

DEPARTMENT OF CHEMISTRY

FIELD VISIT (2008-2009)

SOUNDARARAJA PERUMAL TEMPLE, THADIKOMBU:

Objective:

Field visit to a place or a factory or a temple give students the opportunity to have first-hand experiences and to explore world. Through field visit, students can enrich their knowledge by practically seeing what they have learned about in the classroom theoretically. It also helps students to build closer bonds with their classmates, experience new environments and enjoy a day away from the classroom. In this regard, every year our department of chemistry organized a field visit for our students.

Soundararaja Perumal Temple, Thadikombu:

Soundararajaperumal Temple is a temple dedicated to Hindu god Vishnu, located in Thadikombu, a village near Dindigul, Tamil Nadu. Constructed in Dravidian style of architecture, the temple is believed to have been built by Achyuta Deva Raya during the 16th century AD. Vishnu is worshiped as Soundararaja Perumal and his consort Lakshmi as Soundaravalli.

The temple is known for the Ranga Mandapam, which features rare life size sculptures. The temple has two inscriptions dating from the Nayak period. The temple has a five-tiered rajagopuram (gateway tower) and enshrined within a granite wall. The complex contains all the shrines and water bodies associated with it. Soundararaja Perumal is believed to have appeared for sage Mandukya. The temple observes six daily rituals and three yearly festivals. The chariot festival, celebrated during the month of March–April is the most prominent festival of the temple.

I, II, III year UG students and 5 staff members of our department started from our college at 9.30 am by bus and reached Soundararaja perumal Temple at 10 am. We went around the temple and admired its construction and architecture. The temple is surrounded by rectangular granite walls on all four sides, with a 90 feet (27 m) tall rajakopuram (temple tower). All four sides around the temple are paved in such a way to accommodate movement of the temple car during festive occasions. The main entrance of the temple faces the East, and at the entrance of the temple there is a four pillared open hall.

The temple has two precincts. The first precinct has shrines for his consort, Soundaravalli

and Viswaksenar. All the inner shrines face east, leaving the shrine of Viswaksenar, which faces south. The flag staff and a hall are located in axial alignment from the gateway tower to the sanctum. The South-west corner of the second precinct houses the image of Chakrathazwar. The images of the Dasavatara, the ten avatars of Vishnu, are housed in the Anna Mandapa. The presiding deity is housed in the sanctum in standing posture and has a height of 5 ft (1.5 m). Bhudevi and Sridevi are positioned on either side of him. The image of the festive deity is also housed in the sanctum. We saw the Ranga Mandapam which has beautiful architectural representation of various forms of Vishnu. It is located near the Soundaravalli shrine leading to the sanctum. We worshipped the God and Goddess of the temple. After seeing the temple completely we left the temple with full satisfaction.

This temple visit made us to feel excited and gave satisfaction for our mind and soul.