing and reconstructing huge temple structures and installing new deities by clearing forest cover (Paramasivan, 2022). The single tree left to survive or be replaced in the temple complex is called "Thala Maram". Thala maram, derived from the Tamil word 'thala', refers to location, and 'Maram' refers to a tree that is prominent in that location (Prabhakaran & Lakshmi, 2017). This ecological representative of the location loses its habitat and urges to be extinct, endangered, threatened, and vulnerable (Kumar & Aruna, 2018) as it became an integral part of temple architecture. In this article we aim to address diverse information from secondary sources, different religious

groups for protection and conservation of the grove. The significance of this study helps in developing the destination with its authenticity. the study also finds to trace the similarity between the religious groups of Tamil Nadu in using of Palmyra palm for their rituals and practices.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To identify the significance of the Palmyra palm in the religious shrines of Tamil Nadu.
2. To explore the perspective of different religious group on utilising Palmyra palm in their religious practises.

METHODOLOGY

For the study, we conducted field observation in 23 semi structured interviews. The participants were mainly experts and residents residing near to the shrines. Information was collected from scholarly articles and reputed books.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Many authors and critics, through their notions, have shown respect and gratitude to strengthen the disappearing heritage relating to sacred trees or groves. Despite of several academics contribution on tree worships. Definition to sacred trees is still lacking. Whereas Dafni (2006) denotes sacred groves as stands of trees in the religious realm and sacred trees as individual trees that are largely protected from deliberate wreckage. Further distinguish "tree of god" as incarnation or veneration of deity and "tree of spirits" with presence of demon, jinn or spirit. Middle East and African countries believe in the tree of spirits, and prohibit rituals and religious ceremonies. Exclusive supernatural attribute of tree are "cosmic tree", "sky tree", "inverted tree", "tree of life", "celestial trees", "tree of wisdom", and "tree of knowledge".

The sacred trees along with the sacred grove or a tank are an ecological tradition to conserve and preserve endemic species and endangered environments. These trees with medicinal plants are linked with many mythological stories. Their expressions have been spotted in music, literature, folklore tales, poems, proverbs, films, and jokes (Greenberg, 2015). Over time, the practices shaped ecosystems, community well-being, and economic growth. "The tree is perceived beyond its capture on canvas and instead is perceived aesthetically as an object to be adorned and subsequently adored." The venerated tree upholds a sense of reverence and admiration. Many communities carry out ritual engagement to sustain the sacredness and beauty of the destination. In India trees are worshipped as animistic tribal beliefs. Some Folklore or Hindustva religious groups decorate or venerate the tree according to their choice and availability. The trees that are largely present and utilised are considered sacred, believing they can help overcome hardship (Flower-Smith, 2009).

Like other parts of the world, the primitive Tamil community was deeply entrenched in trees and connected with sexuality, fertility, conception, birth, initiation, death, and rebirth. Even today, these connections are evidently seen through worshipping Thai deivam (mother goddess), Tutelary god, folklore deities, and hero stones (paramasivam, 2022). The sacred worship of trees and the ritual practices aligned with traditional knowledge foster conservation of nature and cultural importance (Flower-Smith, 2009). The book ecological traditions of Tamil Nadu records 60 thalamaram in 256 temples. Exclusively 12 trees were worshipped for marriage and fertility, 8 for healing chronic disease and 7 for

giving birth to male child. Tamil poetry describes five geographical landscapes termed as ainthinai. Kurinji, the mountainous regions; Mullai, the forests; Marudham, the croplands; Neidhal, the seashore; Palai, the desert. The village or areas or streets located in these respective thinai were named, adding it as a suffix. Similarly, the predominant natural resources of the region, such as lakes, rivers, trees, and fruit, were also used to label the location. examples: (panangad), Panai (palmyra palm tree), Kaadu (forest). Likewise, the shrines located on the roadside are also associated with these natural elements and named after them (Amirthalingam, 2016).

Sivasubramaniam (2016) documented historical stories of 11 temples named after palmyra palm that holds palmyra palm as thalamaram. These temples found across Tamil Nadu. Some of them are referred as "paadalpe-trasthalam" meaning place where Thevaram trio sang when the temple were dense with Palmyra palm trees. The Palmyra palm tree gained the name Panjam Pokki, Karpaga tharu, for providing immense benefit to the people (Krishnaveni et al., 2020). The tree has the reputation of being the national tree of Cambodia and the state tree of Tamil Nadu (Shrikumar, 2018). The tree has an enchanting history, an everlasting heritage, perpetual economic benefit, and exclusive nutritional value. In the Sangam era, trees and their communities were highly appreciated and led privileged lives. Historical evidence of streets, resettlement areas, kingdoms, hillocks, and townships was named after the tree (Nagarajan, 2015). Chera, one of the three great rulers of Tamil Nadu, decorates themselves with Palmyra palm flowers during celebrations. The major commander of Mahabharata, the Bheeshmacharya flag, and the mediaeval Chozha kingdom's ruler, the Pazhuvettarayar flag, depict Palmyra palm.

