



## SIVA TEMPLES IN KUMBAKONAM TALUK OF TANJORE DISTRICT

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### ABSTRACT:

*Kudanthai in the course of time named as kumbakonam. In the history of devotional literature this Kudanthai has been named as kudamookku. Kumbam is a pot and Konam is nose. In the North Kumbamela festival is sacred and in the south Mahamagam is great festival. Mahamaga festival is coming once in every 12 years on Maham star in Masi Month. This is a grand festival in Kumbakonam and lakhs and lakhs of people are taking bathe in this sacred tank. Ganges in this tank with all the other spiritual rivers and no tank can be parallel to this sacred tank. Sun Lord should take place in Kumba Rasi. Jupiter Lord should stay in Simha. Maham star should come on a full moon day when all this is identified in the Panchanga is the day of Mahamagam festival. This day is named Mahamagam day and the auspicious day which has wide publication for each and every one to participate to sacred dip. Kumbamela.*

**KEY WORDS:** - Kudanthai, Lord Nageswarar, Someswarar, Mahamagam, Kanniyar Theertham, Mangala Nayaki alongwith Parivara Devadhas.

### INTRODUCTION

During this festival day between 10.30 to 12.00 morn all the deities of this temple city will be present in this sacred tank Mandapams and to the tank and will bestow. The Aadhikumbeswarar with Mangala Nayaki alongwith Parivara Devadhas in the Northern side of the tank in Brahma Theertha Katam to give all to the devotees dipping in the tank on the day auspicious. Lord Nageswarar, Someswarar and other deities will be there in bathing Mandapams and give all the good to devotees. During this time Lord Indhiran and Brahma and Theva are coming to bestow the devotees all their benefits. Those who takes dipping in that on the festival Mahamagam day has been said to have been Dharsan of all the Devas. They will get richness. Good health and wealth and will be freed from all worries. Their sins will vanish once for all. When a person with devotion takes dipping in the center of the tank very particular in the Kanniyar Theertham will get great richness and it is equal to thousand times ganges bath in one dip in this tank. In the Maha Maha Periyavar Kamakodi peedathipathi Chandrasehara Saraswathi used to take bath in this holy tank on each and every Magamaha festival day.

### METHODOLOGY:

This city is attracting and lakhs of people for Dharsan of the temples in and around the Kumbakonam. Those who are in artistic fame are visiting the temples and have dharshan for glory and fame. The city is famous for silk sarees and for bronze vassals in various components next to Conjeevaram. There are number of temples famous with historical festivity. The temples are situated in the Bank of River Cauvery. This is highly spiritual and beautiful to have Dharshan and blessings of the deities.<sup>1</sup> Every where art is visible, Great people were born in this city. The sacred Azhwars, Nayanmar visited the sacred

temples and have songs on the deities genius came from the city. Educational richness is in this city. The college in the city of Kumbakonam were said to be equal to the Cambridge in those days for contents and talents.<sup>2</sup> However both Saivism and Vaishnavism are dominant here but Saivism is attained its zenith.

### **Siva Temples in Kumbakonam** **Aadhi Kumbeswarar temple.**

In the sacred Thevaram name of Kudamookku is seen this is now Aadhi Kumbeswarar is in this Kumbakonam. Sacred Appar Swamigal praised the Lord and wrote in Thevaram about the mighty force of Lord. He says that any one chanting name of the Lord kudamookku repeated will come out from their troubles and can reach the lotus feet of Lord. The famous temple in Kumbakonam is Aadhikumbeswarar temple. In this place the sacred Amutha Kumbam has its resting for sacred rise. Because of this, this place is named as Kumbasem and in due course Kumbakonam and then Kudanthai.

The temple situated in the midst of the populated area of residence and business attracts large gathering of devotees every day. The structure of building is monumental and carries the glory of historical period. The temple is beautiful in structure and of art. The rajagopuram is fantastic and is rich in structure and height. There are 3 prakaram in and around the temple of course three Gopuram for each prakaram.

One Govinda Theetchatar Chief warrior of king Auchuthappa Naickar has undertaken more renovation works of the temple to a great extent in devotion and dedication. The front Gopuram entrance is 128, height. This is very beautiful to look before entering to the temple. In the northern east of the temple a Pushkarani is seen and this is Mangala Theertham. In the northern west Lord Sadayappan temple is situated.<sup>6</sup>

The beauty of the Kumbeswarar temple can be enjoyed only when one goes through it personally with devotion and cannot be explained in words. The Lord Sivalingam is made out of sand and Amutham when Pralayam came, and so the deity will not have any Abhishega. On the important dates Punugu sattam is aalanangaram to be seen. In the east side Amman temple is located. She is famous deity Mangalambigai.

