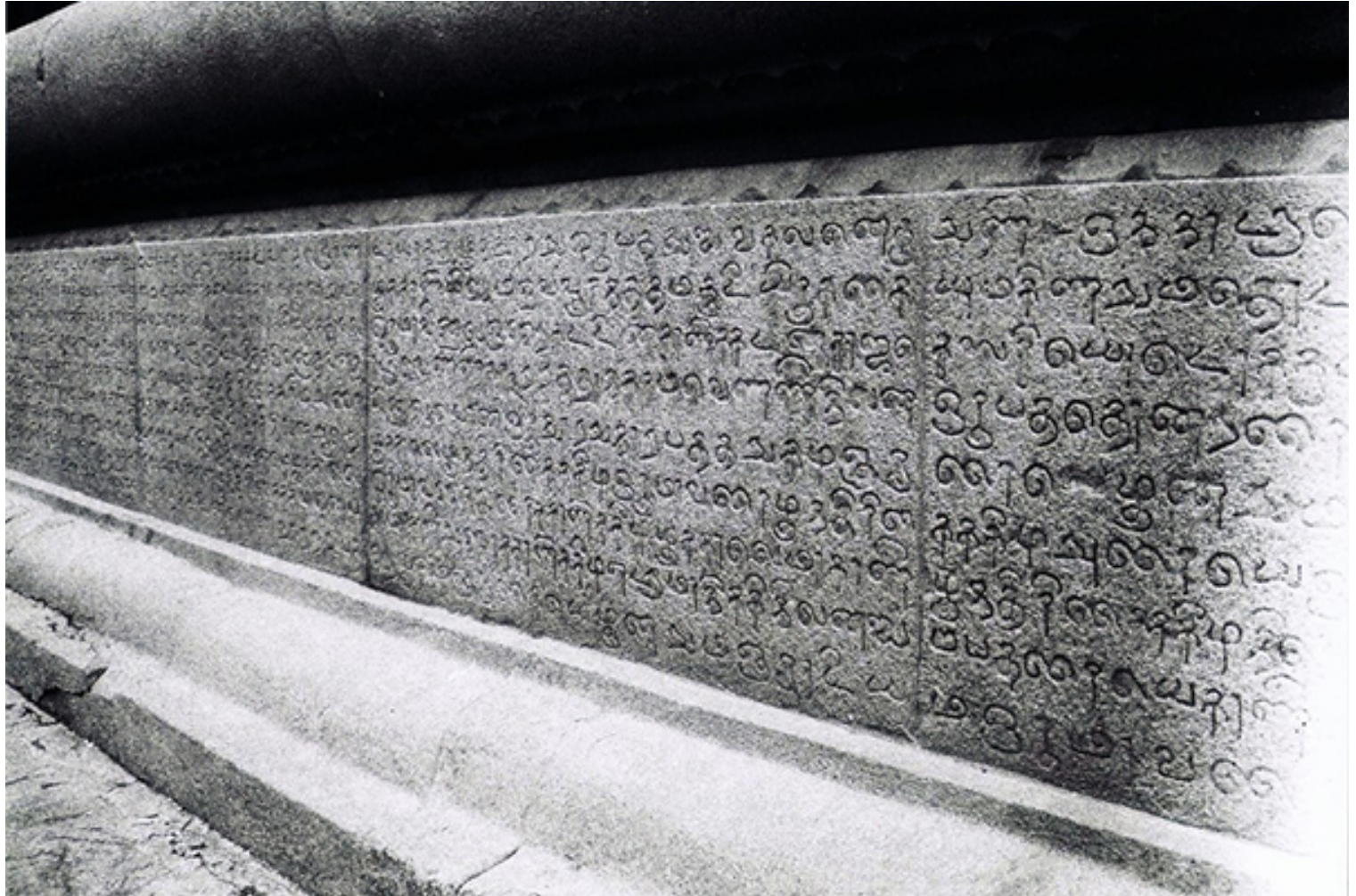


## Kudavolai Electoral System

By IASToppers | 2024-02-01 15:45:00



## Kudavolai Electoral System

Tamil Nadu's tableau in the Republic Day parade showcased the historical significance of the Kudavolai electoral system.

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### **About Kudavolai Electoral System:**

- Emerged during the **Chola era**, the Kudavolai system was utilized to **elect representatives** responsible for village administration.
- The system effectively conveyed the **collective will of the people to the empire**.
- Historical evidence for the Kudavolai system is documented in the **Uttaramerur inscriptions** located in **Kanchipuram district**.

### **Key features of the system:**

- Villagers actively participated in the **administration**, resembling the **modern Panchayat Raj system**.
- The village was divided into 30 wards, and **residents from these wards** gathered to select one representative for the village assembly.

### **Election Process:**

- Contestants' names were written on palm leaf tickets (**volai**), placed in a pot (**kuda**), and shuffled.
- **A small boy randomly picked palm leaves** to determine elected representatives.

### **Qualifications for Representatives:**

- Ownership of a designated amount of land.
- Possession of a house.
- Age between 35 and 70.

- Knowledge of **mantras** and **Brahmanas** from the Vedic corpus.
- Exception made for those who learned at least one Veda and four **Bhashyas**.
- Proficiency in business and virtuous conduct.

#### Disqualifications:

- The inscription lists disqualifications based on factors like **not submitting accounts**, committing **grave sins**, association with **outcastes**, and consumption of **forbidden dishes**.

#### Limitations:

- While resembling a form of local self-governance, the system had limitations.
- Membership was restricted to a specific group of **land-owning Brahmins**.
- The selection process involved a **draw of lots rather than true elections**.

#### About Uttaramerur inscriptions:

- Uttaramerur is situated in the present-day Kanchipuram district, Tamil Nadu.
  - It is known for its **historic temples** built during Pallava and Chola rule.
- The town houses the renowned **Vaikunda Perumal Temple**, where an inscription from **Parantaka I's reign** provides valuable insights into the **functioning of the local sabha** (village assembly).
- The Uttaramerur inscription outlines the **structure, selection process, and responsibilities** of the local sabha, specifically comprised of Brahmins.