



A TWO-DAY NATIONAL-LEVEL SYMPOSIUM AND EXHIBITION



ON

“THIRUKKURAL”

“THIRUKKURAL: UNIVERSAL WISDOM,
ETHICS AND CONTEMPORARY RELEVANCE”

(7th and 8th October 2026)

Organised by

Tamil Language Unit and Marathi Language Unit
Bhasha Bhavana, Visva-Bharati, Santiniketan

Sponsored by

Central Institute of Classical Tamil (CICT), Chennai

The Thirukkural, composed by the celebrated Tamil poet and ethical philosopher Thiruvalluvar, is one of the most significant works of classical Tamil literature. Consisting of 1,330 couplets (kurals) organised into 133 chapters, the work presents a comprehensive vision of ethical conduct, social responsibility, governance, human relationships and the pursuit of a meaningful life.

The universality and brevity of the Thirukkural have enabled it to transcend linguistic, cultural and geographical boundaries. Its emphasis on virtue (aram), material and social well-being (porul), and love (inbam) provides an enduring ethical framework that continues to be relevant to contemporary society.

As a work of classical Tamil literature, the Thirukkural also offers rich possibilities for interdisciplinary and comparative study. Its ideas can be examined in relation to Indian philosophical traditions, other Indian languages and literatures, modern social thought, ethics, political philosophy, education, translation studies and contemporary societal concerns.

The Tamil Language Unit and the Marathi Language Unit of Bhasha Bhavana, Visva-Bharati, propose to organise a Two-Day National-Level Symposium on the Thirukkural on 7th and 8th October 2026, with the financial assistance of the Central Institute of Classical Tamil (CICT), Chennai.

The proposed symposium seeks to bring together scholars, teachers, researchers, students and experts from different parts of India to deliberate upon the literary, linguistic, philosophical, ethical, social, cultural and contemporary dimensions of the Thirukkural. The joint participation of the Tamil and Marathi Language Units will further encourage dialogue between Indian languages and promote the understanding of Tamil classical literature in a wider multilingual and comparative context.



BACKGROUND AND RATIONALE

The *Thirukkural* occupies a unique position in Tamil literary and intellectual history. Its concise couplets encompass a wide range of subjects, including personal morality, family life, social conduct, kingship, governance, justice, friendship, education, agriculture, economic life, diplomacy, warfare, love and human relationships.

The work is particularly important in the context of the study and dissemination of classical Tamil literature. The recognition of Tamil as a Classical Language provides an important framework for promoting scholarly engagement with foundational works such as the *Thirukkural*.

At the same time, the *Thirukkural* is not confined to a particular historical or geographical context. Its ethical and humanistic concerns have universal resonance. Concepts such as truthfulness, compassion, self-control, justice, education, good governance and social responsibility remain important in the contemporary world.

A national-level symposium at Visva-Bharati will therefore provide an important academic platform for:

- Promoting scholarly research on the *Thirukkural*.
- Facilitating interaction among scholars working in different Indian languages.
- Encouraging comparative and interdisciplinary approaches.
- Examining translations and interpretations of the *Thirukkural*.
- Introducing the text and its ideas to younger researchers and students.
- Exploring its relevance to contemporary social, ethical and educational issues.
- Strengthening academic engagement with Classical Tamil literature.

The participation of the Marathi Language Unit is especially significant in creating an Indian-language dialogue around the *Thirukkural*, enabling scholars to examine its reception, translation and interpretation beyond Tamil.

AIM OF THE SYMPOSIUM

The primary aim of the symposium is to promote comprehensive academic study, dissemination and contemporary interpretation of the *Thirukkural* by bringing together scholars and researchers from Tamil, Marathi and other Indian languages and disciplines.

OBJECTIVES

The specific objectives of the symposium are:

1. To promote advanced academic research on the *Thirukkural* and its various dimensions.
2. To highlight the significance of the *Thirukkural* as a major work of Classical Tamil literature.
3. To examine the literary, linguistic, philosophical and ethical dimensions of the text.
4. To explore the concepts of Aram, Porul and Inbam and their relevance to human life.
5. To study the *Thirukkural* from interdisciplinary perspectives, including philosophy, history, sociology, political thought, education and cultural studies.
6. To encourage comparative studies between the *Thirukkural* and literary or philosophical works of other Indian languages and traditions.
7. To examine the history and significance of translations of the *Thirukkural* into Indian and international languages.

OBJECTIVES (CONTINUED)

8. To study the reception and interpretation of the Thirukkural in different linguistic and cultural contexts.
9. To explore the relevance of Thiruvalluvar's ideas to contemporary social, political, educational and ethical challenges.
10. To encourage young researchers and students to undertake research on the Thirukkural.
11. To facilitate interaction and academic networking among scholars working in Tamil and other Indian languages.
12. To strengthen multilingual and comparative approaches to the study of Indian classical literature.
13. To create greater awareness of Tamil classical literary heritage among students, teachers and the wider academic community.
14. To encourage the use of modern research methodologies and digital resources in the study and dissemination of the Thirukkural.

MAJOR THEMATIC AREAS

Research papers and scholarly presentations may address, but need not be limited to, the following themes:

1. Thirukkural and Classical Tamil Literature
2. Thiruvalluvar and His Thought
3. Ethics and Human Values
4. Thirukkural and Political Thought
5. Thirukkural and Social Thought
6. Thirukkural and Philosophy
7. Thirukkural and Comparative Literature
8. Translation and Reception
9. Thirukkural and Contemporary Society
10. Digital Humanities and Thirukkural

PROPOSED ACADEMIC FORMAT

The two-day symposium will include:

- Inaugural Session
- Keynote Address
- Plenary Lectures
- Exhibition on Thirukkural
- Invited Scholarly Lectures in hybrid mode
- Technical Sessions
- Paper Presentations
- Young Researcher/Research Scholar Sessions
- Special Session on Translation
- Comparative Literature Session
- Interactive Academic Discussion
- Valedictory Session

The symposium may accommodate approximately 75–100 participants, including invited scholars, faculty members, research scholars, students and other interested participants.

ORGANISING COMMITTEE

Name	Role / Designation
Prof. Mrinal Kanti Mandal	Chairperson; Principal, Bhasha Bhavana, Visva-Bharati
Dr. Senthil Prakash S.	Coordinator; Vice-Principal, Bhasha Bhavana, Visva-Bharati
Dr. Ranvir Sumedh Bhagwan	Joint Coordinator; In-Charge, Marathi Language Unit, Bhasha Bhavana
Dr. Jagadish Bhagat	Member; Head, Department of Hindi, Visva-Bharati
Dr. Norbu Gyaltsen Negi	Member; Department of Indo-Tibetan Studies, Visva-Bharati
Dr. Sarat Kumar Jena	Member; Department of Odia, Visva-Bharati
Dr. Mansaram Murmu	Member; Department of Santali, Visva-Bharati

JOINTLY ORGANISED BY

Tamil Language Unit & Marathi Language Unit
Bhasha Bhavana (Institute of Languages, Literature and Culture)
Visva-Bharati, Santiniketan, West Bengal – 731235

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

Central Institute of Classical Tamil (CICT), Chennai



VISVA-BHARATI, SANTINIKETAN

Bhasha Bhavana • Tamil Language Unit & Marathi Language Unit



7–8 OCTOBER 2026 • VISVA-BHARATI, SANTINIKETAN

senthilprakash.s@visva-bharati.ac.in
ranvirsumedh.bhagwan@visva-bharati.ac.in