A classical folklore practice named "madal erudhal" is recorded in many Tamil literatures. The practice explains a meeting between hero and heroine, leading to a natural attraction. When heroine doesn't accept his love, he performs a romantic ritual near the temple premises called "madal erudhal." Here, madal refers to palmyra petiole. He makes horses using this. He drew her image on a cloth. He applies thiruneer (sacred ash) to his entire body. He wears garland made from Ourei lanata, a crown flower, and some bone. Precautionarily, she accepts him to avoid unnecessary gossip and questions from society (Ramesh, 2023).

In Tanjore the Palmyra tree with bifurcated branches is considered sacred and has a cross, crescent and thirusulam (three pointed emblem); reflecting the symbols of Christianity, Muslim and Hindu. In Melakkal Madurai Palmyra palm was found bearing eighteen branches. The community believed the tree is associated with munisamy, a folklore god. When T.A Davis, prominent researcher of the field wanted to click a photo, he was warned by the community not to do so considering the deity will be annoyed. Despite that took the photo without any consequences (Davis & Johnson, 1987).

From these existing literatures we can conclude that Palmyra palm played an important role in constructing Tamil Nadu history and deeply immersed with layman are now disappearing due to multiple factors.

DISCUSSION

"Each benefit to those of actions' fruit who rightly deem, though small as millet-seed, as Palmyra palm-tree vast will seem" - Thirukkural (104).

Through these verses, it is evident that the benefit

of Palmyra palm is considered extraordinary and cannot be compared with another. This made people in the state worship the tree, even if it was found on the roadside. They offer some flowers and turmeric while worshipping. Beyond considering it a folklore practice, we should overlook it as an autochthonous practice. Palmyra's binding with Banyan or Peepal explains their strong friendship or relationship. Both the trees produce milk. Therefore, the community ties it to rope and worship. Palmyra palm, entwined with a parasite tree, kills itself to produce nutritional support for these trees. Mythological, this incident is compared with Sathyavan Savithri. When Emadharmā is about to take away the life of Sathyavan, Savvithi protects him with love and prayers (Informant: Godson Samuel & Local Community, Thiruvothur).

"In our village, when women desire to marry, they worship the palmyra palm tree and perform rituals by tying a yellow rope along with turmeric or a cradle to the tree in the temple premises. The fertility ritual is performed by gifting little wooden cots with dolls covered with ribbons and string and consuming Palmyra palm fruit that is believed to be part of the fertility ritual" (Informant: local community, Thirukandrapoor). Palmyra palm is worshipped in association with Sudalai, Kalavasal Muneeshwaran, Muniyandi, and a few Amman (goddesses). People in Tamil Nadu believe that God resides in the tree. Some exclusively believe the tree as Goddess Kali and the neera from the tree as kali milk (Informant: Godson Samuel). Madurai has a village with no doors; the resident proclaims they don't need one, believing that god Muneeshwaran stays in the palmyra tree to protect them (Informant: Papa Madurai).

We are natives of Puravar, Panangadu. Even though the temple belongs to us. We worship the god as Kula Dheivam (community god). We were taken away from stewardship and treated poorly by other dominating communities. We, as a majority, converted to Christianity. Beyond our choice, this conversion helped us to retain self-respect. Christianity also allowed us to follow certain of our rituals, but we were not allowed to step inside by the temple management to offer our products, such as palmyra neera and Palmyra jaggery, to God. This situation pertains to other similar destinations in Tamil Nadu. (Informant: Megala Palmyra climber)

Usage of Palmyra in Temple premises or during festivals

The book 'Nedu Nelvaadai' narrates the practice of people taking sticks and setting fire during the rainy season. All over the world, there are many ritual practices followed to stop the pouring rain. The stick with a fire or broomstick is kept facing the sky to stop the rain. In some places, ashes are thrown to stop the rain, as mentioned in Tamil Nadu. Similarly, a ceremony for burning Sokka Panai is conducted in Shiva temples in Tamil Nadu. A cut Palmyra palm tree is dug to about 6 feet and above. Along with it, other stems were dug, and the Palmyra leaves are arranged in a circular way, like a hut with the gateway. The priest is then called to offer prayer and light the hut. The Palmyra palm catches fire and reaches the top of the tree. The ashes after burning are left for cooling. These ashes were later sprinkled on the cultivated land, believing that the crop would grow healthier. The Shiva devotees believe that Shiva has fired the three directional belongings of kings Vidiyun, Maligaatshan, and Kamalashan, who had troubled Vishnu, Brahma, and Indhiran (Sivasubramaniyam, 2016).

