

## History of Tamil Society

### Sources for the study of early Tamil culture

- Tamil culture - Dated back three centuries before the Common Era (CE).
- Tamil traders and sailors - commercial and cultural linkages across the oceans as maritime people.
- Foreign merchants - visited the Tamil peninsula.
- Cultural, mercantile activities and internal developments - Together contributed in the region's urbanisation.
- Cities and ports arose.
- Coins and paper money - began to circulate.
- There were written materials produced.
- The Tamil language was written using the Tamil Brahmi script.
- Subsequently, classical Tamil poetry was written.

### Prehistoric Tamilagam Lemuria Continent

- Similarities between Africa, India, and Madagascar in the nineteenth century were explained.
- Group of European and American scholars - proposed the presence of a submerged continent called Lemuria.
- This notion was developed by a group of Tamil revivalists.
- They linked it to Pandyan traditions of territories considered lost to the sea
- It is documented in ancient Tamil and Sanskrit literature.
- Lemuria - Tamil civilization flourished before it was wiped out by a natural disaster.
- Tamil writers - Referred to this submerged continent as "Kumari Kandam" in the 20th century.
- The continental drift - (plate tectonics) theory - Made Lemuria theory obsolete.
- It became popular among Tamil revivalists in the 20th century.
- According to them, during the Pandyan dynasty, Kumari Kandam was the site of the first two Tamil literary academies (sangams).
- Scholars declared Kumari Kandam as the cradle of civilization.

### According to some experts

- This is the place where the first human was born.
- Pandians ruled this region 30,000 years ago.
- It was made up of 49 countries.
- Palaru and Kumari - Two highly resourceful rivers which flowed through Kumari Kandam.
- Kumari and Mani Mountains are two mountain ranges.
- Madurai and Kabalapuram - The most economically developed cities.
- This territory was ruled by the Pandiyans.
- The first three Tamil Sangams took place.
- The majority of the top Tamil literature was produced here.
- They are as follows "Purananooru,
- KalarivezhiAgathiyam, Thollkapiyam, Agananooru, Naaladiyarr, and Thirukural etc.
- It is considered to be the 'Golden Period' where the continent sank due to a large flood or global warming.

### The following materials can be used to recreate the ancient Tamils' history:

- Classical Tamil literature
- Scriptorium (inscriptions)
- Material culture and archaeological excavations
- Non-Tamil and International Literature.

### Classical Tamil Literature (Sangam)

- The Tholkappiyam, PathinenMelkanakku (18 major works), PathinenKilkanakku (18 minor works), and the five epics make up the Classical Sangam corpus (collection).
- Tholkappiyam - Earliest written book by Tholkappiyar.
- The Third section of Tholkappiyam - Provides information about Tamil social life and elaborates the grammar standards.
- PathinenMelkanakku contains, The manuscripts -Pathupattu- (ten long songs) Ettuthogai (eight anthologies).
- These are considered to be oldest among Tamil Classical Texts.

- PathinenKilkanakku's texts are from a later period.

**The Ettuthogai or the eight anthologies are**

- Natrinai
- Kurunthogai
- Paripaadal
- Pathittrupathu
- Aingurunuru
- Kalithogai
- Akanaanuru
- Puranaanuru

**Pathupattu collection includes ten long songs**

- Thirumurugatrupadai
- Porunaratrupadai
- Perumanatrupadai
- Sirupanatrupadai
- Mullaipaattu
- Nedunalvaadai
- Maduraikanchi
- Kurinjipaattu
- Pattinappaalai
- Malaipadukadam

**PathinenKilkanakku(18 minor works)**

- The PathinenKilkanakku - Collection of eighteen texts about ethics and morals.
- Thirukkural, created by Thiruvalluvar, is the most famous of these works.
- In 1330 couplets, Thirukkural is concerned with morality, statecraft, and love.
- The Five Epics or Kappiyams are long narrative poems of very high quality. They are
  - Silappathikaaram
  - Manimekalai

- Seevaka Chinthamani
- Valaiyapathi
- Kundalakesi

### Epigraphy

- Study of inscriptions - epigraphy.
- Documents scripted on stone, copper plates, and other media such as coins, rings are known as inscriptions.
- The beginning of the historical period is marked by the development of the script.
- The prehistoric period is defined as the period prior to the use of the written script.
- Tamil-Brahmi was the first script - Tamil Nadu for writing.
- Tamil-Brahmi inscriptions - Discovered in caves, rock shelters, pottery and other items (coins, rings & seals). Tamil Brahmi Script:
- Inscriptions in Tamil-Brahmi have been discovered in more than 30 locations in Tamil Nadu.
- They are engraved mostly on cave surfaces and rock shelters.
- Monks, primarily Jain monks, lived in these caverns.
- By cutting a drip line to keep rainwater away from the cave.
- Thus, natural caves were turned into homes.
- Inscriptions are frequently found beneath driplines.
- The monks who lived in these shelters maintained a modest existence and slept in smooth stone beds chiseled from the rock surface.
- Monks who had renounced worldly life were housed in these natural formations by merchants and rulers.
- Some of the notable sites of such caves with Tamil-Brahmi inscriptions include Mangulam, Muthupatti, Pugalur, Arachalur, Kongarpuliyankulam, and Jambai.
- Many caves with Tamil-Brahmi inscriptions can still be found around Madurai.

### The Sangam Age

- **The term 'Sangam' refers to a group of poets** - Flourished at Madurai under the royal patronage of the Pandya monarchs.
- Sangam literature - Refers to the collection of poems written by the poets.
- The Sangam Age is the time period during which these poems were written.
- The first three centuries of the Common era - Commonly considered the Sangam period.
- Epigraphical, archaeological evidence and literary evidence available for this period.
- The Sangam Period in South India - the area south of the Krishna and Tungabhadra rivers.
- It runs roughly from the 3rd century B.C. to the 3rd century A.D.
- It was named after the Sangam academies that flourished under the royal patronage of the Pandya kings of Madurai during that time period.
- Eminent intellectuals - Gathered at the sangams to act as censors, and the best writing was rendered in the form of anthologies.
- The earliest examples of Tamil literature were these literary works.
- According to Tamil traditions, three Sangams (academies of Tamil poets) were held in the ancient South Indian region known as Muchchangam.

### Three Sangams

- The First Sangam - Took place at Madurai (Gods and legendary sages in attendance).
- First Sangam's literary work is unavailable.
- Only Tolkappiyam - Survived from the Second Sangam.
- The Second Sangam - Held in Kapadapuram.
- Madurai - Hosted the Third Sangam.
- A few of these Tamil literary works have survived.
- This can be used to recreate the Sangam period's history.

