

IRON IN TAMIL NADU



Issue

The Tamil Nadu government has announced that carbon dating has pushed the use of Iron in India to 4,200 years.

Background

The dating was carried out on iron objects excavated in Tamil Nadu.

Details

Carbon dating has pushed the origin of the iron objects to 2172 BC. Previously, the earliest iron usage was 1500 BCE for Tamil Nadu and 1900-2000 BC for rest of India.

Location of materials

- The iron objects were excavated from Mayiladumparai near Krishnagiri in Tamil Nadu. The site dates between the Microlithic (30,000 BCE) and Early Historic (600 BCE) ages.
- The site was discovered by Prof Rajan in 1990s. It is in the vicinity of several other archeological sites.

Significance of dating

The results also pushes back the start of agriculture in Tamil Nadu as iron objects were used to clear forests and establish farms.

Iron Age

- The precise time of Iron Age varies from region to region. Iron Age in India was traced to 1300 BCE after discovery of Ahar culture.
- It was red-adjusted to 1900-2000 BCE based on excavation in sites at Malhar near Varanasi and Brahmagiri in North Karnataka.
- Before the latest discovery, the Iron Age in Tamil Nadu was dated based on objects excavated at site of Thelunganur and Mangadu near Mettur, dating back to 1500 BCE.

Importance of iron to civilization

- Discovery of iron led to the production of agricultural tools and weapons, leading to production required for a civilization.
- Copper metal played a major role in cultural evolution but it was not as strong as iron to clear dense forests and bring land under agriculture.

NOTES

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