Karthigai Deepam, a festival of light, is celebrated

during the full moon day of Karthika month, called Karthika Pournami. A row of Agal Vilakku clay lamps lit up every house. Pana Kozhukattai is a traditional Tamil cuisine rich in nutrients, containing millets and palmyra jaggery wrapped in palmyra palm leaves and stemmed (informant: local community, Nanguneri). On the same day, Maavuli, otherwise called Kaarthi or Soonthu, is an eco-friendly cracker that is lit and spinned. The cracker is absent, creating noise and air pollution. Adults involving children used to collect a portion of male palmyra palm that fell on the ground, crush it, and make it into ashes. These ashes, along with some salt crystals, are placed in a Y- or U-shaped wooden stick or rod. On one end, it is tied using rope, and on the other end, it is spinned. The entire community enjoys spinning the eco-friendly cracker that whistles melodiously. The single cracker can be used about three times. This festival falls in the rainy season. The science behind this spinning karki is to protect the community from mosquitoes (Informant: Local Communities of Panangad).

Chitra Purnima fasting is celebrated between April 15 and May 15 in memory of Chitrāgupta's birthday. Chitra Gupta is believed to be associated with Yemen (the god of death art). Madurai Meenakshi Amman Temple and Thiruvannamalai Shiva Temple or At home, the devotees make pongal by adding palmyra jaggery, offer Navadhaniyam (nine varieties of grains) in a winnowing basket made from Palmyra palm, and a Palmyra palm fan is also kept for offering. This culture also replicates in Sri Lanka. A Bathra Kali temple in Jaffna, Sri Lanka, offers kanji, a Tamil cuisine in Palmyra leaves, to the devotees to end the fasting. In this temple, Palmyra palm boxes are used to keep oil lamps and flowers, and Palmyra palm wood is used as a peedam for god (Informant: Varma, Temple Priest: Jaffna).

Tanjore Aadi perukku rituals include kaadolai karugamani, which has palmyra leaves as an important component (Informant: Rev. Godson Samuel, Mumbai).

In Thiruchendur, an ice apple otherwise known as ice apple is mixed with milk and served during the festival panguni uthiram. On 22nd October, 2023 Shiva devotees of kalyana pasubatheeshwar temple of karur district participated in *Eripantha thiruvizha* and performed a *pookudal ritual* (taking flower to shiva in Palmyra palm box) (Informant: Medha Dakshi namoorthy, Pondicherry).

Inscriptions dating back to 1149 CE state that during the period of Raja Raja II. Palmyra, jaggery, banana, milk, and rice were offered to God in the form of appam, aval, adhirasam, and Pongal. A 1219 CE inscription during the period of Veeraasendhiran XII inai Udumal Coimbatore states that Kaikolaar offered aval made of palmyra, jaggery, coconut, pepper, and jeera to god. During the colonial period, the British found it difficult to produce large quantities of palmyra palm jaggery. As an alternative, they produced refined sugar, which became the primary reason for the decline of palmyra jaggery. A 1492 CE inscription located in the district museum of Kanyakumari states that Venaatu King ordered that thirumadaipalli food should not include palmyra jaggery, addressing it as a product made by Shiva devotees. Vaishnava temples started offering Channa Dal Sundal. The food was introduced by Europeans to feed horses (Sivasubramaniyam, 2016).

The prominent literature of the Sangam period narrates the importance and joy of consuming toddy. The literature describes that from king to layman, male to female, everyone enjoyed drinking toddy. Toddy was neither

considered taboo nor alcohol, but rather considered thelixir of life or the lixir of immortality (Amurtham). In Purananooru, an ancient literature after the death of Adhyamaan, Avaiyar, with her bittersweet tone, explicates her memories of consuming adhyamaan. Literature such as Agananooru versus (216), Patinapalai versus (105–108), and Paripaadal records female drinking toddy. Toddy was part of the Tamil cuisine; women who don't consume toddy directly ensure they get its benefit by adding it to their food. In those days, the community practised offering toddy to the guests. People living in Tamil Nadu face several diseases due to the heat generated in the body. Consuming toddy relieves heat from the body and prevents the community from staying away from diseases (Informant: Deepan).

