

Ancient Civilisation Study through Dholavira Archaeological Site in Kutch District: A study

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Abstract

An archaeological site is a place or group of physical sites in which evidence of past activity is preserved (which is either prehistoric or historic or contemporary), and which has been, or may be, investigated using the discipline of archaeology and represents a part of the archaeological record. Sites may range from those with few or no remains visible above ground, to buildings and other structures still in use. The goal of archaeology is to understand how and why human behavior has changed over time. Archaeologists search for patterns in the evolution of significant cultural events such as the development of farming, the emergence of cities, or the collapse of major civilizations for clues of why these events occurred. Dholavira is one of the archeological sites in Gujarat. This study includes the existing condition of the site as planner point of view, locally available facilities for tourists, Features of the site, issues related to tourism. The aim is also to understand our heritage culture and to prevent it from loss and depletion.

Keyword- Archaeological, Heritage, Harappan Civilization, Civilisation, Human Behavior

I. INTRODUCTION

Dholavira is one of the oldest and largest sites in India of Indus Valley Civilisation. It is important tourist place in kutch. The site is surrounded by water in monsoon season. The site was occupied from 2650 BC, declining slowly after about 2100 BCE. It was briefly abandoned and reoccupied until 1450 BCE. The site was discovered in 1967-68 by J. P. Joshi, of the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI), and is the fifth largest of eight major Harappan sites. It has been under excavation since 1990 by the ASI, which opined that "Dholavira has indeed added new dimensions to personality of Indus Valley Civilization." The other major Harappan sites discovered so far are Harappa, Mohenjo-daro, Ganeriwala, Rakhigarhi, Kalibangan, Rupnagar and Lothal. Dholavira is the only site where the sign board – Inscription of ten letters found during excavation. Also a large stadium re excavated. This city has 16 reservoirs for water storage and most of them are inter-connected by underground canals. Also there is a dam across the river to store water. The 47 ha (120 acres) quadrangular city lay between two seasonal streams, the Mansar in the north and Manhar in the south.

II. NEED OF STUDY

- Carry out the survey to study of Dholavira ancient site.
- To understand the existing scenario of tourist flow.
- For promoting the facilities available for tourist.
- To preserve the site

III. STUDY AREA

Dholavira is an archaeological site at Khadirbet 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 kilometer (0.62 mi) south of it. It is one of the five largest Harappan sites and most prominent archaeological sites in India belonging to the Indus Valley Civilization. It is located on Khadir Bet Island in the Kutch Desert. The map of Dholavira is shown in below figure.

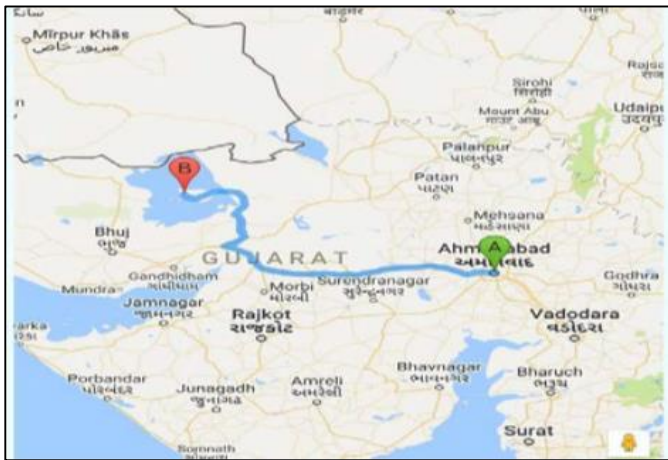


Fig. 1: Map of Bhuj



Fig. 2: Map of Khadir Bet

Nearest major stations near Dholavira are Bhachau, Samakhyali, Bhuj and Anjar. Their distance from the Dholavira is 66 km, 70km, 88km, 86km. as consequent.

IV. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- To analyze existing scenario of archaeological site.
- To enhance tourism in archaeological site.

V. EXISTING SCENARIO OF TOURIST FLOW

During visit at Dholavira following scenario is observed regarding tourist flow, existing facility for stay and also nearby site

- In current condition around 8000 to 10,000 people per year visit dholavira.
- Tourist visits in dholavira are mainly during rann utsav.
- In khadir bet 3 resort are available for stay, out of which 1 is near dholavira and 2 are far.
- Home-stay facility is also available at village.
- Fossil Park is developed by Govt. which represent dholavira excavation site.
- Museum is also located near dholavira which has different statues which represent culture of Kutch of various communities.

VI. EXISTING TOURIST FACILITY

- Far away from bustle of the city, deep in the heart of a majestic past, is the Dholavira Tourism Resort. It is an ideal retreat for families and nature enthusiasts alike. The resort offers a perfect blend of nature along with the comfort of modern amenities.
- The resort is also a starting point to several outdoor activities and sightseeing tours. It is with this vision that involvement of the locals has been our prime objective. Numerous people from in and around Dholavira have found employment here at the resort as its helpers or as experienced travel guides for visitors. Resort is at 1.2 km from excavated site of Dholavira.
- Government of Gujarat has set up a high power substation at Balasar for upgrading the electric supply to Dholavira and villages which fall in between and also a primary health center at Dholavira.
- Government of Gujarat widened the road from Chitrod to Dholavira and constructed a connecting road between Dholavira and Jam Kunharia across the Rann partially.
- The Department of Tele-communication has set up primary telecommunication facilities at the site.

