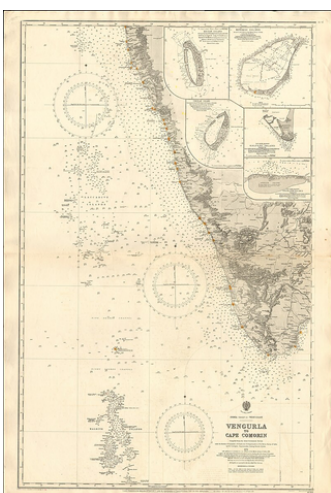




## Name Roots: Meaning of Lakshwadeep

The name Lakshadweep means “one lakh islands” in Malayalam, despite the fact that the Laccadive Islands are only one portion of a hundred-island archipelago. The capital is Kavaratti. Malayalam is the official language of the area, as well as the most frequently spoken native language. The islands are India’s smallest union territory, with a total surface area of about 32 km.



It entails a group of 36 islands. The lagoon size is around 4,200 km<sup>2</sup>, the territorial waters area is approximately 20,000 km<sup>2</sup>, and the exclusive economic zone area is approximately 400,000 km<sup>2</sup>. With ten subdivisions, the area comprises a single Indian district. The name Lakshadweep is derived from Lakṣadvīpa, meaning "one hundred thousand islands," presumably from Sanskrit or Malayalam. Laccadive is an Anglicization of the given name during the British Raj. The native name of Minicoy is Maliku, and the given name is the Anglicized version derived from Minikaa-raajje, meaning "land of the cannibals" in Nicobarese, as the island was known then in the Andaman and Nicobar. Amindivi derives its name from the Amindivi people, who were the earliest inhabitants of Amini Island.

**Map Creation:**  
Students can draw a map of the Lakshadweep Islands and label each island with its historical name and a brief description of its origin and significance.



## Activity:

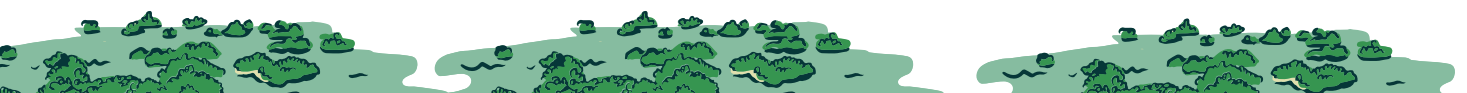
**Pick a historical figure who had a role to play in the history of Lakshwadeep Islands. Write journal entries written from the perspective of the figure. Include factual information from the time period they were there in the journal entries.**

**Did You Know?  
The islands are known for traditional dance forms like "Kolkali" and "Parichakali."**

## History of the Land

The Periplus of the Erythraean Sea contains one of the earliest references to the region. The Sangam Pathupattu alludes to the Cheras' rule over the islands. Local traditions suggest that the earliest settlements began during the reign of Cheraman Perumal, Kerala's last Chera monarch, with Amini, Kalpeni, Andrott, Kavaratti, and Agatti being the oldest inhabited islands. Archaeological evidence indicates that Buddhism was prevalent in the region during the fifth and sixth centuries CE. Islam is believed to have been introduced to Lakshadweep around 661 CE by Ubaidullah, whose tomb is on Andrott island. According to legend, Cheraman Perumal, the last Chera monarch of Kerala, traveled to Mecca from Dharmadom near Kannur, though this story is unsubstantiated.

In the 11th century, the Cholas invaded Kerala, bringing the islands under their control before they became part of the Kingdom of Kannur. During the medieval period, the islands were crucial in Indian Ocean trade, connecting the Middle East with the Malabar Coast, Ceylon, and Southeast Asia. The Portuguese controlled the region in the 16th century, naming the archipelago "Laque Divas" and exploiting coir production until the islanders expelled them in 1545. In the mid-16th century, the Chirakkal Raja granted the islands to the Arakkal Kingdom to protect against the Portuguese.



## *Preserving Lakshadweep's Marine Ecosystem*

Lakshadweep is celebrated as the world's most spectacular marine ecosystem, home to the only coral reefs in the Indian Union. The coast's geomorphologic and climatic variations have fostered an incredibly diverse marine environment.