These texts were substantiated with archaeological evidence found in many parts of Tamil Nadu. In Arikamedu, Hero stones, or memorial stones, were installed to commemorate the memory of a warrior who died during the war. Common people offer flower, aarathi and sacrifice domestic animals to these stones. 53 stones dating back to the Pallava period exhibit a pot-like structure near the legs of the stones. This might indicate a toddy pot. As days passed, the heroes in the hero stone were considered gods. The hero stone is transformed into a statue (a folklore deity), and the ritual of offering toddy continues (Sengootuvan, 2016). Toddy was eliminated from rituals, considering it untouchable, after the bhakti movement (informant: local community, Narasinganur), a male from Lambadi, a tribal community residing in Tiruvannamalai district of Tamil Nadu, visited the woman's home of their desire along with their relatives and friends to propose to her for marriage. The men offer a pot full of toddy to her father. If he accepts the toddy, it is believed that he agreed to the proposal (informant: Subhashini, Thfi). Palmyra jaggery is prepared from unfermented toddy, and that can be a reason for banning it on the Vishnu Temple premises. Instead, wrong information spreads to question the hygiene standards during the preparation of the palmyra jaggery. Brahmins and other upper-middle-class people do not include palmyra palm jaggery in their ritual practices. The common layman and underprivileged people who believe in folklore or tutelary deities offer Palmyra jaggery, Palmyra fruit and sprouts, and Neera to the gods (Sivasubramaniam, 2016). In present days, it is heartbreaking to witness the replacement of toddy with other alcoholic beverages while offering to the hero stones or folklore deities (Informant: Pandiyan Palmyra climber).

Palmyra in Minority religions of Tamil Nadu

Islam

"A lofty tree that a believer resembles and its beautiful structure" - Quran 50.10

In Quran, a lofty tree represents a palm tree. Here, a palm tree resembles a believer in Islam. i.e., a believer should be deeply rooted in the holistic belief of Islam. And just like palm trees, believers should survive in any situation to yield fruit.

Islam originated in the desert.. Oasis and date palms were considered a "life of hope" to the people in that desert. When Arabs reached Tamil Nadu, they considered palmyra palm to be close to date palm. This made them more connected with the palmyra palm. The Islam community in Tamil Nadu used mats and caps made from palmyra palm leaves during prayers. Palmyra palm mats and sticks were also used during the funeral ceremony to bury dead

people. (Informant: Salai Basheer, Kayalpatinam).

We, residents of Kayalpattinam, performed a ritual called "oddukathu pudhan" on the last Wednesday of suffering. Believing that Allah will bless and protect us from misfortune. On this day, we take palmyra leaves and heat the rice till it gets black in colour. Grind the rice. We write important recitations of the Quran on palmyra leaves using this rice ash paste. We kept it for a day. On the next day, we take this writing to a nearby water body. Add some water to it and apply it to our heads. By doing this, we believe that Allah prevents us from negativity. In our region, puttu, paavu, ponavam, and vattalapam are our vernacular dishes made using Palmyra palm jaggery (Informant: Abati Jariya).

We use palmyra palm leaves or palmyra leaf boxes to offer food to needy people. We serve nambu kanji in Palmyra leaf. In some Dargah, biriyani is packed using palmyra palm leaves, and Hindus do serve temple prasadam in a similar packing method. In recent years, this eco-friendly packaging has been widely used by many food outlets. In our town, during the marriage ceremony, four people as a group sit together on a palmyra mat to relish the marriage food (Informant: Architect Shahina, Keelakai).

Christianity

"The righteous will flourish like a palm tree, they will grow like a cedar of Lebanon; planted in the house of the Lord, they will flourish in the courts of our God" - Psalm 92:12–15.

These verses when translated to Tamil it denotes Palmyra palm. Because When Christianity spread in Tamil Nadu, especially southern Tamil Nadu. It observes a huge population of Palmyra palm associated with underprivileged communities. Even today the presence of Palmyra palm is predominantly found in many of their celebrations. During Christmas, the Christmas tree and the hut beside the tree is decorated using Palmyra palm leaves (Informant: Anto Briton, Thiruchendur). We consistently curate wealth from natural waste and inspire the world to be responsible. This year 2023 the unique 16 feet Palmyra Christmas tree is made from 270 Palmyra stalks and 175 Palmyra leaves in ITC hotel Mahabalipuram (Informant: Art teacher Umapathy, padmabushan Awardee).

