

Dholavira gets Unesco's World Heritage Site tag

July 28, 2021

In news- Dholavira, the archaeological site of **Indus Valley Civilisation (IVC)** received the UNESCO world heritage site and hence became the **fourth site from Gujarat and 40th from India to make to the list**. It is the **first site of the IVC in India to get the tag**. Other than India, Italy, Spain, Germany, China and France have 40 or more World Heritage Sites.

About Dholavira-

- The IVC acropolis is located on a hillock near present-day Dholavira village in Kutch district.
- It has two **seasonal streams, Mansar and Manhar**.
- It was discovered in **1968 by archaeologist Jagat Pati Joshi**.
- The site's **excavation** was carried out **between 1990 and 2005 under the supervision of archaeologist Ravindra Singh Bisht**.
- The ancient city was a **commercial and manufacturing hub** for about 1,500 years before its decline and eventual ruin in 1500 BC.
- After Mohen-jodaro, Ganweriwala and Harappa in Pakistan and Rakhigarhi in Haryana of India, **Dholavira is the fifth largest metropolis of IVC**.
- The site has a **fortified citadel, a middle town and a lower town** with **walls made of sandstone or limestone** instead of mud bricks in many other Harappan sites.
- It has a **cascading series of water reservoirs, outer fortification, two multi-purpose grounds** – one of which was used for festivities and as a marketplace, nine gates with unique designs, and funerary architecture featuring tumulus and hemispherical structures like the Buddhist Stupas.

- Unlike graves at other IVC sites, **no mortal remains of humans have been discovered at Dholavira.**
- The memorials contain **no bones or ashes** but offerings of precious stones, etc.
- Remains of a **copper smelter** indicate Harappans, who lived in Dholavira, knew metallurgy.
- It is believed that traders of Dholavira used to source copper ore from present-day Rajasthan and Oman and UAE and export finished products.
- It was also a hub of manufacturing **jewellery made of shells and semi-precious stones**, like agate and used to export timber.
- The beads peculiar to the Harappan workmanship have been found in the royal graves of Mesopotamia, indicating **Dholavira used to trade with the Mesopotamians.**
- Its **decline also coincided with the collapse of Mesopotamia**, indicating the integration of economies.
- From 2000 BC, Dholavira entered a phase of severe aridity due to climate change and rivers like Saraswati dried up and people migrated toward the Ganges valley or towards south Gujarat and further beyond in Maharashtra.