



National Maritime Heritage Complex: Lothal

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Why in News

The **Ministry of Culture (MoC)** and **Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways (MoPSW)** signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for '**Cooperation in Development of National Maritime Heritage Complex (NMHC)**' at Lothal, Gujarat.

Key Points

- **About:**
 - NMHC will be **developed in Lothal region of Gujarat**.
 - It would be developed as **an international tourist destination**, where the maritime heritage of India from ancient to modern times would be showcased.
The idea is **to create an edutainment (education with entertainment)** approach for this destination that would be of great interest for the visitors.
 - It is **going to cover an area of 400 acres**, with structures such as Heritage Theme Park, National Maritime Heritage Museum, Lighthouse Museum, Maritime Institute, eco-resorts, and more.
 - There will also be **many pavilions where all coastal states in India and union territories** can showcase their artifacts and maritime heritage.
 - The unique feature of NMHC is the **recreation of ancient Lothal city**, which is one of the prominent cities of the **ancient Indus valley civilization**.

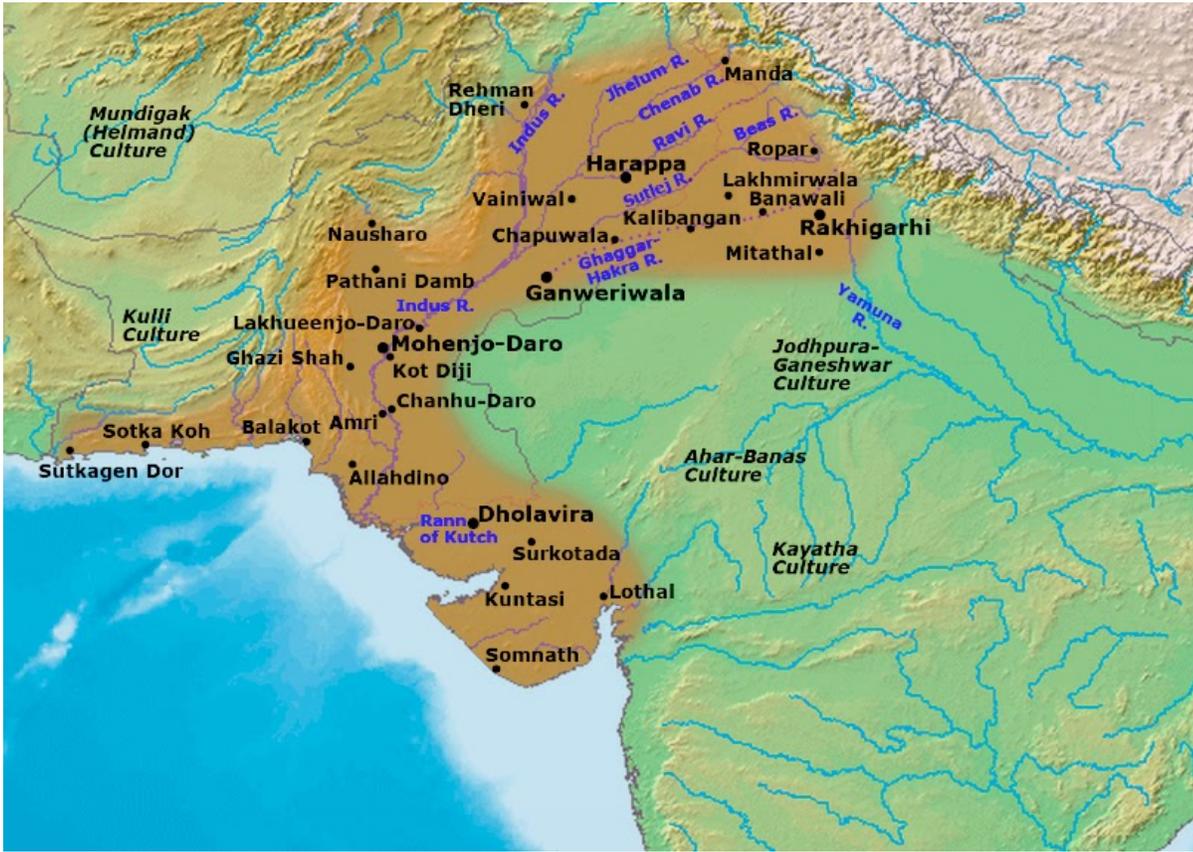
- **About Lothal:**

- **Lothal** was one of the southernmost cities of the ancient **Indus Valley Civilization** located in Gujarat.
- Construction of the city began **around 2400 BCE**.
- According to the **Archaeological Survey of India (ASI)**, Lothal had the **world's earliest known dock**, which connected the city to an ancient course of the Sabarmati river on the **trade route between Harappan cities in Sindh and the peninsula of Saurashtra**.
- Lothal was a **vital and thriving trade Centre in ancient times**, with its trade of beads, gems, and valuable ornaments reaching the far corners of West Asia and Africa.

The techniques and tools they pioneered for bead-making and in metallurgy have stood the test of time for over 4000 years.
- The Lothal site has been **nominated as a UNESCO World Heritage Site**, and its application is **pending on the tentative list of UNESCO**.

Indus Valley Civilization

- Also known as **Harappan Civilization** that flourished around 2,500 BC, in the western part of South Asia, in contemporary **Pakistan and Western India**.
- It was home to the **largest of the four ancient urban civilizations of Egypt, Mesopotamia, India and China**.
- It was **basically an urban civilization** and the people lived in well-planned and well-built towns, which were also the centers for trade.
 - They had wide roads and **a well-developed drainage system**.
 - The houses were **made of baked bricks** and had two or more storeys.
- The highly civilized Harappans **knew the art of growing cereals**, and wheat and barley constituted their staple food.
- **By 1500 BC, the Harappan culture came to an end**. Among various causes ascribed to the decay of Indus Valley Civilization are the recurrent floods and other natural causes like earthquakes, etc.



Source: PIB