### Sources Copper Plates:

- Velvikudi and Chinnamanur copper plates Coins - Coinage of the Cheras, Cholas, Pandyas, and Sangam Age chieftains, and also Roman coins Burials and Hero Stones - Megalithic Monuments
- Adichanallur, Arikamedu, Kodumanal, Puhar, Korkai, Alagankulam, Uraiyur - Excavated Materials

### Some of the literary sources

- Tholkappiyam, Ettuthogai (eight anthologies), Pathupattu (ten idylls), PathinanKeezhkanakku (eighteen poetic works), Pattinapalai, and Madurai Kanji.
- Silapathikaram and Manimegalai are two epics.

### Foreign accounts

- The Periplus of the Erythrean Sea, Pliny's Natural History, Ptolemy's Geography, Megasthenes' Indica, Rajavali, Mahavamsa, and Dipavamsa. Literature
- Tolkappiyam, Ettutogai, Pattuppattu, Pathinenkilkanakku, and (two epics) Silappathikaram and Manimegalai are among the Sangam literature. Tolkappiyam (Tamil literary work) - written by Tolkappiyar.
- **A primary study on Tamil language** - Contains information about the political and socio - economic conditions of the ancient Tamil period.
- The eight works that make up **Ettutogai (Eight Anthologies)** - Aingurunooru, Narrinai, Aganaooru, Purananooru, Kuruntogai, Kalittogai, Paripadal, and Padirruppatu.
- The 10 works that make up the Pattuppattu (Ten Idylls) - Thirumurugarruppadai, Porunarruppadai, Sirupanarruppadai, Perumpanarruppadai, Mullaippattu, Nedunalvadai, Maduraikkanji, Kurinjippattu, Pattinappalai, and Malaipadukadam are
- Eighteen texts on ethics and morals - Pathinenkilkanakku.
- Thirukkural, written by Thiruvalluvar.
- Thiruvalluvar - A great Tamil poet and philosopher
- The two sagas;

- Elango Adigal wrote Silappathikaram
- SittalaiSattanar wrote Manimegalai.
- Provides useful information about Sangam society and politics.

### The Muvendhar

- The Cheras, Cholas, and Pandyas were known as Muvendar.
- They are ‘the three crowned kings’.
- They ruled over key agrarian tracts, commercial routes, and towns.
- The Sangam poetry- the Satiyaputra (same as Athiyaman) recorded in the Asokan inscription with the above three dwellings is a Velir chief.

### The Cholas

- The Cholas - ruled Tamil Nadu's centre and northern regions.
- The Kaveri delta – Cholamandalam.
- Capital was Uraiur (near Thiruchirapalli town), with Puhar or Kaviripattinam serving as secondary royal residence and major port.
- Mascot was a tiger.
- Pattinappalai - Written by poet KatiyalurUruttirankannanar.
- Provides detailed accounts - Especially about the lively commerce activities that took place during Karikalan's reign.
- Karikalan (the son of Ilanjetchenni) - Described as the most powerful Chola of the Sangam period.
- Pattinappalai - Describes his reign in graphic detail.
- Karikalan's greatest notable military victory was at Venni - He defeated the Cheras and Pandyas with the help of as many as eleven Velir chieftains.
- He is credited with converting forests into habitable areas.
- He developed agriculture by providing irrigation.
- He also built reservoirs along the Kaveri's embankment.
- During his time, Kaviripattinam was a thriving port.
- Perunarkilli, another king, is said to have carried out the Vedic sacrifice Rajasuyam.
- Following Karikalan's death, the Puhar and Uraiur branches of the Chola royal family had a succession dispute.

### The Cheras

- The Cheras ruled Kerala's central and northern regions.
- It also ruled Tamil Nadu's Kongu region.
- Capital was Vanji.
- Controlled the ports of Musiri and Tondi on the west coast.
- Scholar's associate Vanji with Karur.
- While others associate it with Tiruvanchaikalam in Kerala.
- Most scholars - Agrees that the Chera family had two main branches.
- They are - The Poraiya branch ruling from Karur in modern-day Tamil Nadu.
- The Patitrupathu - Mentions eight Chera monarchs, their kingdoms, and their renown.
- **Three generations of Chera rulers** - Mentioned in the inscriptions at Pugalur in Karur.
- In his honour, Chellirumporai cast coins.
- Chera monarchs like Imayavaramban Nedun-cheralthan and Chenguttuvan are well-known.
- Chenguttuvan - Reported to have vanquished several chieftains and put down piracy to protect the safety of the major port Musiri.
- The great northern Indian expedition of Chenguttuvan is recounted in Silappathikaram.
- But this is not found in the Sangam poems.
- He is supposed to have ruled for 56 years and was a patron of both orthodox and heterodox religions.
- Copper and lead coins were issued by several Cheras.
- Legends in Tamil-Brahmi imitating Roman coins.
- Numerous Chera coins with the bow and arrow emblem are found without writing.

### The Pandyas

- Madurai was the capital of the Pandyas.
- Korkai - Near the confluence of Thampraparani with the Bay of Bengal.



- It is considered to be the principal port.
- It was well-known for its pearls.
- Chank diving and fishing Korkai is a term used to describe a group of people.
- Korkai is referred to in the Periplus.
- Fish was the main course.
- The Pandyas' insignia.
- Banknotes have on one side - an elephant.
- Other side - and a school of fish on the other.
- They invaded the southern states.
- Kerala, as well as the port of Nelkynda, were under their authority.
- The vicinity of Kottayam Tradition dictates.
- There were patrons of Tamil Sangams and aided in the creation of the Sangam poems.
- The Sangam poems make reference to the Several kings' names being mentioned, but their order is unclear.
- The regnal years are unknown.
- The second-century BCE Pandya ruler Nedunchezhiyan is mentioned in the Mangulam Tamil Brahmi inscription.
- Mudukudumi- Peruvazhuthi and another Nedunchezhiyan are referred to as Maduraikanchi.
- Talaiyalanganam's victory and few other Pandya rulers Mudukudimi- Peruvazhuthi - Mentioned in the eighth-century Velvikkudi copper plates for granting land to Brahmans.
- To commemorate his many Vedic sacrifices - He appears to have minted coins with the legend Peruvazhuthi.
- Talayalanganam - Nedunchezhiyan defeated the combined force of the Chera, Chola, and five Velir chieftains (Thithiyan, Elini, Erumaiyuran, Irungovenman, and Porunan).
- He is also credited for taking Milalai and Mutthuru (both in the Pudukottai area) from a Vel chief.

- He is known as the lord of Korkai and the overlord of the 10 others, a Tirunelveli coast martial and fishing town
- Social Formation in Tamil Eco-zones
- Tamilagam was split into five landscapes or eco-regions.
- It is based on the thinai concept:
- Kurinji, Marutam, Mullai, Neytal, and Palai.
- According to the natural conditions, each region had distinct characteristics - a presiding deity, people, and cultural life.
- Kurinji - It is a steep place where people go hunting and collecting.
- Marutham - It is a riverine tract where agriculture is practised with plough and irrigation.
- Mullai - A forested region where pastoralism and shifting farming coexist.
- Neythal - Fishing and salt production on the coast.
- Palai - It is a Greek word that means "parched country."
- It is due to that the land was unsuitable for farming, people turned to livestock rustling and thievery.

