

CURRENT AFFAIRS

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TOPIC: ARCHEOLOGICAL DISCOVERIES

Excavation season set to end today in ancient Chola city



Brick structures were found during the excavation at Maligaimedu in most of the 19 quadrants opened this year. M. MOORTHY

S. Ganesan
TIRUCHI

Archaeological excavations at Maligaimedu near Gangaikondacholapuram is set to end on Friday amid calls for scaling up the exploration to cover more areas in the ancient city that King Rajendra Chola I (1012-1044) had built after his victorious expedition up to the Gangetic plains.

This season's excavation, inaugurated by Chief Minister M.K. Stalin on February 11, led to the exposure of more brick structures of what is believed to be a medieval palace.

More significantly, broken pieces of a bracelet made of gold and copper, a figurine made of ivory and a copper coin were found this year. Besides these, Chinese ware, iron nails and broken pieces of other copper objects were found. Brick structures were also found in most of the 19 quadrants opened.

With the licence granted by the Central Advisory Board for Archaeology (CABA) expiring on September 30, the team of archaeologists and workers have been busy covering quadrants with tarpaulin sheets over the past few days to protect the site during monsoon. The process of documentation would continue over the next few weeks. The Department of Archaeology is likely to continue the excavation at the site next year too,

sources in the department said.

Gangaikondacholapuram was the capital of the Cholas for about 250 years from about 1025 CE. It is widely believed that palaces of Chola kings had existed there about 1,000 years ago but were destroyed during the Pandya invasions or later. Excavations carried out in the 1980s by the Department of Archaeology, under the direct supervision of its first director late R. Nagaswamy, had already unearthed parts of a palace and the city. During the excavation last year, more portions of the palace's structure were exposed.

In the recent months, the excavation site had been attracting a steady stream of visitors, including tourists visiting the famous Brihadeswara Temple at Gangaikondacholapuram. Local residents and heritage enthusiasts feel that the scope of the exploration should be widened to cover more places around Gangaikondacholapuram. "I wish the officials take up a wider and deeper exploration in Manmalai, believed to have been the 'thermutti' (the place where car is kept) during the period of Rajendra Chola," says P. Ramamurthy of Manmalai.

"During the excavations led by Dr. Nagaswamy, a few antique objects were found from a couple of trenches dug close to my field," he claimed.

- ✓ Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu has recently inaugurated the second phase of excavation at Maligaimedu near Gangaikondacholapuram in Ariyalur district.
- ✓ Gangaikondacholapuram was established by King Rajendra Chola after his victorious expedition to the Gangetic plains.
- ✓ He also built Brihadeeswarar Temple there as an example of the architecture of Chola empire, which has been declared a protected monument.
- ✓ Pottery, roof tiles, iron nails, ornate stones, bracelets, bells, ivory carvings and coins were unearthed.

TOPIC: AGRICULTURE

Cotton growers in Karnataka are worried over excess soil moisture

Ravikumar Naraboli
YADGIR

Excessive rainfall this year has not only damaged the crops but has also led to gradual increase in moisture content in the soil, as a result of which leaves of cotton plants have begun turning red along with a thickening of the stem.

The sudden development of this disease has become a cause for worry among farmers. After heavy rain flooded their lands and destroyed their crops two months ago, farmers were hoping that the remaining crops would recover. However, their expectations have been dashed.



Cause for concern: Due to excess moisture content in the soil, leaves of cotton plants have begun turning red. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

“I spent thousands of rupees expecting good yield, but the rain ruined it. Now, leaves and stem of cotton trees are becoming red. I don’t know how to overcome this crisis,” Sha-

rana Basappa, a farmer in Ukkinal village, said.

The cotton crop, covering 1,77,684 hectares in the district, is presently in its flowering stage. However, if the current situation con-

tinues, a majority of the crops will not bear yield. Therefore, agriculture department has extended a helping hand to farmers with proper guidelines and suggestions to prevent the crop from withering.

