

The Pen Memorial of Tamil Nadu

February 3, 2023

In news- Tamil Nadu's proposed Pen Monument to Karunanidhi's memory was opposed by representatives of some opposition parties and fishermen's and environmental groups on grounds of environmental damage.

About the monument-

- The Pen Memorial pays tribute to Karunanidhi, one of the most influential figures in Tamil Nadu and Dravidian politics.
- Karunanidhi, apart from being president of the DMK from 1969 to 2018 and Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu for five terms between 1969 and 2011, made significant contributions to Tamil literature as an orator, poet, and writer of non-fiction and fiction, plays, and films.
- **The memorial in the shape of a pen represents his many contributions to Iyal** (poetry and literature), Isai (music), and Naadagam (theatre), **the three fundamental pillars of both ancient and contemporary Thamizh, or Tamil.**
- **The design of the monument is based on the Veena, a traditional Carnatic music instrument** that is handmade in Tamil Nadu with extreme precision.
- **The Thumba is used to represent the pen pedestal**, the neck portion of the long bridges, the music hole, a pen statue, and the peg the tensile canopy seating on the bridge.
- The frets are used to represent the distance between the bridge's columns, and the strings are used to represent the Meru or Kudira.
- **The design for the landscaped garden on the memorial pedestal is inspired by Sikku Kolam, a traditional**

drawing made by Tamil women in their homes, in which a geometric shape is created using dots and circles. Locally procured granite will be used for the memorial.

- **The proposed 'Muthamizh Arignar Dr Kalaignar Pen Monument' off Marina the beach falls under Coastal Regulation Zones (CRZ) IA, II, and IVA**, and requires clearance under Section 4(ii)(j) of the Union Environment Ministry's Coastal Regulation Zone Notification, 2011 (amended up to March 22, 2016).
- The Rs 81-crore 'Pen Monument', standing in the Bay of Bengal 360 m from the coast, was proposed by the government 2022, and is expected to become a Chennai landmark on completion.
- **It has been planned as a representation of Tamil culture and architecture**, and will incorporate regional motifs, architecture, and designs with Tamil heritage elements.

The Access Bridge-

- The idea of a monument on water derives from the **metaphorical catamaran** to which Karunanidhi compared himself.
- The monument will be 42 metres tall and 2.60 metres in diameter, and will be accessible by a lattice bridge from the existing Karunanidhi memorial on Marina beach.
- Two hundred and ninety metres of the 650-metre bridge will be above land (the Marina seashore), the remaining portion will be above water. There will be wave patterns on the parapet walls of the bridge.
- The floor of the bridge will be made of non-slip material such as rough semi-polished granite to make walking safe even in the rainy season.