

Tolkāppiyam

December 30, 2021

In news- The Minister of State for Education released the Hindi translation of Tolkāppiyam and the Kannada translations of 9 books of Classical Tamil literature recently.

About Tolkāppiyam-

- Tolkappiyam is the **most ancient extant Tamil grammar text and the oldest extant long work of Tamil literature.**
- It is a comprehensive text on grammar, **and includes sutras on orthography, phonology, etymology, morphology,** semantics, prosody, sentence structure and the significance of context in language.
- **The surviving manuscripts of the Tolkappiyam consists of three books,** each with nine chapters, with a cumulative total of 1,612 sutras in the nūrpā meter.
- **The three books are** -the *Eluttatikaram* (“Eluttu” meaning “letter, phoneme”), the *Sollatikaram* (“Sol” meaning “Sound, word”) and the *Porulatikaram* (“Porul” meaning “subject matter”, i.e. prosody, rhetoric, poetics).
- **There is no firm evidence to assign the authorship of this treatise to any one author.**
- **Tholkapiyam, some traditionally believe,** was written by a single author named Tholkappiyar, a disciple of Vedic sage Agastya mentioned in the Rigveda (1500–1200 BCE).
- **Some in the Tamil tradition place the text in the mythical second sangam,** variously in 1st millennium BCE or earlier.
- **According to the traditional legend, the original grammar was called Agathiam written down by sage Agastya,** but it went missing after a great deluge.