### Velirs and Chieftains

- Apart from the Vendhars, there were Velirs and a slew of other chieftains.
- They used to inhabit territory on the Muvendhar's outskirts.
- Pari, Kari, Ori, Nalli, Pegan, Ai, and Athiyaman were the seven velirs.
- The generosity of these Velirs is well-documented in Sangam poetry.
- These chiefs were famed for their large-heartedness.
- They had close relationships with the poets of the day.
- These chieftains were allies of one of the Muvendar.
- They assisted them in their fights against the other Vendhars.

### Tamil Polity

- This Thinai classification is said to reflect the differences in socio-economic development among the various locations.
- They can also be seen in political forms.
- There are three levels of rulers:
- Kizhar is number one.

- Velir is number two.
- Vendhar is number three.
- Kizhar - They were the chiefs of villages or small territories.
- They were tribal chiefs who ruled over certain tribal communities.
- The Vendhar - Rulers who ruled over vast lush lands.
- The Velir - Ruled over territories of varying geographical character, primarily hilly and forested lands.
- Lay between the fertile territories of the Muvendar.
- Athiyaman, Pari, Ay, Evvi, and Irungo, for example, each ruled over a vast territory rich in natural riches.
- Scholars - Varied opinions on how the three kingdoms should be organized politically.
- The traditional and widely held belief is that the Sangam Age culture was a well-organized state society.
- Cheras, Cholas, and Pandyas polities were pre-state chiefdoms.
- The following are the justifications for the latter viewpoint:
  - No social stratification is apparent.
  - There is no proper territorial association.
  - Destructive conflict hampered the development of agriculture and surplus output necessary for the establishment of a state.
  - There is no sign of taxes, as there is in North Indian regimes.

### **Political Ascendancy of the Vendhar**

- The Vendhar of the early historic period emerged from the Iron Age chiefs (c. 1100-300 BCE).
- Vendhar rose to higher status by taking dominance over the agricultural and pastoral regions.
- Athiyaman is referred to as Satiyaputra in Ashoka inscriptions
- He did not achieve the rank of kings like the Chola, Pandya, and Chera Vendhar.
- The Vendhar defeated the chieftains and engaged in combat with the other two Vendhars.

- They did this by mobilizing their own soldiers and enlisting the help of some Velir chiefs.
- Sangam Age Vendar to demonstrate their power they adopted various titles.
- Kadungo, Imayavaramban, Vanavaramban and Peru Vazhuthi. set themselves apart from ordinary people and Velirs.
- Monarchs usually promoted their names and reputations by patronizing bards and Poets.
- For example, the Chola monarch Karikalan is claimed to have offered Uruttirankannanar, the composer of Pattinappalai, a large sum of gold coins.

### **Tamil Society and Economy**

- Vendhar's conflicts throughout the Sangam Age were focused on increasing their geographical base by annexing the enemy's lands.
- Endemic fighting is thought to have exacerbated social inequalities.
- It is stated that some war captives are serving in cult centres.
- Some references to slavery.
- Women - Extensively involved in economic output throughout the Sangam Age.
- There were many female poets.
- Bronze vessels, beads and goldwork, textiles, shell bangles and jewellery, glass, iron smithy, and pottery manufacture are all examples of craft output.
- Craft production - Widespread in Kerala's major cities, including Arikamedu, Uraiyur, Kanchipuram, Kaviripattinam, Madurai, Korkai, and Pattanam.
- Maduraikanchi - Mentions both day and night marketplaces that sell a variety of handicrafts.
- Raw materials for making various objects and ornaments were not always readily available.
- Stones, both precious and semi-precious, were collected and exchanged for other goods.
- Raw materials - Transformed into numerous products in industrial centres.

- The presence of non-Tamil speakers, especially traders, in various craft centres and towns is revealed by the names of people mentioned in inscriptions on ceramics.
- Traders from all over the world - were present in Tamil Nadu.
- Magadha artisans, Maratha mechanics, Malva smiths, and Yavana carpenters collaborate with Tamil craftsmen under the name Manimegalai.
- Tamil-Brahmi inscriptions - Phrases like vanikan, chattan, and nigama appear to be tied to trade.
- The barter system - Quite popular in trade.
- Coins were also used.
- As bullion - Roman coins circulated.
- Long-distance trade - Existed and several archaeological sites provide evidence of ties with the Roman empire and Southeast Asia.
- The southern section of India - Played a significant role in outside connections.
- Because of its easy access to the coast.
- Evidence of Roman amphora, glassware, and other items imply robust nautical activities in the important early historic ports.
- Archaeology and literature - Both document the prosperity brought by the Romans and the presence of foreign merchants.

#### **Economy:**

- The economy was mixed.
- People practised agriculture, pastoralism, trade and money exchange, hunting-gathering, and fishing.

#### **Agricultural Production:**

- One of the main sources of subsistence was agriculture.
- Paddy, sugarcane, and millets were among the crops grown.
- Farming - Done on both wet and dry terrain.
- Paddy - It was cultivated in riverine and tank-irrigated areas.
- Millets - Grown in arid climates.

- In the literature, rice varieties such as sennel (red rice), Vennel (white rice), and Aivananel (a variety of rice) are described.
- Rice grains - Discovered in burial urns in Adichanallur and Porunthal excavations.
- Punam or shifting cultivation - It was used by people in the jungle.
- Pastoralism - It is a nomadic lifestyle in which people raise cattle, sheep, and goats for a living. Industries and Crafts of the Sangam Age
- Craft specialization and manufacturing were significant features of urbanisation.
- There were professional groups that produced numerous commodities during the Sangam Age.
- The term "industry" - Refers to the system of producing goods. Pottery
- Pottery was used in a variety of settlements.
- People employed pottery made by Kalamceyko (potters) in their daily lives.
- Enormous quantities were produced.
- Different varieties of pottery were utilised.
- It also includes black ware, russet-coated painted ware, and black and redware potteries. Iron Smelting Industry
- Iron production - Significant artisanal activity.
- Traditional furnaces with terracotta pipes and raw ore were used to process iron.
- Such furnaces have been discovered in many archaeological sites.
- Kodumanal and Guttur - Evidence of iron smelting has been discovered.
- Blacksmiths, their tools, and their operations -Mentioned in Sangam literature.
- Agriculture and combat (swords, daggers, and spears) both required iron implements.

### Stone Ornaments

- People throughout the Sangam Age wore a wide range of jewellery.
- The poor wore clay, terracotta, iron, leaves and flowers as ornaments.
- The wealthy donned valuable stones, copper, and gold. Gold

- During this time, gold ornaments were very popular.
- Roman gold coins were used to manufacture jewellery.
- At Pattanam in Kerala, evidence of gold smelting has been discovered.
- At the megalithic sites of Suttukeni, Adichanallur, and Kodumanal, gold ornaments have been discovered.

