

# Dholavira – a Harappan city

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## About Dholavira

- **Location:** Dholavira is an archaeological site at Khadir Bet( Khadir island) in Bhachau Taluka of Kutch District, in the state of Gujarat in western India, which has taken its name from a modern-day village 1 kilometre south of it
- It belonged to mature Harappan phase

**First discovered by** archaeologist **JP Joshi in 1956**, excavations at Dholavira started only 35 years later in 1990 under RS Bisht of the Archaeological Survey of India.



## Structures in Dholavira

- Dholavira had monumental structures, a sophisticated drainage system and gateways.
- **It was a well-planned town** and its layout has given archaeologists great insight into the life and times of the Harappan people.
- Also known locally as *Kotada timba*, the site contains ruins of an ancient Indus Valley Civilization/Harappan city
- It is also considered as having been the grandest of cities of its time.
- Estimated to be older than the port-city of Lothal, the city of Dholavira has a rectangular shape and organization, and is spread over 22 ha (54 acres)
- At the height of its habitation the city was surrounded by enormous walls measuring 15-18 mts in thickness
- Unlike Harappa and Mohenjo-daro, the city was constructed to a pre-existing geometrical plan consisting of three divisions – the citadel, the middle town, and the lower town
- This city had a citadel, consisting of enclosures identified as a castle and a bailey (by excavators), having massive mud-brick walls flanked by dressed stones.
- To the north of the citadel was the quadrangular middle town having an area identified as the ceremonial ground or stadia.
- Next to the citadel there is a broad empty space to the north, probably used for multiple purposes like as a venue for public gathering on festive or ceremonial occasions, a stadium or a market place for exchanging merchandise during trading seasons.
- Dholavira show large scale use of dressed stone in construction.
- A regular house at Dholavira consisted of four rooms, a spacious courtyard, a bathroom and also a kitchen.
- One can also find **sign board** made up of ten large-sized letters of the Harappan script

- This city also had a **water management system**.
- The water conservation system here consists of a combination of channels and reservoirs, which are among the earliest such networks made of stone, in the world.
- They also built dams on the two rivers Mansar and Manhar which flowed around this city during this time.