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Inscription from Renati Chola Era

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Why in News

A rare inscription dating back to the Renati Chola era has been unearthed in a remote village of Kadapa district of Andhra Pradesh.

Key Points

- The inscription was found engraved on a dolomite slab and shale, which are part of a fragmentary pillar excavated from a farmer's field.
 - **Dolomite** is a sedimentary carbonate rock composed mostly of calcium magnesium carbonate.
 - **Shale** or mudstone is a fine-grained sedimentary rock that forms from the compaction of silt and clay-size mineral particles.
- The inscription was written in **archaic Telugu**. It was assigned to the **8th Century AD**, when the region was under the rule of **Chola Maharaja of Renadu**.
- **Text:** The inscription seems to throw light on the **record of a gift of six Marttus** (a measuring unit) of land to a *Brahmin* Priest. Some lines are indicative of the **priority given to morality in those days**.
- In July 2020, the **Archaeological Survey of India** (ASI) had found the exact location of Renati Cholas' capital in Kadapa district of Andhra Pradesh.

ASI deciphered two inscriptions of Renati Cholas belonging to the 7th century. The first inscription speaks of their capital **Erikal** in **Kamalapuram region in Kadapa**, while the other speaks about the **battle of Renati Cholas and Banas**.

- **Renati Cholas:**
 - The Telugu Cholas of Renadu (also called as Renati Cholas) ruled over Renadu region, the present day **Kadapa district**.
 - The earliest of this family was **Nandivarman (500 AD)**.
 - Renandu Cholas were the **feudatories of the Chola dynasty**.
 - These kings claimed that they belonged to Karikala **Chola's dynasty**.
 - They are said to be the **first kingdom to use Telugu in administration and inscriptions**, instead of Sanskrit.

Chola Dynasty

- The Cholas controlled the central and northern parts of Tamil Nadu from around the 8th-12th century AD.
- Their core area of the rule was the Kaveri delta, later known as Cholamandalam. Their capital was **Uraiyur** (near Tiruchirapalli town) and Puhar or Kaviripattinam was an alternative royal residence and chief port town.
- **Tiger** was their **emblem**.
- The Cholas also maintained an **efficient navy**.
- **King Karikala** was a famous king of the **Sangam** Cholas.
 - Many **Sangam** poems mention the **Battle of Venni where he defeated the confederacy of Cheras, Pandyas and eleven minor chieftains**.
 - Trade and commerce flourished during his reign.
 - He founded the **port city of Puhar (identical with Kaveripattinam)** and constructed 160 km of an embankment along the Kaveri River.
- Recently, the Department of Science and Technology (DST) has launched '**Project Digital Poompuhar**' to recreate the **Chola Dynasty port city (Poompuhar)** in Tamil Nadu.
- Recently, the consecration (Kumbhabhishekam) ceremony was held at the **Brihadisvara Temple** after 23 years in Thanjavur, Tamil Nadu. The temple was built by Chola emperor **Raja Raja Chola I** (985-1014 AD) between 1003 AD and 1010 AD.

Source: TH