### Traders

- In Tamil-Brahmi inscriptions, the terms Vanikan and Nigama (guild) exist.
- Gold merchants, textile merchants, and salt merchants were among the several categories of merchants.
- Salt merchants were known as Umanars, and they travelled with their families on bullock carts. Means of Transport
- Bullock carts and animals - utilised to convey products across the land.
- Different settlements of Tamilagam - Connected by trade routes.
- Tamil literature - Watercraft and seagoing vessels such as the Kalam, Pahari, Odam, Toni, Teppam, and Navai are mentioned. Coins and Barter
- Means of the transaction - Barter.
- Rice, for example, was substituted for fish.
- The Sangam's large coin hoards are widely available.
- Several festivals were observed.
- Some of them included the harvest festival (Pongal) and the spring festival (kaarthigai).
- Thai Poosam and Vaikasi Visagam were also given importance.

### Tamil Literature Sangam Age to Contemporary Times

#### Introduction:

- According to scholarly studies, the Sangam Age in Tamil Literature dates between B.C.30 and A.D. 300.
- Sangam literature are the texts written during this time period.
- The literature was discussed below.

#### Merkanakku Noolgal:

- "Padhinenmerkanakku Noolgal" is the name given to Pathuppattu and Ettuthogai's poetry.

- Pathuppattu is a ten-hydil work with long verses written in the Agaval metre.
- "Ettuthogai" - It is a large work consisting of eight separate texts comprising hundreds of songs.
- Most of which are written in Agaval metre.
- The majority of the songs in the "Merkanakku" texts are written in Agavarpa style.
- It is one of the four types of Tamil prosody.
- Agam and Puram categorize all of these songs based on their textual content.
- Half of the texts in Pathuppattu belong to the "Atruppadaai" category.
- It deals with the outward aspects of existence.
- These books direct people to approach kings or benefactors in order to gain fortune.
- "Madhuraikanchi," - Deals with exterior matters, other pieces of music Internal Agam texts include Mullaippattu, Kurinjippattu, Pattinappalai, and Nedunalvadai.

#### **Ettuthogai:**

- Natirai, Kurunthogai, Agananuru, Inkurunuru, and Kalithogai belong to Agam, internal, whereas Pathitruppathu and Purananuru deal with Puram, external, in Ettuthogai.
- Paripadal is an Agam and Puram text.
- Ettuthogai has 2381 songs and 473 poets.

#### **Pathitruppathu:**

- This text has 10 x 10 songs called Pathitruppathu.
- It tells the narrative of ten Chera emperors who previously ruled over Tamil Nadu's "Chera" area.
- The first and last chapters are missing.
- This text covers the Chera dynasty from the second to the ninth century.
- Every song concludes with Thurai, Vannam, Thookku (Pann), and the song's title.
- The poet, the King, the presentation, and the King's regnal year are all stated at the end of each verse.



- This one comes before the Imperial Cholas' "Meikkeerthi."

### **Kurinjipattu:**

- Kabilar mentions ninety-nine flower names in his Agam book. Pattinappalai
- This literature focuses on the Sangam Age trade and business, particularly during the Karikalan period.
- It depicts the early Chola port of Puhar.
- Karikalan on the eastern bank of the Bay of Bengal, and Sangam songs of Agam and Puram are known as "Heroic Age" songs.
- They are on par with Eliot and Odyssey are two early Greek epics.
- "Two things bigger than all," as Homer puts it.
- Things are what they are; one is Love, and the other is War."
- Sangam Literature is total, as that adage goes.
- Love and war's inner and outside emotions and sensations are shown in this painting.

### **After the Sangam Age:**

- Tamil scholars refer to the time 3-5 A.D as "Sangam Maruviyakalam."
- Eighteen texts were gathered as "PadhinanKeezhkanakku" during this time period.
- **They are categorized as Ethics:** Agam Puram in numbers 12: 5: 1 and accordingly.
- Thirukkural is the most ethical of the twelve ethical writings.
- Naladiyar, Nanmanikkadigai, Enna Narpadhu, EniyawaiNarpadhu, Elathi, Thirikadugam, sirupanchamulam, pazhamozhi, Asavakkovai, Mudhumozhikanchi, and Innilai are among the other names.
- These are the texts of values that individuals adhere to in a proper manner.
- Agam's texts include Kar Narpadhu, ThinaimozhiImbathu, ThinaimalaiNootrimbathu, InthinaiEzhupadhu, and Kaivilai.
- Another is "KalavazhiNarpadhu," which is about Puram.
- It describes the conflict between the Chera and Chola kings.
- Poygaiyar is the name of the poet.

- It went on to say that the combat scenario and the success of Kocheganan. EraiyanarKalaviyal
- EraiyanarKalaviyal is a text written by Iraiyanar that deals with the subject of Agam.
- "IraiyanarKalaviyal Urai" was Nakkeerar's criticism of it.
- First and foremost, this commentary is stated concerning the theory of the three Sangams.
- It also mentioned a lot of early music literature as well as Tamil drama. YathiraiThagadu
- This is thought to be a Sangam Age text written by an unknown author.
- The attack of Chera King on Adhiyaman is the subject of this praise poetry work, which has just 44 poems.
- Thagalur is now known as Dharmapuri.
- Its poetic style is similar to that of Sangam hymns of Our Tamil Kings' valour.

#### **Twins (Silambu and Mekalai):**

- Tamil Literature's twins are Silappadhikaram and Manimekalai.
- These two heroes, Hero and Heroine, are not from the heavenly people of the palace, according to our earlier epics.
- They are members of the early Chozha kingdom's common people.
- Elango Adigal, Chera Senguttuvan's younger brother, wrote the first Silappadhikaram.
- He discusses three topics in this epic: politics, chastity, and destiny.
- The two main characters in the story are Kovalan and Kannagi.
- Manimekalai - Kovalan and Madhavi's daughter.
- Manimekalai transformed herself into a Buddhist divinity.
- She abandoned Buddhism and became a non-believer.
- Her sermons and teachings to the entire world are a lesson to humanity.
- She emphasizes the importance of food, clothing, and shelter.
- She said that a life provider is someone who feeds the poor.
- These two epics constitute the pinnacle of Tamil literature.

- Both are written in the Agavarpa style.
- It has blood ties to the characters, and continues the narrative of both epics.
- SeethalaiSathanar, the poet of Manimekalai, has Elangovadigal links the grounds for being referred to as "Twins".
- However, Silappathikaram discusses secularism
- Whereas Manimekalai is a Buddhist epic“Silambu”.
- Elaborately discusses the hunters' and people's folk songs and dances.
- This is a pastoral area.
- It places a greater emphasis on the inhabitants of the inland and their arts.
- Mekalai - Completely discusses Buddhism's Dharma, which directs the divinity of ethical deeds.