“After 60 days from sowing of cotton seed and before onset of winter, farmers should spray 2% of Urea or DAP with 2% Potassium Nitrate or 1% Muriate of Potash on the cotton leaves two to three times every fortnight. After 90 to 110 days from sowing, 10 gram Magnesium Sulphate should be sprayed on leaves after mixing it with one litre of water,” sources from the agriculture department said.

Cotton- fibre, oil and protein yielding crop of global significance.

- ✓ Temperature: Between 21-30°C
- ✓ Rainfall: Around 50-100cm.
- ✓ Soil Type: Well-drained black cotton soil of Deccan Plateau.
- ✓ Top Cotton Producing States: Gujarat > Maharashtra > Telangana > Andhra Pradesh > Rajasthan.



TOPIC: HISTORY

Excavations shed light on Tipu Sultan's unfinished fort

A.S. Jayanth
KOZHIKODE

Less-known facts are now emerging about a well-planned fort that was designed to be part of Farokhabad, the capital of Malabar at Feroke near Kozhikode, as envisioned by the Mysore king Tipu Sultan.

These are coming to light in the course of the excavations by the Kerala State Archaeological Department in the area. Historical documents such as William Logan's *Malabar Manual*, the Joint Commissioner's 'Report on Malabar', and Mohibbul Hassan's *A History of Tipu Sultan* say that Tipu

planned to build the fort on the south bank of the Chaliyar river between 1786 and 1790. But its construction could not be completed. A report by the department says that this was the only fort in Kerala built entirely by Tipu.

"The main structures found inside the fort earlier were a bungalow built by the Basel Mission, a laterite chamber, a helical step-well and a rock-cut cave of the early Iron Age. Through systematic exploration, we have now uncovered bastions, ramparts, moats, arsenal remains, and ditch wells," K. Krishnaraj, field survey assistant who is heading the excavations, told *The Hindu*.



Back to life: The wall and laterite chamber unearthed from Mysore king Tipu Sultan's fort at Feroke near Kozhikode in Kerala. K. RAGESH

The fort was situated on a strategic location on a hillock with the Arabian Sea on one side and the Chaliyar river on the other to

keep an eye on military movements from both sides. The defence wall on the western side was built on a laterite foundation.

The bastions are a two-tier structure similar to the one at Tipu's fort in Palakkad. "There was no well on the northern side of the struc-

ture, indicating that it must have been the entrance to the fort," Mr. Krishnaraj said.

The excavations have also led to the discovery of copper coins and coin pellet moulds, hinting at a possibility of minting on the premises, probably in the laterite chamber. Musket balls and gun flints are among the other relics excavated from the area. Shards of ceramic collections and Staffordshire pottery too have been found.

The excavation work began in April this year and the third level of work will conclude on Friday. The department had conducted a preliminary study in October 2020.

TIPU SULTAN

- ✓ He was a ruler of the Kingdom of Mysore and the eldest son of Sultan Hyder Ali of Mysore.
- ✓ Fought the first Anglo-Mysore War (1767-69) at the age of 17 and subsequently, against the Marathas and in the Second Anglo-Mysore War (1780-84).
- ✓ He fought Company forces four times during 1767-99 and was killed defending his capital Srirangapatnam in the Fourth Anglo Mysore War.
- ✓ Tipu reorganised his army along European lines, using new technology, including what is considered the first war rocket.

- ✓ Devised a land revenue system based on detailed surveys and classification, in which the tax was imposed directly on the peasant, and collected through salaried agents in cash, widening the state's resource base.
- ✓ Modernised agriculture, gave tax breaks for developing wasteland, built irrigation infrastructure and repaired old dams, and promoted agricultural manufacturing and sericulture. Built a navy to support trade.
- ✓ Commissioned a “state commercial corporation” to set up factories.



TOPIC: TRADE

Current account deficit widened to 2.8% of GDP in Q1

The Hindu Bureau
MUMBAI

India's current account deficit (CAD) widened to \$23.9 billion, or 2.8% of GDP, in the April-June period, from \$13.4 billion or 1.5% in the preceding quarter, and compared with a surplus of \$6.6 billion (0.9%) a year earlier, Reserve Bank of India data released on Thursday show.

