

Chola Era

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Context- After a long struggle, the Idol Wing CID of Tamilnadu Police was finally able to recover a rare variety bronze Hanuman idol that had been stolen from a Chola-era temple in the Ariyalur district a decade earlier.

Key Highlights

- In 2012, a theft was reported from the Sri Varadharaja Perumal Temple, a Chola-era Vishnu temple in the Pottaveli Velur village near Sendurai in the Ariyalur district.
- The case was taken up for investigation by the Idol Wing CID, which looked at the various idol images on the websites of international art galleries and museums.

About Chola Dynasty

- The Cholas, who ruled from 8th to 12th century AD, are remembered as one of India's longest-running dynasties in the south.
- The Cholas' victory over the Pallavas in the 9th century marked the beginning of their rule. Until the 13th century, this rule existed for more than five long centuries.
- The Cholas experienced absolute power and growth during the medieval period.
- Aditya I and Parantaka I were kings at this time, and Rajaraj and Rajendra Chola continued to expand the kingdom into the Tamil region from here.
- Kulothunga Chola eventually took control of Kalinga to establish a firm rule.
- This splendor persisted until the Pandyas arrived in the early 13th century.

Famous Monarchs

- **Vijayalaya:** Vijayalaya was the one who founded the Chola Empire. In the 8th century, he took control of the kingdom of Tanjore and defeated the Pallavas, which led to the rise of the powerful Cholas.
- **Aditya I:** Aditya I became the empire's ruler after Vijayalaya left. He crushed ruler Aparajita and the domain acquired huge power under his rule. Together with the Vadumbas, he overthrew the Pandya Kings and established Pallava rule in the region.
- **Rajendra Chola:** He took over for the powerful Rajaraja Chola. The first person to venture to the Ganges' banks was Rajendra I. He was often referred to as the "Victory of the Ganges." The Cholas' golden age is the name given to this time. The kingdom saw widespread decline during his rule.

Management and Governance:

- The entire southern region was brought under the control of a single governing force during the Cholas' rule. The Cholas had a long-lasting monarchy.
- Mandalams were the provinces that made up the massive kingdom.
- Every mandalam had its own governor in charge.
- These were further subdivided into tehsil-based districts known as nadus.
- During the time of the Cholas, the government was set up in such a way that each village was its own self-governing unit.
- The administration was seen investing in the construction of several temples and complexes containing sculptures and paintings because the Cholas were ardent supporters of poetry, literature, art, and drama.
- The king would continue to be the primary figure in charge, exercising authority and making major decisions.

Architecture

- The Dravida style of temple architecture was best exemplified by Chola architecture between 871 and 1173 AD.
- They built some of medieval India's most impressive temples.
- Brihadeshwara, Rajarajeshwara, and Gangaikonda Cholapuram are examples of Chola temples that elevated Dravidian architecture to new heights. Even after Cholas, temple design continued to flourish.

Cholas Sculpture

- The sculpture of Nataraja in the Tandava dance posture was a significant Chola sculpture.
- However the earliest realized Nataraja design, which has been unearthed at Ravana phadi cave at Aihole, was made during the early Chalukya rule, the figure arrived at its top under the Cholas.
- The later period of Chola craftsmanship, in the thirteenth 100 years, is outlined by the figure showing Bhudevi, or the earth goddess as the more youthful partner of Vishnu. She remains in a smoothly flexed mentality on a lotus base holding a lily in her right

hand, while the left arm hangs along her side.

- Images made of chola bronze are regarded as among the finest in the world.