### **Archaeological excavations**

- Archaeological excavations are considered as one of the scientific tools to rewrite the Nation's cultural past.
- The ancient literature and epigraphical records generally display the administrative and social life of the elite, whereas the excavation provides the life of the common man.
- Further, the biological samples provide important information on the palaeo-environment, their subsistence pattern and change in lifestyle in chronological sequences.
- The Department of Archaeology has so far conducted excavations at 46 historical sites, of which 37 excavation reports have been published as per Annexure.
- The Archaeological Survey of India [ASI] has so far conducted excavations at more than 50 sites in the State.

### **Keeladi and its Cluster (KeeladiAgaram and Kondagai)**

- Archaeological excavations at Keeladi and its cluster sites for the eighth consecutive year continue to reveal antiquities, features and structures of the Sangam Age urban settlement on the banks of river Vaigai.
- In the eighth phase of excavations, ten quadrants were excavated at Keeladi and from one trench a three-meter-long brick structure, from another trench

nearby a three-course brick wall, 15 courses of terracotta ring-well were unearthed alongside black-and-red ware and red slipped ware potteries.

- Apart from the 1700 artefacts, the upper strata shows glass bead domination.
- Notable artefacts such as gamesman made of ivory, terracotta male head figurine, cubic ivory dice, terracotta ear ornaments, gamesmen, spindle whorls, hopscotches, an iron knife and nails, copper coins, glass beads and carnelian beads were also recovered.
- In Agaram excavations, six quadrants were dug and 4 terracotta ring wells and 530 artefacts were unearthed.
- For the first time in Agaram excavations, a terracotta ring well was unearthed and found to be executed in an interlocking pattern.
- In Kondagai, two trenches and two quadrants were excavated that went to reveal 59 burial urns.
- Human skeletons, 74 carnelian beads, iron implements such as 2 swords, 3 knives, 2 chisels and an axe, rice husks and more than 170 grave good vessels made of black-and-red ware, black slipped ware and red slipped ware were also excavated from these ancient burial urns.
- The remarkable discovery in this season's excavation was the occurrence of 74 carnelian beads in a single urn.

### **Korkai**

- Korkai is a small village in Srivaikuntam Taluk of Tuticorin district.
- It is situated at a distance of 3 km to the north of the river Tamaraparani.
- The sea originally had receded about 6 km to the east.
- The river Tamaraparani skirted this town in ancient days.
- The site is referred to in Tamil Sangam literature, and has attracted the notices of the classical geographers as an important port of pearl fishery.
- In the excavation a structure with nine courses of bricks in six rows was unearthed at the depth of 75 cm from surface level.
- Below the structure three large sized rings placed one over the other (probably soakage jars) were found.

- Inscribed potsherds bearing Tamil Brahmi letters assignable, to 300 BCE to 200 CE were also found.
- Charcoal samples were collected which were assigned to 785 BCE, by the Tata Institute of Fundamental Research, Mumbai.

### **Sivagalai**

- Sivagalai village is located on the left bank of the river Porunai (Tamiraparani) in Eral Taluk in the Thoothukudi District.
- This famous urn burial site lies west of the site on the bank of the same river.
- Excavation at Sivagalai and its surroundings has been carried out for three consecutive seasons. It is habitation-cum-burial.
- Sites of Iron Age noticed at SivagalaiParambu, Petmanagar and Moolakarai.
- The habitation sites noticed at ValappanpillaiThiradu, Sekkadi, Avarankadu, Pottalkottai and ParakkiramapandiThiradu.
- The urn burial site, SivagalaiParambu, was the first to be excavated.
- Nearly 160 urns were exposed and 583 artefacts were unearthed in these three seasons of excavation.
- More than eighty iron objects were found both inside and outside of the urns such as swords, knives, axes, etc.
- A total number of 750 offering grave goods such as bowls, lids, pots and ring stands were found.
- Excavation at the habitation site yielded more than a hundred graffiti-bearing shards, three Neolithic tools and five Tamili (Tamil-Brahmi) potsherds.
- Noteworthy gold ornaments, Chinese coins and potsherds are also found at ParakkiramapandiThiradu.
- Smoking pipes, bone points, shell and glass bangle pieces, hopscotches, beads and copper coins were the major antiquities found.
- A brick channel found at ParakkiramapandiThiradu reveals evidence of pure water flowing through that channel by diatom study.

- One of the important findings is the collection of paddy grains from an urn which is dated to 1155 BCE suggesting that paddy cultivation was happening on the banks of the Tamiraparani river as early as 3200 years ago.

### **Panchalankurichi**

- Panchalankurichi was the capital of the Nayaka chief, Vira Pandya Kattabomman at the close of the 18<sup>th</sup> century.
- It is situated in Ottappidaram taluk of Tuticorin District. The Panchalankurichi fort area measuring 35 acres remained as a mound.
- The aim of the excavation was to find out the remnants of the palace of Kattabomman.
- The excavation revealed the main palace with its east facing entrance in the southern end.
- Three rooms on each side flanked the entrance.
- There was a square pit about one and a half meters lined with lime plaster probably intended for storing grains.
- A passage with a slope to the north led to the audience hall, which is the most impressive part of the structure.
- It had a raised platform at the western end, built of brick.

### **Vasavasamudram**

- Vasavasamudram is a coastal village in Kanchipuram district and lies eleven miles south of Mamallapuram, and north of Vayalur, another historic site.
- The exploration revealed conical jars and neck of an amphorae and proves the fact that this site had trade contacts with Rome during 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> century CE.
- In the excavation two ring wells were exposed. Both the ring wells were found close to each other.
- These two ring wells were also very close to a brick lined tank, which was probably used for dyeing or washing.
- The important potteries found at Vasavasamudram were rouletted ware, amphorae, red ware, red slipped ware, black slipped ware and brown ware etc.

### **Anaimalai**

- Anaimalai is situated in Coimbatore district.
- The Department undertook a trial excavation of a dolmen at Manamboli, a village in the Anaimalai Hills in the year 1969-1970.
- The dolmen was found on a road under formation on the way to Parambikulam- Aliyar Project.
- A small piece of iron point, probably of a pointed knife, was found during the excavation.
- A few pieces of black and red ware pottery with different burial type potteries were also found.
- This excavation has thrown more light on burial type and the burial antiquities.
- These objects are datable to megalithic period. (1000 BCE to 300 CE)

### **Mayiladumparai**

- Mayiladumparai is a small hillock situated about 4 km west of Togarapalli village in Bargur Taluk of Krishnagiri District.
- It is one of the most important sites of Tamil Nadu that provides evidence of the existence of cultural material in the Microlithic, Neolithic, Iron Age, Early Historic and Medieval phases.
- An impressive burial complex of about 100 burials consisting of stone circles entombing pit burials and cairn circles enclosing cist burials.
- Entombed with a huge capstone is distributed around 40 hectares.
- Two seasons of excavation were taken up during 2021 and 2022.
- The first season of excavation discovered a remarkable Iron Age, dating about 4200 years ago through the AMS dating.
- This rich site was further extended for the next excavation season to trace the social formation.
- In the present season of excavation, a total of 30 trenches were laid to expose the complete material evidence to reveal the exact settlement pattern and the socioeconomic status of the society.

