

Major Sites Of Indus Valley Civilization - Ancient History Notes For UPSC

UPSC Ancient History Notes

The Indus Valley Civilization (IVC) is one of the four ancient civilizations of the world and also claimed to be the largest among all. Around 3000 BC, the Indus Valley Civilization emerged on the banks of the river Indus and they flourished between 2600 BC to 1900 BC. It belonged to the bronze age and is proved to be far more advanced in bronze using culture.

- The civilization mainly covered Sindh, Balochistan, Punjab, Gujarat, Rajasthan and northern Uttar Pradesh. In total, the area of civilization accounted for approximately 1.3 million square kilometers.
- In 1921, the Archaeological Department of India unearthed the first site of Indus Valley Civilization and it is known as Harappa. Since then the civilization itself is referred to as the Harappan Civilization.
- In the following years, several sites of Indus Valley Civilization were discovered by various archaeologists. In addition, numerous sculptures, jewellerys, seals, potteries and so on which display the artistic sensibilities and vivid imagination of the people belonging to the Indus Valley Civilization have also been excavated from these sites since 1921.

In this article on the major sites of Indus valley civilization, we shall discuss some of the important Harappan sites, their location, the archaeologist behind its excavation and the important archaeological findings in these sites. This topic will be very helpful for the [UPSC](#) aspirants in their upcoming preliminary examination.

Important Sites Of Indus Valley Civilization

More than 1000 sites of the Indus Valley Civilization have been unearthed in various regions of India, Pakistan and Afghanistan. India is home to the majority of the sites of this thousand year old civilization. Let us discuss a few major sites of Indus Valley Civilization one by one.

Harappa

- Harappa was the first excavated/ discovered site of the Indus Valley Civilization. It was excavated by a team led by the archaeologist Daya Ram Sahnii in 1921.
- It is located in the Sahiwal district of West Punjab, on the banks of River Ravi.
- This city was possibly an urban center of the Indus Valley Civilization.
- Some of the major archeological findings which have been unearthed from this site are as follows,
 - Two sandstone statue depicting human anatomy
 - Ekkas (Bullock carts)
 - Two rows of six Granaries
 - workmen quarters
 - Bronze sculpture of dog chasing a deer
 - Red sandstone male torso
 - Sculpture of mother goddess
 - A pottery with Indus script on it.
 - Faience slag
 - Terracotta figurines

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Mohenjo Daro

- Mohenjo Daro was the second site to be unearthed from the area of Indus Valley Civilization. It was discovered by R.D. Banerjee and his team in 1922.
- It is located in the Larkana district of Sindh (Pakistan) on the banks of river Indus.
- Most of the unicorn seals belonging to the Harappan Civilization have been discovered from Mohenjo Daro.
- Major archaeological findings of this city includes,
 - The great bath
 - Citadel
 - Bronze statue of dancing girl
 - Bronze buffalo
 - Steatite statue of a bearded priest
 - Seal of pashupati
 - The great granary
 - Assembly hall
 - 3 cylindrical shaped seals similar to Mesopotamian ones.
 - Terracotta toys
 - A piece of woven cloth

Sutkagendor

- In 1929, one of the sites of Indus Valley Civilization, Sutkagendor was excavated by an ar

- Flint blades archaeologist named Stein.
- This Harappan site is located in the Makran district of Balochistan (Pakistan), on the banks of Dast river. As of now, it is the westernmost site of Indus Valley Civilization that is known.
- Like most of the Harappan sites, Sutkagendor also has a citadel and defensive wall which is about 30 feet wide. Archaeologists believe that this Harappan site would have been on the trade route from Lothal to Mesopotamia.
- Some of the major archaeological findings unearthed from this site are,
 - Stone vessels
 - Pottery
 - Shell beads and
 - Bangles made out of clay.

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Chanhudaro

- In 1931, the Harappan site called Chanhudaro was excavated by N.G.Majumdar and his team.
- This site is located in the Nawabshah district of Sindh (Pakistan) on the bank of river Indus. It is located 80 miles south of Mohenjo Daro.
- From the archaeological findings of this site, it can be inferred that this city was the manufacturing center of Indus Valley Civilization and it was possibly the abandoned city.
- This site is portrayed as the Lancashire of ancient India and it is the only Indus city which does not have any citadel in it
- Some of the archaeological findings from this site are listed below,
 - Traces of bead maker's factory
 - Usage of kajal and lipstick were discovered
 - Inkpot
 - Impression of a cart with seated driver

Lothal

- Archaeologist R.Rao unearthed the Lothal city of Indus Valley Civilization in 1953.
- It is located near the Gulf of Cambay/ Gulf of Khambhat in Gujarat, on the bank of river Sabarmati.
- One of the important features of this Harappan site is that it consists of a dock which is regarded as the oldest one in the country. This dock connects the city to Arabian sea via Sabarmati river. This made the city an important trade center of the entire civilization.
- Archaeologists and historians claim that Lothal was possibly the Manchester of the Harappan civilization.
- It is the most extensively researched coastal site of Indus Valley Civilization.
- Archaeological findings from this site includes,
 - Port and dockyard
 - Single citadel
 - Exclusive feature of lothal is that it has house with entrance facing the street
 - Couple burial
 - The seal with the story of clever fox
 - Mesopotamian seal made of ivory
 - Rice husk
 - Chess game
 - Terracotta figures of horse and ship

