



Gyan Bharatam Mission

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Why in News?

The Ministry of Culture, at the **first Gyan Bharatam International Conference on 'Reclaiming India's Knowledge Legacy through Manuscript Heritage'** under the [Gyan Bharatam Mission](#), invited experts to present research on [deciphering the Harappan \(Indus Valley\) script](#).

What is the Gyan Bharatam Mission?

- **About:** The Gyan Bharatam Mission, announced in [Union Budget 2025-26](#), is a national initiative to preserve, digitise, and disseminate **India's vast manuscript heritage**, combining tradition with modern technology for future generations.
- **Nodal Ministry: Ministry of Culture.**
- **Objective:**



- **Mission Components:**
 - **Survey & Documentation:** Nationwide identification and cataloguing of manuscripts.
 - **Conservation & Restoration:** Safeguard fragile texts through scientific and traditional methods.
 - **Digitisation & Repository:** AI-assisted digitisation and creation of a **National Digital Repository**.
 - **Technology & AI Innovation:** Tools like **Handwritten Text Recognition** and **Gyan-Setu AI Challenge**.
- **Significance:** **With over 44 lakh manuscripts documented in Kirti Sampada (National Database of Manuscripts), it preserves India's civilisational knowledge spanning philosophy, science, medicine, mathematics, arts, literature, and spirituality.**
 - Supports **Article 51A(f), fundamental duty** to value and preserve cultural heritage.
 - Aligns with [National Education Policy \(NEP\) 2020](#), integrating Indian Knowledge Systems into modern education.
 - It bridges **heritage and technology**, empowering youth while promoting India's global cultural leadership.