- The site yielded microlithic tools in shelters, Neolithic cultural material, Neolithic grooves, rock art, Iron Age megalithic graves, Early Historic cultural material such as graffiti and Tamili (Tamil-Brahmi) bearing potsherds and memorial stones and trade guild inscriptions of the medieval period thereby suggesting its long survival of the site.

### **Pallavamedu**

- Pallavamedu is a mound situated at the outskirts of Kanchipuram; it is traditionally believed to contain relics of the Pallavas.
- The present excavation revealed three periods of occupation.
- The findings are related to the Pallava rule of this region from 6<sup>th</sup> to 9<sup>th</sup> century CE.

### **Karur**

- Karur is situated about 70 km from Tiruchirappalli town and is a District headquarters.
- The excavation results have thrown valuable light on the identification of this place as an important trade centre.
- The important findings are several potsherds with Tamil-Brahmi inscriptions assignable to the beginning of the Common era.
- The inscribed potsherds were found along with Roman Amphorae and rouletted ware of Mediterranean origin.

### **Panayakulam**

- Panayakulam is a small village situated in Dharmapuri district.
- It lies in between Papparapatti and Palakkodu.
- During excavation at the mound situated about 4 km from Papparapatti on the way to Panayakulam revealed archaeologically important antiquities like potsherds, terracotta figurines, bones, and bricks.
- Terracotta figurines are assignable to 8th century CE.
- The excavation proves the continuous occupation of the site from 3<sup>rd</sup> century CE to 13<sup>th</sup> century CE.

### **Boluvampatti**

- Boluvampatti is situated in Coimbatore taluk.



- The excavation was conducted at Kottaikadu, 3 km from Boluvampatti.
- The village is situated on the west bank of river Kanchi popularly known as river Noyyal, a tributary of the river Cauvery.
- Excavations yielded 50 semi-precious stone beads of various sizes and also large number of terracotta ear lobes.
- Other findings are iron objects, shell bangles, an important terracotta seal obtained from the bottom portion of a pit filled with terracotta lids and cups.
- Most probably this pit might have been used as kiln.
- One significant find is the terracotta seal with the royal emblem of a bow and a seated tiger, along with an inscription of 7<sup>th</sup> century CE characters.

### **Kobanpolattu**

- The place is situated in the small village of Madurai in Madakkuzha.
- This area is known as the Kobanpolattu by the name of Kovalan, the hero of Tamil Epic Silapathikaram.
- The area was excavated in the region in the year 1980 to find the oldest of the region.
- Three of the largest adults found in a pit were found.
- The mouth was opened and found to be man's skull (skull) bone pieces and pot tiles.
- Also, a square copper coin is 45 cm. Found at a depth.
- It is noteworthy that the fish on the side of the coconut is engraved.

### **Thondi**

- Thondi is a small village situated about 25 km from Tiruvadana in Ramanathapuram District.
- It was a port town during the Sangam period.
- Trial excavation was conducted at a mound near Thondi Amman Temple.
- Potteries and bricks belonging to late period like coarse red ware were collected.

### **Gangaikondacholapuram**

- Gangaikondacholapuram lies in the Udaiyarpalayam Taluk of Ariyalur District.

- It was established as the capital of the Cholas by Rajendra-I (1012-1044 CE), the celebrated son and successor of Rajaraja-I (985-1014 CE).
- The excavation site Maligaimedu, the palace mound lies 2 km southwest of the famous Gangaikondacholeswarar temple and about 2 km southeast of Utkottai village.
- It is widely believed that it was the residential place of the Chola kings.
- The nature of structural evidence available at the mound also supports this view.
- Besides structural remains, the stone and copper plate inscriptions explicitly express the foundation of the capital city Gangaikondacholapuram and confirm the fact that exposed structures might have been the possible foundation of the palace.
- Earlier explorations and excavations were conducted in 1980, 1984, 1991, 1996 and 2009 in and around Gangaikondacholapuram.
- So far, a good number of antiquities along with bricks and roof tiles have been found in Maligaimedu.
- Many bricks and roof tiles kindled the interest to go for further excavation at this site in 2021 and 2022 to expose the extension of the possible foundation of the palace remains.
- Along with the brick structures, roofing tiles and potsherds also were found.
- Antiquities such as iron objects, copper objects, copper coins, a silver coin, a gold bracelet, ivory objects, glass beads and fragments of bangles, hopscotch, terracotta objects and Chinese ceramics such as celadon and porcelain also were collected.
- It is obvious that these findings establish Chinese contacts during the 12<sup>th</sup> century CE.
- The sequel excavations are in progress and they may bring out considerable evidence to understand the nature of construction activities, the plan of the palace and other political and cultural activities that flourished at the site.

### Vembakottai

- Vembakottai is a village located on the northern bank of the Vaippar River in the Virudhunagar District.
- The habitation mound extends over a vast area of more than an acre and rises about 6-meter height from the ground level.
- The first season of excavation was initiated at Vembakottai in the year 2021-2022.
- The excavation was carried out in the mound locally called Mettukadu or Uchimedu and it reveals continuous cultural material right from pre-historic times to the Medieval period.
- The first season excavation yielded 3254 antiquities such as semi-precious stone beads made of carnelian, agate, amethyst and crystal.
- More number of glass beads in various colors, shell bangles, glass bangles, terracotta beads, spindle whorls, terracotta gamesmen, smoking pipes, terracotta pendants, toy objects, terracotta figurines, terracotta weighing units, terracotta balls, terracotta seals, terracotta human and animal figurines, bird figurines, humped bulls, hop-scotches, earlobes, wheels, rubbing stones, iron objects, gold objects and copper objects were collected.
- Ceramics such as pots, bowls, dishes, lids, plates, vases, basins, storage jars and perforated pots of red ware, red slipped ware, black slipped ware, black-and-red ware and brown slipped ware were collected in excavated trenches.
- Among the artefacts, the occurrence of microlithic fluted cores and chert flakes indicate the possible existence of the Microlithic period.

### Kannanur

- Kannanur was the capital of the Hoysala kings during 13<sup>th</sup> century CE.
- It is now called Samayapuram and it is situated in Tiruchirappalli District.
- The excavation was conducted to trace the old passage of the channel supplying water to Kannanur.
- The excavation yielded a large number of coarse red ware besides a few sherds of Chinese celadon ware, medieval roof tiles of various types, few terracotta beads, glass bangles, studs and a large number of iron nails.

