Thiruvalluvar

Why in News?

Recently, ancient saint Thiruvalluvar has been in the news because of a political issue in Tamil Nadu.

Key Points

- Thiruvalluvar, also called Valluvar, was a Tamil poet-saint.
- The period when he lived is debated, as is his religious identity.
  - He is believed to have lived between 3rd-4th century or 8th-9th century.
  - He is thought to be linked to Jainism. However, Hindus have also claimed that Thiruvalluvar belonged to Hinduism.
- Dravidian groups also count him as a saint, as he dismissed the caste system.
- He had contributed the Tirukkural or ‘Kural’ to the Sangam literature.
- **Tirukkural is comprised of 133 sections of 10 couplets each is divided into three books: Aram (virtue), Porul (government and society), and Kamam (love).**
- The Tirukkural has been compared to the great books of the world’s major religions.

Sangam Literature

- The word ‘Sangam’ is the Tamil form of the Sanskrit word **Sangha** which means a group of persons or an association.
- The Tamil Sangam was an academy of poets who flourished in three different periods and in different places under the patronage of the Pandyan kings.
The Sangam literature which was largely consolidated from the third Sangam, throws information on conditions of life of people around the beginning of the Christian era.

- It deals with the secular matter relating to the public and social activities like government, war charity, trade, worship, agriculture, etc.
- Sangam literature consists of the earliest Tamil works (such as the Tolkappiyam), the ten poems (Pattupattu), the eight anthologies (Ettutogai) and the eighteen minor works (Padinenkilkanakku) and the three epics.

Source: IE