Kodumanal reveals megalithic belief in afterlife

- The Kodumanal excavation of **10 pots and bowls**, instead of the usual three or four pots, placed outside three-chambered burial cists and inside the cairn-circle, threw light on burial rituals and the **concept of afterlife in megalithic culture**.
- A team from the State Department of Archaeology, Chennai, led by J. Ranjith, Archaeology Officer and Project Director for the Kodumanal excavation, has identified **250 cairn-circles** at the village in Erode district.
- Earlier excavations revealed that the site served as a trade-cum-industrial centre from 5th century BCE to 1st century BCE.
- The **rectangular chambered cists**, each two metres long and six metres wide, are made of stone slabs, and the entire grave is surrounded by boulders that form a circle.
- The grave could be of a **village head** or the head of the community as the size of two boulders, each facing **east and west**, are bigger than other boulders.
- Believing that the **deceased person** will get a **new life after death**, pots and bowls filled with grains were placed outside the chambers.
- This is probably the first time that 10 pots have been found near the cists during excavations in the State.
- Previous excavations have revealed that **multi-ethnic groups** lived at the village, located about 500 metres away from the **Noyyal river**.
- Mr. Ranjith told The Hindu that the findings unearthed so far include an **animal skull**, possibly of a **wolf or a dog**; precious stones like **beryl**, **carnelian**, **quartz**, **jasper**, **beads**, **gold pieces and needles**; **copper smelting units**; the mud walls of a workshop; **potteries**; and **Tamil Brahmi script**.