In the front Mandapa Lord Siva is with Sivagami. This is very beautiful and heart inspiring in the right side, temple of Somaskandar is located. 63 Nayanmars are in the west facing in the front Mandapam. One can pray all these Nayanmars with devotion for all best.

Lord Muruga is with 6 hands, and also with 6 faces. This presence cannot be seen anywhere. It is such a beautiful one and attractive. To narrate the historical feature of Lord Siva in the Pralaya days, about sacred Kumba and Amutham in this place spread over sacred. Lord is in a hunter Ruba for worship. One should not miss to pray this Lord for sins vanished.<sup>7</sup> The above said Lord can be seen near the Mangalambigai temple. Dhakshinamoorthy is here with Yoga Roobam. This will attract ever one witnessing it. The Pitchadanar is also beautiful to pray. In the front side of the temple there is a temple for Kumaraperumal. The deity in the temple is attractive with gracefull look.

### **Thirukudanthai Koranam (Sri Somanatheswara temple)**

This temple is situated in the vicinity of Potramarai tank at Kumbakonam. This Somanathar temple is said to be the temple of Kudanthai koranam. The Lord of this temple is Sikkesar. This deity is graceful to drive away all the sick of devotees. Irrespective of its dangerous growth and when one came to have Dharsan of this Lord, is protected from all sickness. Their bad time also changed to good time. Their sufferings are wiped out. This deity is powerful. In this place the Kumba pot has been in its last shape during pralayam. The Lord in hunter roobam is suyambu lingam in this place. This Lord is Sikkesar the goddess of this temple is Thenar Mozhiyammai. She is also named Somasundari. Devi has taken place with the Lord when Nava Kannies came here to take holy both in the tank. The gopuram is small and the temple is facing the east.

Lord Somaskanthar is the Lord beautiful in form and dancing in the egg shape Thiruvachi. The Goddess Devi is witnessing the dancing with pleasure and in devotion to lord.<sup>8</sup> Lord Pragaspathi cursed

moon soman and this Lord relieved him from the curse vimochanam and hence the Lord is named Somesar. At one stage Lord Thirumal came here for a long stay of an year and prayed this Lord Somasar. He has been bestowed with power and strength to destroy the might to Asuras from this Lord. Therefore the Lord, since bestowed grace to Thirumal for destroying the Asuras is named in the name of Malesar also. One can see Malesar and also the Mangalambigai while entering into the temple. Somesar is in full vigour and in powerfull structure in the temple. The Narmada grace is full of power in this temple. There are beautiful structures of 8 famous devotees in the wall of the temple. Thirugnana Sambandar has composed song on this Lord in Thevaram about this Kudanthai Koranesar in splendid way.<sup>9</sup>

### **Kasi Viswanatha temple**

This Kasi Viswanatha temple is situated at northern bank of the tank. This Kasiviswanatha is in RuthraAmsam viz, Ruthra force.<sup>10</sup> Lord Rama wants to add force of his might to destroy Ravana with additional force of ruthra power which has to be granted by Lord Siva is powerful to destroy the enemies. He approached Sage Agasthiyar for guidance to have it granted by Lord Siva.<sup>11</sup> The sage Agasthiyar acceded to the request of Sri Rama and directed him to go to Kumbakonam to stay for some time to pray Kasiviswanatha to get the powerful Ruthra power. As has been told by Agasthiar Lord Rama came to Kumbakonam for dharshan of Kasiviswanatha and daily he took prayers in the temple of Kasiviswanatha regularly. After some days, Lord pleased on the devoted dedication of Sri Rama bestowed him with the Ruthra power to Sri Rama so as to destroy mighty Ravana a Siva Baktha. For this reason the place is named Koranam and in due course Thirukundanthai.

The temple is near and clean after repair works has been made. The Lord is Sivalingam Goddess Devi is facing west. The temple Sannathi of Nava Kanniyar is also facing south. Laksh and Laksh of women devotees are coming to take lake in this Mahamagam tank once in every 12 years, as Navakanniyar took dip in this tank for coming out of their sins.

