Prelims: Ancient History
Mains: GS-1 Art and Culture

Context:
- A recent study claims that a majority of the Indus Valley inscriptions were written *logographically (by using word signs)* and not by using phonograms (speech sounds units).

Paper Title:
- Interrogating Indus inscription to unravel their mechanism of meaning conveyance.

What is Logographic
- In Logographic system a *written character* that represents a *word* or *phrase*.
- Logographic systems include the earliest writing systems; the first historical civilizations of the Near East, Africa, China, and Central America used some form of logographic writing.

Findings of Study:
- The Study points out that the inscriptions can be compared to the *structured messages* found on stamps, coupons, tokens and currency coins of modern times.
- The article mainly focusses on understanding how Indus inscriptions conveyed meanings, rather than on deciphering what they conveyed.
- Analysing the brevity of the inscriptions, the rigid positional preferences maintained by the signs of the inscriptions, and the co-occurrence of restriction patterns demonstrated by certain classes of Indus signs it can be inferred that such *patterns can never be phonological co-occurrence restrictions*.
- The researcher said that the popular hypothesis that the seals were inscribed with Proto-Dravidian or Proto-Indo-European names of the seal owners does not hold water.