Centenary of Discovery of Harappan Civilization

Why in News

To mark the centenary of the discovery of the Harappan civilization at Mohenjo-Daro, the **India Study Centre Trust** in collaboration with the **Directorate of Archaeology and Museums,** Maharashtra, will organise a **10-day online lecture series** from 5th October 2020.

- The India Study Centre Trust has its core focus in the fields of archaeology, geology and biodiversity.

Key Points

- Harappan civilization is also known as **Indus Valley Civilization** (IVC) for being situated on and around the banks of the Indus river.
- It **flourished around 2,500 BCE** in the **western part of South Asia,** in contemporary Pakistan, western India and parts of Afghanistan.
- It was home to the **largest of the four ancient urban civilizations** of Egypt, Mesopotamia, India, and China.
- In the **1920s,** the **Archaeological Survey of India** (ASI) carried out excavations in the Indus valley wherein the ruins of the two old cities, viz. **Mohenjo-Daro and Harappa were unearthed.**

    - Both are **major sites of IVC and are among the earliest and finest examples of urban civic planning.**
    - The planned network of roads, houses and drainage systems indicate the planning and engineering skills that developed during those times.
- In **1924, John Marshall,** Director-General of the ASI, **announced the discovery** of a new civilisation in the Indus valley to the world.
- A marked feature of this ancient civilization was the **vivid imagination and artistic sensibilities** exuded by the numerous sculptures, seals, potteries, pieces of jewellery found at the excavation sites.
- It was a **trade based civilization** which had overseas trade links with **Mesopotamia** (region of Western Asia situated within the Tigris–Euphrates river system) attested by the discovery of Harappan seals there and Mesopotamian carnelian beads here.
- **IVC's discovery** is one of the most important and characteristic findings in the world because it **brought the world's attention to India and an interest in studying Indian culture, society and past.**
- The civilization **declined around 1800 BCE but the actual reasons behind its demise are still debated.**

    - **Invasion by Aryans, decline due to natural causes, flooding** because of a shift in river courses are among the major theories on its decline.

Important Sites of IVC			
Site	**Excavated by**	**Location**	**Important Findings**
Harappa	Daya Ram Sahni in 1921	Bank of river Ravi in	- Sandstone

		Montgomery district of Punjab (Pakistan)	- statues of Human anatomy - Granaries - Bullock carts
Mohenjo-Daro (Mound of Dead)	R.D. Banerjee in 1922	Bank of river Indus in Larkana district of Punjab (Pakistan)	- Great bath - Granary - Bronze dancing girl - Seal of Pasupathi - Steatite statue of beard man - A piece of woven cotton
Sutkagendor	Stein in 1929	In southwestern Balochistan province, Pakistan on Dast river	- A trade point between Harappa and Babylon
Chanhudaro	N.G. Majumdar in 1931	Sindh on the Indus river	- Bead makers shop - Footprint of a dog chasing a cat
Amri	N.G. Majumdar in 1935	On the bank of Indus river	- Antelope evidence
Kalibangan	Ghose in 1953	Rajasthan on the bank of Ghaggar river	- Fire altar - Camel's bones - Wooden plough
Lothal	R. Rao in 1953	Gujarat on Bhogva river near Gulf of Cambay	- First manmade port - Dockyard - Rice husk - Fire altars - Chess-playing
Surkotada	J.P. Joshi in 1964	Gujarat	- Bones of horses - Beads
Banawali	R.S. Bisht in 1974	Hisar district of Haryana	- Beads - Barley - Evidence of both pre-Harappan and Harappan culture
Dholavira	R.S Bisht in 1985	Gujarat in Rann of Kachchh	- Water harnessing system - Water reservoir

Source: TH

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