Adikesava Perumal Temple/Tiruvattaru temple

Prelims: *Current events of national and international importance | Art & Culture*

Why in News?

A Yali sculpture located at Sripalikal mandapam of the Tiruvattaru temple has been found damaged a few days ago.

- It is dedicated to Lord Adi Kesava Perumal, an early and ancient form of Vishnu.

- **Location –** Tiruvattaru, Kanniyakumari district, Tamil Nadu.
- **Rivers –** The temple is surrounded by 3 rivers – ***Thamirabharani, Kothai and Pahrali***.
- **Presiding Deity –** ***Lord Vishnu*** is in the form of Ananthapadmanbhan or Adi Kesava Perumal and resides in a ***reclining position***.
- **Unique feature**
  - Idol is 22 feet long, made of mustard, jaggery, and lime powder.
  - ***Idol faces west***, opposite to Padmanabhaswamy Temple idol in Thiruvananthapuram (facing east), symbolizing spiritual connection.
  - The temple is also called the '***Srirangam of the Chera Kingdom***'.
  - It is one of the ***108 Vaishnavaite shrines***, is sung in praise by Nammalwar.
- The temple was once a part of the erstwhile *kingdom of Travancore.*
- **Architecture –** It is built in authentic ***Kerala-style architecture***, similar to the Padmanabhaswamy Temple in Thiruvananthapuram.
- Its features includes murals, sculptures, and paintings that enrich the interiors.
- **Festivals –** ***Vaikunta Ekadasi*** is one of the festivals celebrated in great pomp and glory in the temple.
- Other important celebrations include **Panguni Uthiram** and **Brahmotsavam**.

Yali

- **Origin of Depiction –** Began during the Pallava period and evolved through subsequent dynasties.
- **Literary Note –** Historians said that the word Aazhi appears in Sangam literature, but it has no connection with Yali.
- **Types of Yali**
  - **Simha Yali** – Lion-like features.
  - **Vezha Yali** – Elephant-like, with a proboscis (snout); gained prominence during the Nayak period.
- **Symbolism & Features –** It is a ***mythical creature***, considered more powerful than a lion, typically depicted with two horns above the eyeballs.
- It represents strength, protection, and ferocity in temple architecture.



References

1. The Hindu | Tiruvattaru temple
2. TN Tourism | Tiruvattaru temple

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