

Burial Ground of Indus Valley Civilisation

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Researchers have recently estimated at least **500 graves** of the **Indus society** in [Harappan civilisations](#) (the World's earliest urban civilisations), near [Khatiya](#) village in Gujarat.



[Ref - BBC]

Graveyards found in Harappan Civilisation:



[Ref -ResearchGate]

- Excavations near **Khatiya** village yielded a **single intact male human skeleton**, and partly preserved **skeletal remains** including skull fragments, bones, and teeth.
- More than **100 bangles** and **27 shell beads** have been found.
- **Discoveries-** Ceramic vessels, bowls, dishes, pots, small pitchers, beakers, clay pots, water cups, bottles, and jars.
- **Minor treasures** include **beads** made of semi-precious stone- **Lapis lazuli**.

- **Lapis lazuli** is a deep-blue **metamorphic rock** used as a semi-precious stone that has been prized since **antiquity** for its intense color.
- The graveyard site was just **300 m** from **Khatiya** village.

Features of Graves:

- The graves include **sandstone-lined burial shafts** that point in different directions.
- These are **oval-shaped** and **rectangular**.
- **Smaller graves** have been found where children were buried.
- The bodies appear to be laid **supine** (lying **face upwards**).
- Many **pre-urban cemeteries** have been discovered, but this is by far the **largest**.
- Thus, it has the potential to reveal a **greater diversity of grave types**.

Funeral Findings:

- The funerals were **unostentatious** (economical), unlike those found in **Egypt** and **Mesopotamia**.
- **No jewels** and **weapons** accompanied the dead to the afterlife.
- Most bodies were wrapped in **cloth** and placed in rectangular **wooden coffins**.
- The **grave pit** was often filled with **pottery offerings** before the **coffin** was lowered into it.
- The health profile indicates that most were **well-fed** and **healthy**.
 - However, some had indications of **arthritis** and **physical stress**.
- **Adults:** Some people were buried with **personal ornaments** (bangles, beads, amulets) which could not be passed on to others, and **vessels** associated with serving and storing food.
- **Women:** Some women were buried with a **copper mirror** and **shell bangles**, typically found on the **left arms** of adult females.
- **Children:** Infants and children were **not** usually buried with any pottery or ornaments.

Stone Walls:



[Ref - The Genius of Ancient Man]

- The burials were made with well-defined **stone walls** suggesting that the people were familiar with **building with stone**.
- Such stone buildings and walled settlements are to be found between **19-30km** (11-18 miles) from the cemetery.

Chemical Studies and DNA Analysis:

- More DNA and chemical **studies of remains** from the sites will give **information** about the earliest people who lived and died here.
- DNA analysis was done on a skeleton found in the Harappan site of **Rakhigarhi** of **Haryana**.
- It claimed that there was **no Aryan invasion** and **no Aryan migration**.
- All the developments right from the **hunting-gathering** stage to modern times in South Asia were done by **indigenous people**.

About the Khatiya village:

- It is a tiny village where **groundnut**, **cotton**, and **castor** were grown on rainfed farms.
- It is potentially the largest **pre-urban cemetery** of the society discovered so far.
- It was in use during **3200BC-2600BC**, making it the **oldest grave** around **5,200 years old**.

About Indus Valley Civilisation (circa 3300–1700 B.C.E.):

- It was one of the **earliest urban civilizations**, roughly contemporaneous with those of **Mesopotamia**, **Egypt**, and **China**.
- It is also called **Harappan Civilisation**.
- It was located in present-day **Pakistan** and **Northwest India**, on the flood plain of the Indus River.
- Although the Harappans had a written language, its writing is **undeciphered**.
- Most findings of their culture and civilization come from the ruins of their two largest cities- **Harappa** and **Mohenjo-daro**.
- Harappan cities had **no palaces** or **temples** and showed **no evidence** of **hereditary kings** or **queens**.
- Staple diet of the Harappa included **wheat**, **barley**, and **rice**.
- The **Harappan Archaeological Research Project** has made many discoveries about Indus Valley since **1986**.