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News: Odhuvars in Tamil Nadu

- Recently, Tamil Nadu government handed over appointment orders to 15 Odhuvars (among them five are women), who were assigned to Shaivite temples in the Chennai region as they serve the deities by singing the hymns and praise.

Odhuvars

- Odhuvars sing **devotional hymns in Tamil Nadu's Hindu temples but are not priests.**
- They are **in the service of Lord Shiva by singing his praise from Thirumurai in Saivite temples.**
- They **sing devotional hymns but do not enter the sanctum sanctorum.**

Origin of Odhuvars

- The **tradition of Odhuvars can be traced back to ancient times, with its roots firmly embedded in the Bhakti movement, which flourished between the 6th and 9th centuries in Tamil Nadu.**
- During this period, **several saint poets known as Alvars and Nayanars composed devotional hymns in praise of Lord Vishnu and Lord Shiva, respectively.**

- The Odhuvars emerged as custodians of this rich musical and devotional heritage.