- Tentatively the date for the brick structures and the water channel is assignable to 13<sup>th</sup> -14<sup>th</sup> centuries.

### **Perumbalai**

- Perumbalai is a small village situated on the left bank of the Nagavathi river, a tributary of Palar.
- Palar is one of the major tributaries of the river Kaveri.
- Perumbalai lies on the Dharmapuri Mechcheri-Pennagaram road at a distance of about 25 km from Pennagaram and 42 km north of Dharmapuri District.
- The 13<sup>th</sup> century CE literary work KongumandalaSatakam written by Karmekavairayar of Vijayamangalam refers to this place as the northern boundary of the Kongu country, a territorial division comprising the Coimbatore, Erode, part of Dharmapuri and Salem regions.
- The excavation was undertaken in the year 2020 and the exposure of the habitation mound containing 3 metre cultural deposit records a continuous settlement covering a period from the 6<sup>th</sup> century BCE to the 13<sup>th</sup> century BCE as per the AMS dates and epigraphical evidence.
- Based on AMS dates and associated cultural materials such as ceramics, terracotta figurines, graffiti-bearing sherds and other materials, the cultural deposit is divided into three cultural periods namely the Iron Age, Early Historic period and Early medieval period from bottom to top, datable respectively 6<sup>th</sup> century BCE to 3<sup>rd</sup> century BCE, 3<sup>rd</sup> century BCE to 4<sup>th</sup> century CE and 4<sup>th</sup> century CE to 13<sup>th</sup> century CE.
- The site yielded as many as 1028 graffiti-bearing potsherds, more than 300 antiquities and more than 200 terracotta objects.

### **Kurumbanmedu**

- Kurumbanmedu is situated 3 km on the western side of the big temple at Thanjavur.
- The imperial Cholas had Thanjavur as their capital.
- The palace site of the Imperial Cholas might have been situated in this area.

- During excavation, medieval period antiquities like tiles, big bricks and terracotta lamps and spouts were collected.

### **Palayarai**

- Palayarai was the secondary capital city of the medieval Cholas.
- It is situated about 7 kms away from Kumbakonam.
- Megalithic urn burials were already reported from Nandanmedu near Palayarai.
- The excavation at a mound covering an area of 20 acres of land yielded early potsherds like black and red ware belonging to the megalithic period.
- Medieval potsherds such as coarse red ware, black ware, porcelain potsherds, glass and shell bangle pieces, terracotta spouts, knobs, terracotta and stone beads and terracotta ear lobes were also found.
- Heaps of terracotta lamps belonging to the medieval period were also unearthed.

### **Alagankulam**

- Alagankulam is a village situated on the east coast in Ramanathapuram Taluk and district.
- The village is situated on the banks of the river Vaigai and is about three kilometers away from the seashore.
- The most significant findings of the excavation are hundreds of potsherds of the Mediterranean region.
- They include Rouletted ware and Amphorae jar pieces.
- Pieces of Red ware with Tamil Brahmi letters have been found.
- They are assignable to the first century BCE.
- Other antiquities include beads, perforated tiles, and bricks in various levels.
- Three Roman coins were unearthed.
- They contain the figure of the head of the Roman Emperor on one side and the figure of goddess of victory, holding a globe on the other side.
- The legend on them shows that the Roman Emperor Valentine II who ruled around 375 CE issued the coins.

- Under sea exploration work was also conducted at Poompuhar in the year 1996-1997 in collaboration with National Institute of Oceanography, Goa. Lead ingots were obtained in the search.

### **Thulukarpatti**

- The habitation-cum-burial site Thulukarpatti is located on the bank of the river Nambhiyar in Radhapuram Taluk of Tirunelveli District.
- The excavation exposed the important cultural sequences contemporary to Adichanallur.
- The excavation in the habitation at Adichanallur could not reach the natural soil due to the high water table.
- To understand the contemporary cultural material, the present site was selected for excavation.
- The cultural material such as white painted black-and-red ware and black-and-red ware, diagnostic ceramics of Adichanallur and Sivagalai was unearthed below the Early Historic cultural phase thereby suggesting its association with the Iron Age.
- The Early Historic period is marked by the occurrence of a large number of graffitibearing potsherds and a considerable number of Tamili (Tamil-Brahmi) inscribed potsherds.

### **Kodumanal**

- The Tamil Nadu State Department of Archaeology in collaboration with the Tamil University, Thanjavur conducted excavations at Kodumanal situated in Perundurair taluk in Erode District.
- The excavation had brought to light two cultural periods viz: Megalithic period The early historic period Black and red ware, black slipped ware, russet coated ware and red slipped ware were found in the excavation.
- Apart from these, beads made of quartz and clay, inscribed potsherds and graffiti potsherds were unearthed.
- A megalithic cairn circle at this site was also excavated.
- The grave goods such as lids, bowls, dishes, four legged jars and ring stands were found placed outside the primary cist.

- At the southeastern side of this primary cist an urn was found which surprisingly yielded 782 beads made of carnelian.
- An iron sword measuring 169 cm length was also found at the eastern side of the main cist.
- Besides, four iron swords, a copper toddy filter with lotus and peacock designs, double edged axe, small daggers, stirrup like object, potsherds bearing graffiti were also gathered.

### **Poompuhar**

- Poompuhar, situated at the confluence of river Cauvery with the sea, was a flourishing port city and the second capital of the Cholas in the Sangam period.
- It is situated in the Sirkazhi taluk of Nagappatinam District.
- The Department of Archaeology conducted excavation at Kizharveli and Dharmakulam areas.
- The Kizharveli excavation revealed two brick walls, running Northeast-Southwest at a depth of 20 cm.
- Soft clay had been used as a binding material.
- These two brick walls were placed wide apart and provided with platforms, the intention being that there should be free movement of water.
- Four wooden poles were found, two made of the Palmyra tree trunk and the other two made of Iluppai tree trunk (*Bassia Longifolia*).
- This structure seems to have served as a wharf in the 4<sup>th</sup> century CE.

### **Mangudi**

- Mangudi is situated in Sankarankoil Taluk of Tirunelveli District.
- The author of Maduraikanchi, e.MangudiMarudanar was supposed to have hailed from this place.
- Roman pottery pieces were already collected in surface explorations conducted in this village.
- So with a view to bringing out the history of this place, excavation was conducted in the year 2001-2002 by the Department of Archaeology.
- 10 trenches were laid bare at the site called Naicker-Punchai.

- This excavation has brought to light two cultural periods
  - Microlithic Period
  - Early historic Period
- The significant find from this site is a black and red ware piece containing Tamil Brahmi inscription.
- The inscription has been deciphered as “Kurummangala Athan yi Yanai Po”. This belongs to the Sangam period (2<sup>nd</sup> century BCE).

