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Gottiprolu- An Early Trade Centre of Andhra Pradesh

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Why in News?

Excavation by **Archaeological Survey of India** at **Gottiprolu** near **Nellore (now renamed as Sri Potti Sriramulu) district, Andhra Pradesh** has **discovered the remains of a huge settlement.**

Key Points

- The site lies on the **right bank of a distributary of river Swarnamukhi.**
- The proximity of the site (at southern coastal location) to the **seacoast** suggests that the site could have served as a strategic settlement involved in **maritime trade.**
- Detailed topographical studies have identified an early historic settlement surrounded by a fortification and the possibility of a moat encircling it.

Discovered Items

- **Sculpture-** Life-size buried **Vishnu sculpture** with following specifications:



- **Four-armed** Vishnu standing over a pedestal,
- Carrying **chakra and conch** in his upper right and left hands respectively. The lower right is in **bestowing boon** position and the left hand in **'Katihastha'** (resting on the hip) posture.
- Features like the elaborate headgear, thick holy thread, and decorative drapery dates it back to the **Pallava period** (c. 8th cent. AD).
- **Pottery- conical jars** that are considered to be imitated variety of **Roman Amphorae jars** (ancient Greek or Roman jar/ jug used to **transport liquid commodities**).
- These settlements could have been an **important trade centre** due to the presence of imitated amphorae wares.
- The conical jars of broken terracotta pipes found fitted into one another revealed about the **civic amenities** and **drainage system pattern** maintained

by the occupants at the site.



- The ceramic assemblage of the site consisted of fine quality **black and redwares** collected from the conical jars, russet coated ware, etc.
- **Brick-built structures** in different sizes and forms like elliptical, circular, rectangular, and curvilinear pattern.
- The size of bricks can be compared to those found in the **Satavahana/Ikshvaku period** structures in the **Krishna valley viz. Amaravati and Nagarjunakonda**.
- This dates back the site to the 2nd century to 1st century BC.

- **Molded female terracotta figurine-** with two hands lifted upwards.



- **Varied stone tools** of **Palaeolithic and Neolithic periods** were also found which suggest that prehistoric people also occupied this area.
- Other major retrieved antiquities unearthed are **copper and lead coins, iron spearhead, stone celts, terracotta beads**, ear stud in semi-precious stone and hopscotches.
- **Important Remnants of the Site:** fortified early historic settlement at Pudururu, Sunbrahmnya temple at Mallam, unique rock-cut laterite stepped well at Yakasiri, Vishnu temple at Tirumuru.

Source: PIB