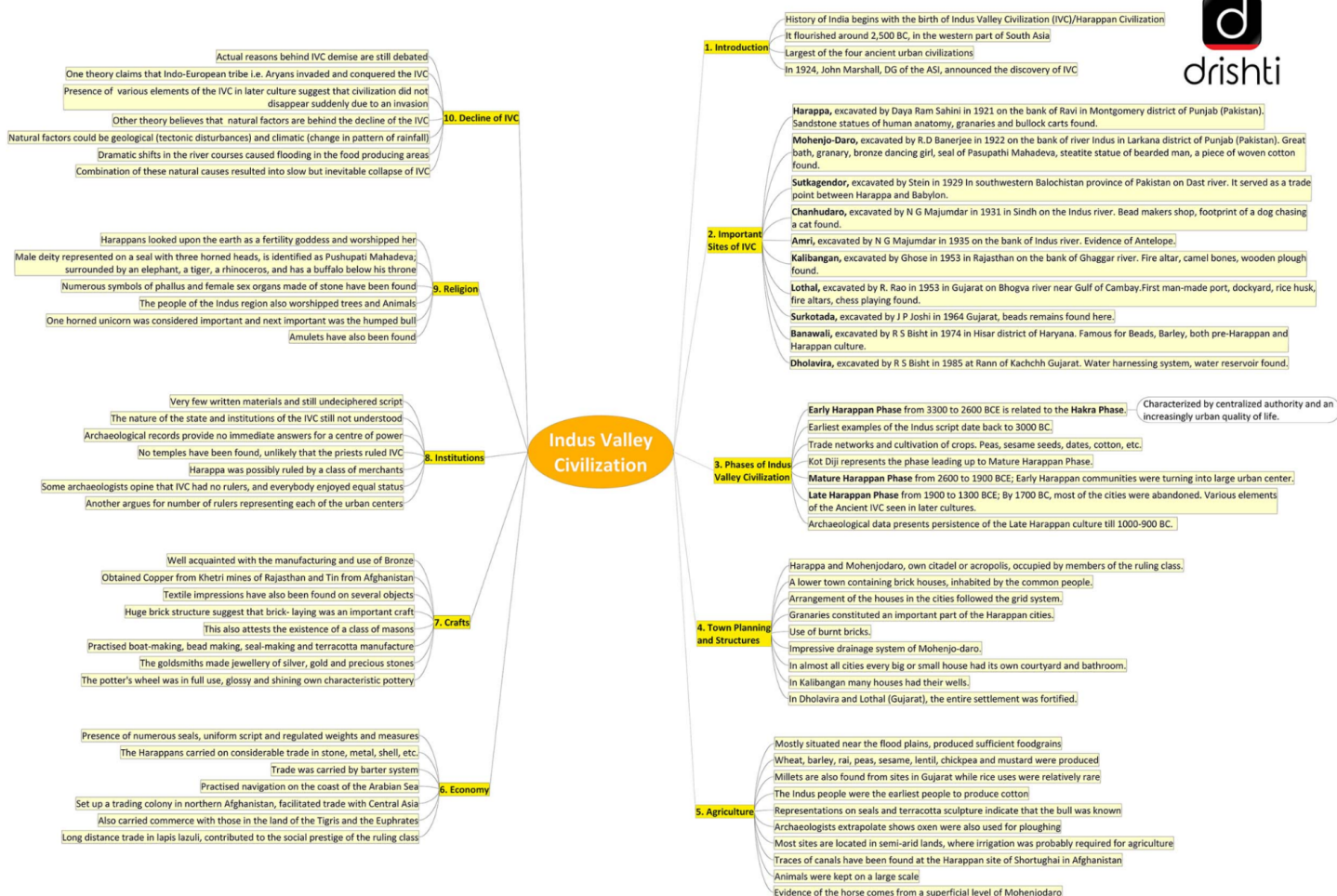
Manuscripts

- **Manuscripts** are handwritten works on palm leaf, birch bark, cloth, paper, or metal, over 75 years old, with historical, scientific, or aesthetic value.
- Cover diverse fields like philosophy, medicine, astronomy, literature, arts and exist in multiple languages and scripts.
- **National Mission for Manuscripts (NMM, 2003)** was established to preserve and safeguard India's intellectual heritage.

What is the Harappan (Indus Valley) Script?

- **About:** It is used by [Indus Valley Civilization \(2600-1900 BCE\)](#) in present-day Pakistan and north-west India.
 - Discovered in the **1920s by Sir John Marshall's team**, the Indus Valley script found on seals, terracotta tablets, and metal is **still undeciphered** and features pictograms, animals, and human motifs.
- **Writing Style & Nature: It is generally written right to left; longer texts sometimes in Boustrophedon style (alternating lines).**
 - Inscriptions are brief, averaging 5 symbols, the longest text has 26 symbols.
 - Likely a logosyllabic system, combining pictograms and syllables, similar to other scripts of its era.
 - Scholars propose a rebus principle, where symbols represent sounds or ideas indirectly.
- **Purpose and Function:** Used for trade, taxes, and identification, though full role is unclear. Some symbols may have educational or religious significance.
- **Major Theories on Harappan Script:**
 - **Dravidian Hypothesis:** Some argue that the script has **Dravidian roots**, using the **rebus principle**; e.g., the fish symbol may represent "star" in Dravidian. Supported by **Brahui language** in Balochistan and **Old Tamil** links.
 - **Sanskrit Connection:** Some suggest a link to **Vedic Sanskrit**, but this is largely **rejected** because the Aryan migration occurred **after 2000 BCE**.
 - **Tribal Language Links:** A few researchers connect it to Adivasi languages such as **Santali and Gondi**.
 - **Non-linguistic Symbols Theory:** The script may have been used for **trade, taxation, or religious purposes**, and may **not represent a full language**.

Indus Valley Civilization



Conclusion

The Gyan Bharatam Mission uses Digital India and AI to digitize over five million manuscripts, making India's ancient knowledge globally accessible. It engages youth and reimagines heritage as living knowledge. Aligned with the vision of a **Viksit Bharat**, **Gyan Bharatam strengthens India's role as a Vishwa Guru** by combining heritage, innovation, and global knowledge sharing.

Drishti Mains Question:

Q. Discuss the significance of the Gyan Bharatam Mission in preserving India's manuscript heritage.

UPSC Civil Services Examination, Previous Year Questions (PYQs)

Prelims

Q. Regarding the Indus Valley Civilization, consider the following statements: (2011)

1. It was predominantly a secular civilization and the religious element, though present, did not dominate the scene,
2. During this period, cotton was used for manufacturing textiles in India.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (a) 1 only
- (b) 2 only
- (c) Both 1 and 2

(d) Neither 1 nor 2

Answer: (c)

Q. Which of the following characterize/characterises the people of the Indus Civilization? (2013)

1. They possessed great palaces and temples.
2. They worshiped both male and female deities.
3. They employed horse-drawn chariots in warfare.

Select the correct statements using the codes given below:

- (a) 1 and 2 only
(b) 2 only
(c) 1, 2 and 3
(d) None of the above

Ans: (b)

Mains

Q1: The ancient civilisation in the Indian sub-continent differed from those of Egypt, Mesopotamia and Greece in that its culture and traditions have been preserved without a breakdown to the present day. Comment. **(2015)**

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