### **Perur**

- Perur, once known as Kanchivaiperur is situated in a strategic location near Coimbatore.
- From July-October 2002, the Department of Archaeology conducted excavations in this site at two locations namely Kallimedu inside the Santhalinga Ramasamy Adigalar College Campus and Thiruneetrumedu.
- An important find from this site is a circular terracotta seal having the figures of bow surrounded by two lamps and a crescent above engraved on it.
- This is supposed to be the Chera emblem.
- So far such terracotta objects were considered as hip hop or weighing stones. It is believed to be now that such objects served as seals also.
- Another significant find is a broken portion of the terracotta figurine assignable to 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> centuries CE.
- It resembles the figures found in excavations conducted at Mathura in Uttarpradesh.
- Various objects like shell bangle pieces and beads made of semi-precious stones were also found in this excavation.

### **Andipatti**

- Andipatti is located at 15 Km from Chengam town in Chengam taluk of Tiruvannamalai District.
- Systematic excavation was carried out by the Tamil Nadu State Department of Archaeology in the year 2004-2005.
- Excavation at two sites namely Nattamedu and Sambalkadu, yielded pottery of Megalithic and Historic period.



- Pottery collection include Black and Red ware sherds and coarse red ware sherds.
- On the basis of unearthed antiquities such as terracotta objects and figurines of 6<sup>th</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> Century CE and megalithic appendages, it is understood that this site had been continuously inhabited since 1<sup>st</sup> Century BCE till 12<sup>th</sup> Century CE.
- The remarkable findings include inscribed potsherds, graffiti potsherds and terracotta figurines of mother goddess.
- Two cultural periods were demarcated from the unearthed antiquities.

### **Tarangampadi**

- Tarangampadi, the historical port, lies on the East Coast in Poraiyar Taluk of Nagapattinam district.
- The river Poraiyur locally called Uppanaru, has a confluence with the Bay of Bengal on the Southern side of the fort.
- Tarangampadi fort was first constructed in 1620 CE by the Danish.
- The King of Denmark sent two ships to India under the leadership of Ove Gedde with the help of Roeland Crape of Holland; a treaty was signed between Thanjavur Nayak ruler, Ragunatha Nayak and Ove Gedde on 19 November 1620.
- This agreement was written in golden leaf.
- According to the agreement the port Tarangampadi was given to the Danish traders and provision was made for collecting the tax and Danish traders and provision was made for collecting the tax and construction of the fort.
- A joint excavation will be conducted by the Danish Government in collaboration with ASI and TNSDA.
- The excavation was carried out in the northern side of the fort for 20 days in March 2008.
- Five trenches were laid before the fort and all the trenches were excavated up to the moat level.
- In this excavation a drop bridge constructed by the Danish period was identified in the entrance of the main gate.

- This drop bridge may be made up of with the wooden pillars and floor of the entrance was high and brick paved platform.
- The bridge contains three platforms and all the three are constructed with the help of bricks and mortar.
- Total breadth of the moat was 24 mts.
- In this excavation Chinese potteries and smoking pipes made in Denmark in Danish clay were recovered.

### **Alambarai**

- Alambarai, the sea shore village of Kanchipuram District is situated about 120 k.m south of Chennai on the East Coast Road.
- In ancient days, the village was in the limits of Idaikazhinadu.
- Ancient port Sopatnam (Marakanam) is very close to Alambarai.
- The excavation at the Fort complex was conducted with the aim of studying the sociocultural conditions during 17<sup>th</sup>-18<sup>th</sup> century CE and to expose the flourished trade activity of this area.
- During excavation three trenches were laid out.
- The antiquities obtained include terracotta objects and objects of copper, iron, glass and lead etc.
- Among the findings, Granite cannon balls, porcelain wares, spindle whorl, terracotta lamps, smoking pipes and terracotta coin mould were important.
- These unearthed objects revealed the socio-cultural condition and trade activity existed at Alambarai during the period of 17<sup>th</sup>-18<sup>th</sup>CE.

### **Pattaraiperumbudur**

- It is situated on the eastern bank of the river Kosathalaiyar and lies on the western side of Tiruvallur, the district head quarter which is about 60 km from Chennai.
- This place is surrounded by a number of prehistoric sites like Gudiyam, Attirampakkam, Vadamadurai, Neyveli, Parikulam etc.
- The archaeological mound found at three places in the village namely anaimedu, nathamedu and irulanthoppu.

- In order to examine the potentiality of the archaeological vestiges the excavation was conducted at the place in April 2016.
- During the course of excavation it has been found that area was accumulating the rich archaeological vestiges right from prehistoric period to early historical period.
- The deposit contain stone tools, different type of potteries, bricks, iron objects, roofing tiles, carnelian beads, shell bangles, terracotta objects, glass beads, copper objects, inscribed sherds (Tamil Bhrami), sherds with graffiti marks, painting potsherds, ivory object, terracotta ring well and other house holding objects in different levels of the excavated trenches.
- A pragmatic study of the cultural vestiges and the in-situ study of findings gleaned from that the cultural deposit at pattaraipeumbudur can be divided into Stone age period, Iron age period and Early historical period.

### **Srirangam**

- Srirangam, on bank of river Cauvery located at 12 km from Trichy.
- The excavations in the year 2013-14 and 2014-15 were conducted in the premises of Srirangam Temple.
- This temple is considered the most important among the 108 Vaishnavite pilgrim centres.
- The temple is found to be built in stages at various periods by the ancient rulers of Chola, Pandiya, Vijayanagara and Nayakar.
- The aim of the excavation is to expose the adhistana portion and the unique sculpture of the Thousand pillared Mandapam.
- The excavation yielded sculptural panel of the adhistana where human statue with ankusa like weapon is in standing position at the back of an elephant.
- This panel depicts the act of controlling the elephant.
- The Kanta part is depicted with dancing sculptures and royal patrons.
- In the second season 2014-15 the work was carried out in the NamperumalTirumamani Mandapa which is in the shape of chariot with the pulling horses.
- The chariot design and the horses are attached with the adhistana portion.

- The lower part of the well moulded.

### **Explorations in the Porunai (Tamirabarani) River valley**

- The river Porunai (Tamirabarani) originates in the Pothigai hills on the southwestern slopes of the Western Ghats.
- The Porunai (Tamirabarani) river valley is classified into upper, middle and lower basins.
- The basins comprise about 670 villages from its western boundary to the eastern coastal zone at the Bay of Bengal.
- In this exploration, nearly 160 sites including burial sites, habitation sites, herostones, cup marks, microlithic flakes, inscriptions, loose sculptures, monuments, etc., have been identified.

### **Offshore Reconnaissance Survey of a Sangam Age Korkai Port**

- The department had undertaken a preliminary reconnaissance survey in collaboration with Indian Maritime University (IMU) and the National Institute of Ocean Technology (NIOT) to identify the Korkai port of mid-Sangam Age Pandyas.