



Rakhigarhi to be Developed as an Iconic Site

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Why in News

Union Budget (2020-21) has proposed to develop **Rakhigarhi** (Hisar district, Haryana) as an **iconic site**.

4 other archaeological sites in **Hastinapur** (Uttar Pradesh), **Shivsagar** (Assam), **Dholavira** (Gujarat) and **Adichanallur** in (Tamil Nadu) will also be developed as iconic sites with onsite museums.

Rakhigarhi

- **Rakhigarhi** is the largest Harappan site in the **Indian subcontinent**.
Other large sites of **Harappan civilization** on Indian sub-continent are **Harappa, Mohenjodaro** and **Ganveriwala** in **Pakistan** and **Dholavira (Gujarat)** in India.
- At Rakhigarhi, the excavations are being done to **trace its beginnings** and to study its **gradual evolution** from **6000 BCE (Pre-Harappan phase)** to **2500 BCE**.
The site was excavated by **Amarendra Nath** of ASI.

Major Findings at the Site

Settlements

The archaeological excavations revealed **the mature Harappan phase** represented by planned township having **mud-brick** as well as **burnt-brick** houses with a **proper drainage system**.

Seals and Pottery

- A **cylindrical seal** with **5 Harappan characters** on one side and a symbol of an **alligator** on the other is an **important** find from this site.
- The ceramic industry represented by **red ware**, which included **dish-on-stand**, vase, **perforated jar** among others.

Other Antiquities

Blades; terracotta and shell bangles, beads of **semi precious stones**, and **copper objects**; animal figurines, **toy cart** frame and wheel of terracotta; bone points; inscribed **steatite seals and sealings**.

Rituals and Burials

- **Animal sacrificial pit** lined with mud-brick and **triangular** and **circular fire altars** on the mud floor have also been excavated that signifies the ritual system of Harappans.
- The excavations have yielded a few extended burials, which certainly belong to a very late stage, maybe the medieval times.

Recent findings

- Recently, a study of **DNA** from **skeletal remains** excavated from the Harappan cemetery at Rakhigarhi found that the people in **the Harappan Civilization have an independent origin**.
- This study **negates** the theory of the Harappans having Steppe pastoral or ancient **Iranian farmer ancestry**.

Harappan Civilization

- It is also known as **Indus Valley Civilization**.
- It flourished around 2,500 BC, in the western part of South Asia, in contemporary Pakistan and Western India.
- The Indus Valley was home to the largest of the four ancient urban civilizations of Egypt, Mesopotamia, India, and China.
- In the 1920s, the Archaeological Department of India carried out excavations in the Indus valley wherein the ruins of the two old cities, viz. Mohenjodaro and Harappa were unearthed.

Source: TH