

Thanjavur Painting

Prelims: Current events of national and international importance

Why in News?

The Department of Posts Transports a Priceless Thanjavur Masterpiece of The Divine Shri Ram from Bengaluru to Ayodhya using its Logistics Post service.

- Thanjavur painting (also known as Tanjore painting) is a ***classical South Indian art form*** originating from the town of **Thanjavur in Tamil Nadu** around 1600 AD.
- **Origins** - The style flourished under the ***patronage of the Nayakas of Thanjavur*** and later reached its zenith during the Maratha rule (17th-19th centuries).
- Renowned for its opulence, it is characterized by rich, vivid colours, intricate gesso work (relief work), and the use of ***genuine 22-carat gold foil and semi-precious stones***.
- **Key Features & Technique**
 - **Materials** - Traditionally done on wooden planks (typically jackfruit or teak), leading to the local name Palagai Padam. Modern versions often use plywood.
 - **Gesso Work** - A paste of limestone powder and Arabic gum is used to create embossed, 3D patterns.
 - **Gold Embellishment** - Thin sheets of 22-carat or 24-carat gold foil are pasted over the relief work to provide a lasting, glittering sheen.
 - **Ornaments** - The paintings are often inlaid with glass beads, pearls, or semi-precious stones to highlight jewellery and architectural elements like arches (Prabhavalis).
- **Common Themes**
 - The primary subjects are devotional, featuring Hindu deities and scenes from religious texts:
 - **Krishna** - Popular depictions include "Butter-Thief Krishna" or Yashoda-Krishna.
 - **Lakshmi & Ganesha** - Often used for pooja rooms to signify

prosperity.

- **Mythological Events**- The coronation of Rama (Rama Pattabhishekam) and the wedding of Meenakshi (Meenakshi Thirukalyanam) are recurring themes.
- **GI Tag** - Thanjavur paintings were officially granted the Geographical Indication (GI) tag in **2007**.

Reference

[PIB | Thanjavur Masterpiece](#)