"CAD will certainly widen further despite the moderation in crude oil prices," said Rupa Rege Nitsure, chief economist at L&T Financial Holdings.

"India can attract more capital inflows if and only if it shows an improvement in growth prospects. Going by the underlying trends, India's CAD may be 3.5-3.7%... in FY23," she noted.

While debits were to the tune of \$254.9 billion, credits totalled \$231 billion.

'Trade deficit widens'

The CAD widened mainly on account of the merchandise trade deficit broadening to \$68.6 billion, from \$30.7 billion, as well as an increase in net outgo of investment income payments.

Net services receipts increased, both sequentially



Going by the underlying trends, India's current account deficit may be 3.5-3.7% of GDP in FY23

RUPA REGE NITSURE
Chief Economist at L&T Financial Holdings

and on a year-on-year basis, on the back of rising exports of computer and business services.

Services exports grew 35.4% from a year earlier, led by broad-based growth in computer, business, transportation, and travel services, the RBI said.

Private transfer receipts, mainly remittances by Indians employed overseas, grew 22.6% year-on-year to \$25.6 billion. Net outgo on the income account, primarily reflecting payments of investment income, increased to \$9.3 billion, from \$7.5 billion.

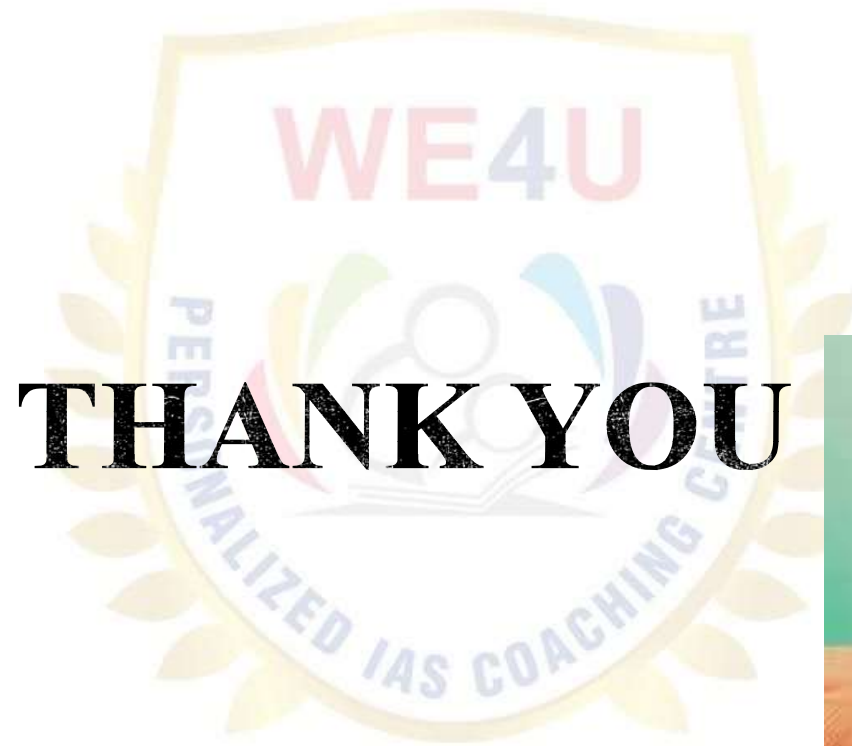
In the financial account, net foreign direct investment (FDI) rose to \$13.6 billion, from \$11.6 billion a year earlier.

Net foreign portfolio investment saw outflows of \$14.6 billion, versus inflows of \$0.4 billion in Q1 FY22.

(With Reuters inputs)

Current Account Deficit

- ✓ A current account deficit occurs when the total value of goods and services a country imports exceeds the total value of goods and services it exports.
- ✓ The balance of exports and imports of goods is referred to as the trade balance. Trade Balance is a part of 'Current Account Balance'.
- ✓ Mostly High Oil Imports, High Gold Imports are the major driving force, widening the CAD.



THANK YOU