### **Kudanthai Kizh Kottam- Arulmigu Nageswaran temple.**

This Kudanthai Kizh Kottam is came out of the vilva tree leaves fell down from the Kumba of Pralaya Kala with the grace of Lord Siva in hunger rooba. This Siva lingam is in the beautiful form. Thevaram has beautiful songs on this deity of Kizh kottam. In the Thevaram song the 9 Mathas bath in the temple, tank has been explained, and praised the mercy of Lord Siva for them to wipe out their sins. The Kudanthai Kottam name is not now days in usage as Nagewara Koil now every one knows the temple as nageswara temple.<sup>12</sup>

The weight of the globe on the shoulder of Aadhiseshan has given him much pain and difficulty. He feels weak to hold it continuously. He went to Himalayas to pray Lord Siva to give him more strength to bear the weight of the land easier. Lord Siva understanding his difficulty decided to help him. He directed Aadhiseshan to visit Kumbakonam and guided him to pray Nageswaran for the purpose. He told him sufficient mighty power will be granted by the Lord in due course of prayer. Aadhiseshan as guided by Lord in due course of prayer. Aadhiseshan as guided by Lord Siva went to Kumbakonam. Prayed Nageswaran and bestowed with the power on his kindness and mercy. Aadhiseshan also found a Theertham.

The second Prakaram is with Natarajar Mandapa is named as Perambalam. This mandapam has been founded in the shape of a Chariot. There are two horse and four elephants to draw the chariot like Mandapam. In the centre of the Perambala Mandapa Lord Nataraja is in dancing phose in festive look. Devi is having two flower in her hands. She is in standing posture. Thirumal Naradha and Thumburuda are in the Mandapa.

In the inner side Prakara there is a temple for Mariyamman. In the Southward Pralaya kala moorthi can be seen for worship. Upward there is Murugan Sannathi and in the North there is a temple for Durga great destroyer of all the evils. Lord Nageswara is in the Linga Rooba. Avudayar is in taller. The base of the lingam is beautiful took and pray. Lord Sun came here to pray for mercy and kindness of the Lord. In the month of Chithirai, April On 11, 12 and 13<sup>th</sup> of Tamil Day. Sun rays rolling on the deity to prove the fact of

his worship historical and ancient. The Sun rays entering into the deity great is said to be the worshipping of Sun. There is also a temple for Sun in the North prakara and a beautiful Sannathi is there to worship him.

### **Arulmigu Gouthamesar temple**

Gouthamesar temple is situated in the South West of the Mahamaham temple tank. One can reach the temple by just moving in the direction of southward. This lingam came to the pilgrim when the sacred thread on the kumbam fell down in this place during he pralaya kala and that too when Lord Siva in hunter rooba, hit out the pot by his arrow from his bow. The deity here is Ubavedesar. Since the Lord came out from the uba Veetha thread in the pralaya kalam he is named as Ubavedesar. Once Gowtham Sage came here to this Sannithi and prayed for special powers. From that day onwards the name of the deity has become Gowthamesar. The Goddess in the temple with the Lord is Sounderesvari and she is called by as Soundarya Nayaki.

### **Arulmigu Abimugasar temple**

The famous temple in Kumbakonam is Abimugeswarar. The Lord appeared from the coconut fell down in the Pralaya Kala when the sacred Kumbam stayed destined to save the world after the pralayam. Narikelam is another name for coconut tree and the pilgrim is named as Narikeswaram. The goddess of the deity is Amuthavalli Thayar. This temple is situated in the vicinity of Mahamaga temple.<sup>13</sup> Lord is facing east direction. This posture is to give Dharshan to Nava Kanniyar –theva Mathas when they came to take bath to get out from the sins. The Lord thus in the direction so as to give Dharshan to nine theva mathas. So he is named as Abimugesar. A Brahmin named Suthapan was in Leprosy all over the body and the pain inexplicable. He came to the Sannithi of Abimugesar and praying him, he came out from the sickness and pain. Like wise a daughter of the king of macha thesam came here and recovered the speech from deaf and dumbness. This is in thirukudanthai Puranam. Navarathri festival of the year is festivity in the temple as well as Amsamagam festival vital to people.<sup>14</sup>

### **Arulmigu Karumbayira Vinayakar temple**

The Vinayakar temple is famous in the city and the devotees are getting all they wants while praying the Lord in this temple. This Karumbayiram Vinayakar temple is in the Northern- side of the Aadikumbesar temple. Once upon a time, a business carrying on the sugarcane load in his cart towards the destination of the Kumbakonam city. While in travelling darkness came close inviting the night to rule. He relieved the bullocks to rest and taken rest in the Vinayakar temple. Lord Vinayakar has changed himself as a young boy, wants to taste one such sugarcane stick. He appeared as a boy before the business man and requested him to give a sugarcane stick to taste. The business man is very stingy and will not spend even a single pie to any one. He bluntly refused to give one such stick and continued his rest in the temple premises.

