



Keeladi Findings

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According to a report published by the Tamil Nadu Archaeology Department (TNAD), the cultural deposits unearthed during the excavations at site **Keeladi** located in the Sivaganga district could be dated to a period between the 6th **century BC** and the **1st century AD**.

Key Findings

- The title of the report was '**Keeladi-An Urban Settlement of Sangam Age** on the Banks of River Vaigai.'
- Previously it was believed that the Keeladi artefacts belonged to the 3rd century BC. But the **carbon dating test** confirmed the date of the **Tamil-Brahmi script** is dated to the year 580 BC.
- The results suggest that the **second urbanization** (the first being the **Indus Valley Civilization**) of **Vaigai plains** happened in Tamil Nadu during the 6th century BC. The contemporary of which in the Gangetic plains was the **Iron Age** & the period of the rise of various **Heterodox sects**.
- **Skeletal fragments** of Cow/Ox & Buffalo, Sheep & Goat, Nilgai & Blackbuck, Wild boar, and Peacock suggest that the society in Keeladi had used animals predominantly for **agricultural purposes**.
- **Pottery specimens** from Keeladi confirmed that the water containers and cooking vessels were shaped out of locally available raw materials. The recovery of spindle whorls, pinpointed bone tip tools, hanging stones of the yarn, terracotta spheres, copper needle, and earthen vessels to hold liquid, outlines the various stages of **weaving industry** from spinning, yarning, looming, weaving and dyeing.

Sangam Age

- The word 'Sangam' is the Tamil form of the Sanskrit word **Sangha** which means a group of persons or an association.
- The Tamil Sangam was an **academy of poets** who flourished in three different periods and in different places under the patronage of the **Pandyan kings**.

- The **Sangam literature** which was largely consolidated from the **third Sangam**, throws information on conditions of life of people around the beginning of the Christian era.
 - It deals with the **secular matter** relating to the public and social activities like government, war charity, trade, worship, agriculture, etc.
 - Sangam literature consists of the earliest Tamil works (such as the **Tolkappiyam**), the ten poems (**Pattupattu**), the eight anthologies (**Ettutogai**) and the eighteen minor works (**Padinenkilkanakku**), and the three epics.

Tamil-Brahmi Script

- The Brahmi script was the earliest script that the Tamils used.
- In the late ancient and early medieval period they started evolving a new angular script, called the **Grantha script**, from which the modern Tamil is derived.

Vaigai River

- It is an **east-flowing river**.
- The Vaigai river basin is an important basin among the 12 basins lying between the **Cauvery and Kanyakumari**.
- This basin is bounded by the **Cardamom Hills and the Palani Hills** on the West and by **the Palk Strait and Palk Bay** on the East.

Source: TH