

Tamil Brahmi Inscriptions in Egypt

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Why in News?

Recently, Tamil Brahmi inscriptions found in Egypt's Valley of the Kings reveal ancient Indian-Roman trade and cultural links.

- **Location** - Found in six tombs of the Theban Necropolis (Nile Valley, Egypt).
- **Key Discovery - Script** - Around 30 inscriptions were newly discovered.
- **Language** - Tamil Brahmi, Prakrit and Sanskrit.
- **Chronology** - Dated to 1st-3rd Century CE.
- **Origin of Visitors** - Indians from north-western, western and southern regions of the subcontinent, with visitors from Tamilagam forming the majority.
- **Nature of Inscriptions** - Names and short graffiti carved on walls, corridors and entrances.
- Followed the Greek tradition of leaving names in tombs.
- **Spatial Spread** - Evidence of Indians travelling beyond Red Sea ports into the Nile Valley.
- **Names Identified - Cikai Korṛaṇ** - Repeated 8 times across 5 tombs.
 - **Cikai** - Linked to Sanskrit *śikhā* (tuft/crown).
 - **Korṛaṇ** - From Tamil *korṛam* (victory/slaying); linked to goddess Korṛavai.
- **Kopāṇ** - "Kopāṇ came and saw"; name found in Ammankovilpatti, Tamil Nadu.
- **Other Names** - Cātaṇ and Kiraṇ.
- **Historical Linkages** - Appears in Sangam corpus (Chera king Pittāṅkorṛaṇ).
- Similar inscriptions at Pugalur (2nd-3rd Century CE).
- **Significance - Trade Linkages** - Confirms Indo-Roman maritime trade involving Tamil merchants.
- **Cultural Continuity** - Links of overseas names to the Sangam corpus and domestic inscriptions.
- **Diaspora** - Evidence of Tamil long-distance mobility and overseas presence.



Reference

[TH | New Tamil Brahmi inscriptions in Egypt's Valley](#)