When he woke up next day, shocked to see the cartload of sugarcane stick in the form of no essence and spread all over such as crushed. He is able to understand that the boy asked a single sugarcane stick is not a boy of ordinary soul but Lord Vigneswara the great. Immediately he went to the lord for his innocence is not given him sugarcane stick when asked for the same as a small boy posture. He also promised to give him 1000 sugarcane sticks to Lord, Vigneswarar accepted the promise and business man as promised has given the said quantity of sugarcane stick with devotion. From that day onwards the Lord Vigneswar has been named Karumbaiyram Vinayakar. This Vinayakar is powerful and is granting all requested once surrendered before his lotus feet.<sup>15</sup>

### **Arulmigu Kalika Parameswari Temple**

Kalika Parameswari temple is powerful in kindness and mercy to the devotees surrendering before her lotus feet. This temple is situated in the Kumbakonam west of the town bus stand in the juncture of East

and South Street. The deity is for Dharsan in high level Peedam and is having five snake hood Kavacham. Kamatchiamman Koil is in the front of the temple in the west side. When one enters through North gate temple Kalika Paramaeswari Sannithi is seen for worship.<sup>16</sup> She is controlling all the eight sides and she is having 8 hands. The posture of SriKaliga Parameswari is beautiful and powerful with grace and divinity great and one dharsan she is also called by devotees as Parameswari. Thursday and Friday are day of festivity and the deity will be in beautiful appearance with garlands and special pooja on the day will attract large gathering of people to have Dharsan.<sup>17</sup> There is also one Thirumana Mandapam behind the Sannithi in the Garpagruha behind the Ekambarasa Peedam. There is painting of Durgai, for worship to get rid of the sins.<sup>18</sup>

### Arulmigu Banapuriswarar Temple

The place of aiming the kumba by Lord Siva in Hunter Ruba is called as Banathurai and otherwise Banapuri. Now it is named Banathurai.<sup>19</sup> The Lord appeared in the temple as Sivalingamoorthi and also named as Banapureswarar. The Goddess Devi is Samakalambal. This temple is situated at eastern side, the temple Sannithi is facing east. So the temple is small beauty. The power and grace of the Lord is supreme for getting all the prayers fulfilled when prayed for. The lord with other deities in the temple are giving all the best to the people came for redress for their pains and difficulties.<sup>20</sup> Once upon a time great Vyasa baghavan, the sage of golden heritage of Bharath came here for praying the Lord to come has given him the remedy and sage blessed with the relief.<sup>21</sup>

This has been taken place in Kudanthai as per the direction of Kasi Viswanathan to the sage when requested for remedy for Ghosha.<sup>22</sup> Surasenen was king of Vanga Desam. His wife was affected with Leprosy and suffered very severe without relief. The prohibit of the king advised the king to have visit to Kudanthai – Kumbakonam Lord said above for relief and king with his wife came to this temple, conducted prayers continuously and blessed with relief.<sup>23</sup> She also blessed with a child that too a male child by the grace of Lord Banapureswarar.<sup>24</sup> The five Panchakrosa temples, means a distance of the voice heard from one place, there are five such temples in the vicinity of Kumbakonam as Panchakrosa temples.<sup>25</sup> Kumbakonam is the centre of art and culture, a place of both Saivism and Vainavam.<sup>26</sup> It is a museum of arts and culture.<sup>27</sup>

### CONCLUSION:

Kumbakonam has given birth to famous historical persons of great elite in the history of time. The world famous Mathematician Ramanujan born in this city. Roamed in the streets and bestowed richness by the deities of this city. The scholar, administrator of the past glory Sri.C.P. Ramaswami Iyer, Dhivan of Kerala in this sacred land the famous great lawyer of prestige and form Sri Alladi Krishnaswami Iyer of Madras born in this Kumbakonam City.U.V. Swaminathan Iyer the great scholar of Sangam age literature born in this sacred city. Narayanasami Iyer also the tamil scholar written explanation to Natrinai born in this famous city. The silver tongue Srinivasa Iyer born in this city. The famous Thirupuvanam for sarees is in Kumbakonam city.

The brass and other vessels are famous and Kumbakonam which are having good name for long life strength and utility. The betel nut leaves are tasty in Kumbakonam, the beautiful lamps are here and attracting large gathering of people from all over the nation. The city is Industrious business commercial centres with it and you can see gopura and Kumba from any place when one enter into the city sacred. The old and new mingles in this culture for history to speak. This city is famous in the days of Chola kingdom equal to Tanjore Uraiyur. The paddy fields are very famous in Kumbakonam of Tanjore District. Kumbakonam is not a name but a place of worship and great importance for spirit and soul.

### END NOTES:

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