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Kalibangan

- In 1953, Kalibangan city of Indus Valley Civilization was excavated by Amala Nanda Gosh.
- It is located in the Hanumangarh district of Rajasthan, on the banks of river Ghaggar. This river is believed to be the remnant of the ancient river Sarasvathi.
- The archaeologists claim that the ploughed fields of Kalibangan is the world's first ploughed field.
- Things that were unearthed from Kalibangan city includes,
 - Double citadel
 - Burnt bangles
 - Fire altars
 - Sun dried bricks
 - Ploughed fields
 - Wooden plough
 - Bones of camel
 - Lower fortified town
 - Earthquake evidence
 - Copper ox
 - Small circular pits with large urns and pottery

Surkotada

- J.P.Joshi in 1964 excavated the Surkotada site of Indus Valley Civilization.
- It is located in the Kutch district of Gujarat on the banks of Shadi Kaur river.
- Harappan made settlement in this IVC site only during the later phase of Harappan civilization i.e between 1900 BC to 1300 BC.
- It is the only Harappan site where the actual remains of horse bones were found.
- It is a fortified Harappan site which covers an area of about 3.5 acres. On the East side of the city, residential complexes were constructed and on the west side Citadel were located. Citadels were located higher than the residential complexes.
- Major archaeological findings are
 - Horse, elephant and wolf bones
 - Stone fortifications.

Go through the [NCERT Notes on Mauryan Administration](#) here.

Banawali

- Banawali is one of the important archaeological sites of Indus Valley Civilization which was unearthed by R.S.Bisht in 1974.
- It is located in the Fatehabad district of Haryana. It is located about 120km to the northeast of Kalibangan.
- The city consists of a well constructed fort town with a defence wall of height 4.5m. Burnt and moulded brick kilns were used to construct the houses.
- The pottery recovered from the IVC site, Banawali is very similar to that of Kalibangan in the assemblage.
- The artefacts unearthed from this site includes,
 - Barley grains of good quality
 - Toy plough
 - Settlement was oval shaped
 - Burnished grayware which were decorated with motifs
 - Ivory comb

- Tortoise shell
- Human figures of both males and females
- S-shaped jars, painted earthen pots, cooking vessels etc.

Rakhigarhi

- The excavation of this Indus Valley Civilization site began only in 1963.
- It is located in the Hisar district of Haryana.
- The excavation of this site has revealed that Rakhigarhi was one of the well-planned cities of the Harappan civilization. It consists of roads and an urbanised sewage system.
- This IVC site appears to be as large as Harappa and Mohenjo Daro. The Global Heritage Fund considers Rakhigarhi as one of the oldest as well as the largest site of Indus Valley Civilization.
- The pottery of Rakhigarhi is similar to that of Kalibangan and Banawali.
- Major archeological findings include,
 - Bronze toys
 - Terracotta statues
 - Granary with 7 rectangular chambers. (It dates back to the mature Harappan phase i.e. 2600 BCE to 2000 BCE).
 - Traces of cotton cloth on silver and bronze artefacts

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Dholavira

- Dholavira was first discovered in 1967 and was excavated by R.S. Bisht in 1985. It is one of the largest sites of the Indus Valley Civilization.
- It is located in the Kutch district of Gujarat.
- Recently, in 2014, a step well was discovered from this Harappan site. It was thrice the size of the Great Bath of Mohenjo Daro.
- Various reservoirs have been found during the excavations. It can be inferred that an advanced water management system was employed in the Harappan cities.
- The entire city was divided into three parts - citadel, middle town and lower town. It is the only Harappan site with such division. The plan of the city was parallelogram.
- Some of the major artefacts excavated from this site includes,
 - Sign board
 - Large water reservoirs and embankments
 - Dams
 - Figure of a chariot tied to a pair of bullocks which was driven by nude men.
 - Usage of rocks in construction.

Amri

- It was discovered in 1935 by NG Majumdar.
- It is located in the Dadu district of Sindh, Pakistan on the banks of Indus river.
- It has evidences of Antelopes and Rhinoceros.

Other Major Sites Of Indus Valley Civilization

Few other prominent sites of Indus Valley Civilization are listed below,

| Indus Valley Civilization Sites | Location |
|---------------------------------|---|
| Amri | Located in the Dadu district of Sindh, Pakistan |
| Alamgirpur | Located in the Meerut district of Uttar Pradesh, India. |
| Balu | Located in the Kaithal district of Haryana, India |
| Balathal | Located in the Udaipur district of Rajasthan, India |
| Daimabad | Located in the Ahmednagar district of Maharashtra, India. |
| Desalpur | Located in the Kutch district of Gujarat, India |
| Ganeriwala | Located in West Punjab, Pakistan |
| Karanpura | Located in the Hanumangarh district of Rajasthan, India |
| Kunal | Located in the Fatehabad district of Haryana, India |
| Kot Diji | Located in the Khairpur district of Sindh, Pakistan |
| Kot Bala | Located in the Lasbela district of Balochistan, Pakistan. |
| Mehrgarh | Located in the Kachi district of Balochistan, Pakistan |
| Mandi | Located in the Muzaffarnagar district of Uttar Pradesh, India |
| Pabumath | Located in the Kutch District of Gujarat, India. |
| Rangpur | Located in the Ahmedabad district of Gujarat, India |
| Ropar | Located in the Rupnagar district of Punjab, India |
| Sanauli | Located in the Baghpat district of Uttar Pradesh, India |
| Shikarpur | Located in the Kutch district of Gujarat, India |

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