Key components of this ecosystem include coral reefs, lagoons, seagrasses, seaweeds, algae, and mangroves. It supports a variety of marine life such as fish, tuna, live-bait, octopuses, mollusks, sponges, echinoderms, whales, and dolphins.

On World Environment Day 2023, the Indian government initiated a project to clean the sea floor of marine litter in Lakshadweep, aiming to protect and preserve this delicate ecosystem.



*Folklore Storytelling: Students can research and narrate traditional folklore and legends from Lakshadweep, highlighting the moral lessons, cultural values, and historical significance embedded in these stories.*

## *In Tune with Tradition: The Vibrant Performing Arts of Lakshwadeep*

Lakshadweep boasts a rich tradition of dance and music. Parichakali, a popular dance performed by men wielding wooden swords and shields, reenacts Islamic battle tales. Starting slowly, the dance builds to a fast-paced, energetic climax, evoking the valor of ancient warriors.

Kolkali, another dance shared with Kerala, features dancers keeping rhythm with wooden sticks. The Minicoy islands present their unique dance, Lava, accompanied by distinctive songs. Musical traditions in Lakshadweep are influenced by Kerala, reflecting the legacy of Hazrat Ubaidullah, who introduced Islam to the islands. Weddings are celebrated with Oppana, a melodious bridal music enjoyed by guests.





## *The Enchanting Archipelago of Lakshadweep*

Lakshadweep, an exquisite archipelago in the Arabian Sea, boasts twelve atolls, three reefs, and five submerged banks, totaling thirty-nine islands and islets. Most atolls align northeast-southwest, featuring islands on the eastern rim and partially submerged reefs encircling lagoons to the west. Among its treasures are ten inhabited islands, seventeen uninhabited islands, linked islets, four new islets, and five underwater reefs. Key islands like Kavaratti, Agatti, Minicoy, and Amini shine with unique charm. Home to 64,429 people (2011 census), this paradise is accessible via direct flights to Agatti from Kochi.



## *Balance Act: Agriculture & Tourism as Economic Structures*

Lakshadweep's economic structure is heavily reliant on fishing and tourism, with a sizable portion of the population making their living from fishing, the foundation of the islands' economy. Local communities employ traditional fishing techniques such as pole and line fishing to harvest seafood, particularly tuna, for both export and domestic consumption. However, there are growing concerns about the sustainability of these methods, prompting efforts to balance ecological preservation with commercial demands.

Agriculture, although limited by the lack of arable land and freshwater resources, also plays a role in the islands' economy. Coconut farming stands out as a significant economic activity, as coconuts are a staple of the local diet and a source of income through the production of coconut-based goods. Research is ongoing to find sustainable ways to increase agricultural productivity without harming the environment.

## Climate Change's Impact on the Islands

Lakshadweep, the picturesque archipelago in the Arabian Sea, is facing a dire threat from climate change. The Lakshadweep Research Collective has reported alarming rates of coastal erosion, with the archipelago's land cover rapidly shrinking. In 2017, the entire island of Parali 1 in the Bangaram atoll was lost to the sea.

Over the past two decades, the islands have experienced four significant temperature anomalies linked to the El Niño-Southern Oscillation (ENSO), a climate phenomenon that causes variations in winds and sea surface temperatures. In addition, three catastrophic cyclones have struck the region in recent years, causing widespread coral bleaching and devastating local ecosystems.


Scientists now predict that, even under conservative estimates, Lakshadweep could be completely submerged by 2050. This projection underscores the urgent need for global action to mitigate climate change and protect vulnerable regions like Lakshadweep from its devastating impacts.

### Coral Reef Art Project

**Objective:** Learn about coral reefs and their importance through an art project.

**Instructions:**

- 1. Introduction to Coral Reefs :** Show images and videos of coral reefs around Lakshadweep. Discuss the importance of coral reefs and the threats they face.
- 2. Art Creation:** Students will create their own coral reef art using a variety of materials.
- 3. Display and Presentation:** Display the art projects in the classroom and present it.



**Did you Know?** There is only one crop on the entire region – coconuts. Some people have private vegetable gardens etc. but mostly everything is carried from the mainland.

**References:**

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