During Palm Sunday, the holy cross is made from Palmyra palm. Hanging decorations (Thoranam) are made using Palmyra palm (Informant: Antony, Anthoniyarpuram Thoothukudi) In Kanyakumari during Good Friday, Kanji with chammanthi is served in Palmyra leaf to be people visiting the CSI church. Many churches utilised Palmyra palm as pillars and rafters (Informant, Ganesh, Kanyakumari).

Jainism and Buddhism

Jains and saints do use Palmyra umbrellas and fans. Queen Victoria utilized a talipot palm fan. Even in Sri Lanka, the Buddhist and Christian communities use Palmyra fans for religious purposes. Other religions used animal skin, clay tablets, and Palmyra palm leaves for writing religious texts. Buddhism exclusively used Palmyra leaves for writing their religious texts as they preached "non-killing (Informant: Godson Samuel).

It is a blessing to the state of Tamil Nadu to observe that the Palmyra tree binds diverse religious groups. These cultures and ritual practices support economic benefit for the community.

CONCLUSION

Trees are poems that the earth writes upon the sky

Kahlil Gibran. This paper presents the impressions on Palmyra palm, everlasting history, and enchanting stories that are binded with the community. remarkably, the perspective of different religions dignified the tree. Palmyra palm is considered to be a tree of life, knowledge and legacy. This tree supports the different religious group economically and environmentally. The great challenge in the present century is to conserve the existing green cover and the treasured heritage. Heritage is an amalgamation of biophysical features, artefacts and intangible credentials. Today most of the development focuses on building massive infrastructure. In this account, the voice of the tree, the voice of the underprivileged community, and the voice of the destination are forever hidden. For that reason, this study proceeded to revive and rejuvenate the existing gems. In the case of Palmyra palm different religious communities considered the tree as sacred. But human disturbance, change in social setup, attitude of the people, modern education system, the attrition of traditional beliefs are considered major root causes of destruction. This led several indigenous communities and the depended species to disappear. Folklore deities, tutelary gods, and tree veneration carries a unique history that is believed in and respected by the community. Communities once associated with the temple were removed from its stewardship and also trespassed upon to enter. These temples exclusively receive more visitors during fairs and festivals that are promoted by the temple management. Development that facilitates mass tourism is considered as a form of violence to the ecosystem. The trash and plastic trash started to pile up, resulting in a garbage catastrophe. Priests and devotees are found blind to scientific and traditional knowledge. Modernization, migration, and shifting livelihood practices, above all caste systems and discrimination, are considered major drawbacks in these regions to conserve the destination. Through the interview and observation, it is evident that these rituals, practices, and mythological stories of any religion in Tamil Nadu can pave the way to sustain the tree and its community. Mutualism between the tree and humans protects trees and their ecosystems. The human-tree relationship can eliminate anthropogenic views and include ethical opinions for conservation (Bhutia, 2021). Therefore, Community driven activities can enhance economic empowerment, social status, promote the authenticity of the destination and above all conserve the relationship of different religious groups associated with the tree.

RECOMMENDATIONS

On the basis of the study, the following activities and initiatives are proposed to enhance sustainability the authenticity of the palmyra shrines.

1. Trees and tales: curating trees tales enables individuals to empathise, clarify, reflect, and adapt. This can involve photography, painting, discussions on building its ecosystem, and many more.
2. Reintroducing palmyra-based products on temple premises as souvenirs. This initiative aims to provide economic activities to traditional handicraft artisans.
2. The use of more palmyra palm-based products in temple activity generates employment opportunities for the women of that village.
3. Light and Sound show: Recording the stories of palmyra palm as lost heritage to living heritage in shrines. Historians and researchers can delve into the stories. And telecasting the film to the public. This initiative can sustain the history

and can also generate revenue to the temple management.

4. Recording the relationship stories of local communities with the temple or the tree concomitantly trains the community on tour-guiding and escorting skills.
5. Educating the community is most important; regular skill development programmes and regular interaction with other stakeholders can enhance confidence and leadership skills among the community.
6. Integrating responsible practices and involving the community in all activities will help the community retain its privilege status.
7. Theme-based circuit trails: muniyandi trail, Ayyanar trail, shiva trail, kali trail, and other forms of heritage trails—these trails can reveal the hidden history of the destination. Along with the trail, tourists can visit the Palmyra craftsmen village, experiencing their traditional food.

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