

Legacy of Chola dynasty provides road map for modern India, says PM Modi in Tamil Nadu

Prime Minister Modi announces Centre will erect statues of Chola emperors Rajaraja Chola and his son, Rajendra Chola I in Tamil Nadu

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THE HINDU BUREAU



Prime Minister Narendra Modi offers prayers at Gangaikonda Cholapuram Temple, in Ariyalur on Sunday. | Photo Credit: PIB

Paying glowing tributes to the military might and administrative acumen of Rajendra Chola I and his father Rajaraja Chola in Tamil Nadu, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on

Sunday (July 27, 2025) said the heights reached by the emperors were a source of inspiration, providing an ancient road map for the country to become a developed nation.

“The economic and strategic advancements achieved during the Chola era remain a source of inspiration for modern India. To become a developed nation, we too must prioritise unity; strengthen our Navy and Defence forces and look for new opportunities, even while safeguarding our core values,” Mr. Modi said at the valediction of the Aadi Thiruvathirai festival marking the birth anniversary of Rajendra Chola I at Gangaikonda Cholapuram.

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Mr. Modi released a commemorative coin in honour of Rajendra Chola I on the occasion. The king had built Gangaikonda Cholapuram, the ancient capital of the Imperial Cholas, along with the Brihadisvara Temple and the Cholagangam, a massive lake, after his victorious expedition to the Gangetic plains about 1,000 years ago.

The Prime Minister announced the Centre would install grand statues of the two emperors in Tamil Nadu, to serve as the pillars of country’s historical consciousness. “The legacy of Rajaraja Chola and Rajendra Chola is synonymous with India’s identity and pride. The history and heritage of the Chola Empire proclaim the true potential of India,” he said.

Rajaraja Chola built a powerful navy; his son Rajendra Chola I strengthened it. The Cholas strengthened local administration, established extensive trade and cultural links to bring out about development in various spheres to his country. The Chola rulers had extended their diplomatic and trade relations to Sri Lanka, the Maldives, and Southeast Asia, he pointed out.

India too placed the highest priority on its national security, Mr. Modi said and added that through Operation Sindoor, the world has witnessed the firm and decisive response of the country to any threat to its sovereignty.

Pointing out the Chola reign was considered to be one of the golden ages of the country by historians, Mr. Modi said the dynasty was not only known for their military strength but also for being the mother of democracy by introducing the *kudavolai* system of electing local representatives centuries ago.

The global discourse now revolves around water management and ecology preservation, but our ancestors understood the importance of these issues long ago, Mr. Modi said citing the Cholas excellent water management systems.

“The Chola rulers had woven a thread of cultural unity. Our government is carrying forward their ideals,” he said referring to the conduct of the Kashi Tamil Sangamam and the Saurashtra Tamil Sangamam to reinforce centuries-old bonds of unity. Over the past decade, the nation had worked on mission mode to preserve its cultural legacy. About 600 ancient statues and artefacts, which had been stolen and sold abroad, have been brought back to India since 2014. Of these, 36 belonged to Tamil Nadu.

The Prime Minister paid tributes to the country’s Shaivite tradition too, saying it played a vital role in shaping the nation’s cultural identity. If only the world adopted the teaching of Tirumular, ‘Anbe Shivam’ (Love is God), problems such as instability, violence and environmental crises could be solved, he observed.

Tamil Nadu Governor R.N. Ravi, Union Minister of State for Information and Broadcasting L. Murugan, State Ministers Thangam Thennarasu and S.S. Sivasankar, and Lok Sabha MP Thol. Thirumavalavan, were among the participants.

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