VII. FEATURES OF DHOLAVIRA SITE

A. Plan of Dholavira

Harappan town-planning is usually based on a duality acropolis (upper town, lower town).while Dholavira's plan is divided in three part. An acropolis or upper town consisting of castle and bailey, middle town and lower town. The city of Dholavira in its fullest form was a precisely proportionate whole, with a mathematical precision and perhaps with astronomically established orientation. Another significant feature is the arterial roads ran across axially from east to west dividing all the units and sub-units of citadel, baily and middle town into halves.

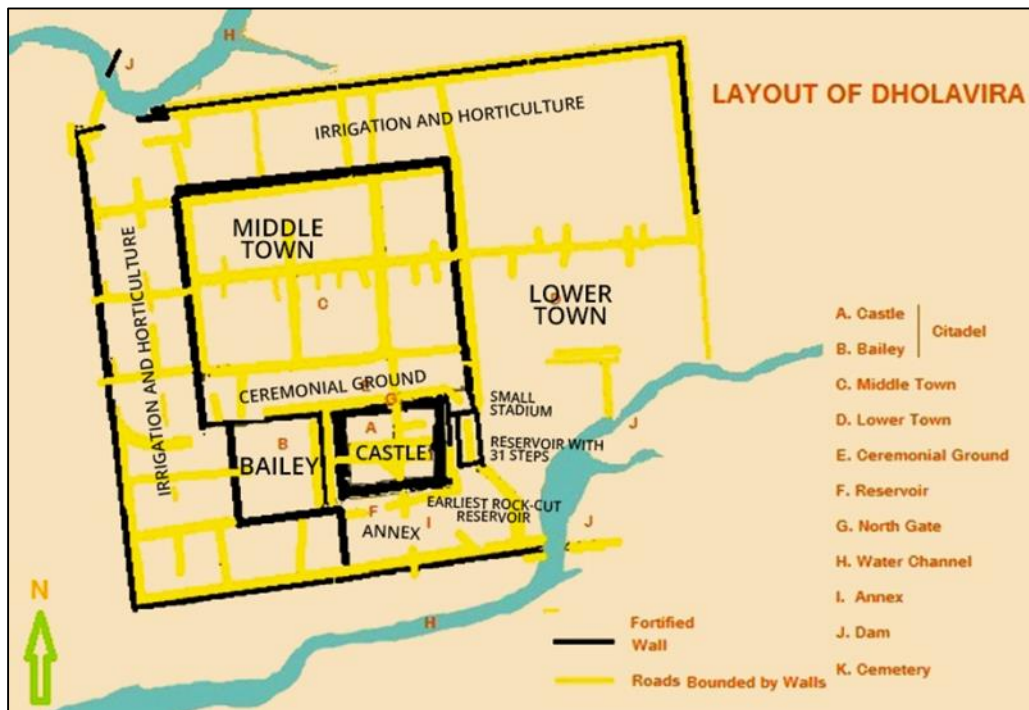


Fig. 3: Layout plan of Dholavira

Particulars	Length(m)	Width(m)
Lower town (entire city)	771.1	616.85
Middle town	340.5	290.45
Ceremonial ground	283	47.5
“Castle” (inner)	114	92
“Castle” (outer)	151	118
“Bailey”	120	120

Table 1: Dholavira’s dimensions

B. Water Management System



Fig. 4: Reservoir

One of the unique features of Dholavira archeological site is the sophisticated water conservation system. The city had massive reservoirs, among them three are exposed. Which is earliest found anywhere in the world. Within the city there were a series of well-planned rectangular water reservoirs, which was meant to harness the scarcely available water in the region. The inhabitants of Dholavira created 16 reservoirs of varying size. Some of them have taken advantage of slope of the ground.

C. Language and Script

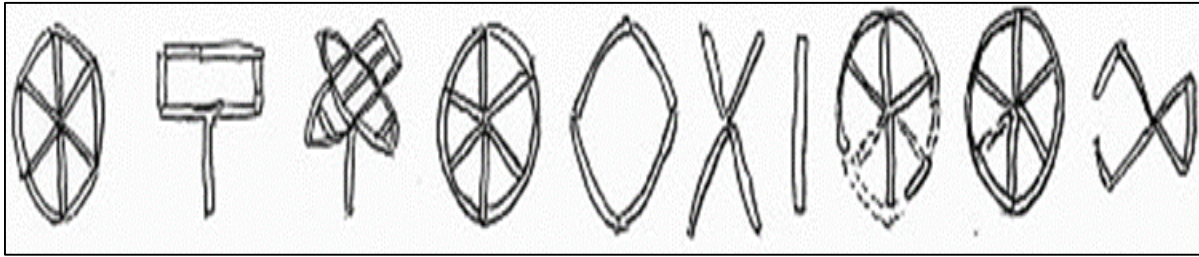


Fig. 5: Sign language found at Dholavira

One of the most significant discoveries at Dholavira was made in one of the side rooms of the northern gateway of the city, and is generally known as the Dholavira Signboard. The Harappans had arranged and set pieces of the mineral gypsum to form ten large symbols or letters on a big wooden board.

D. Artifacts and Ruins of Dholavira

Excavations at Dholavira has revealed all the essential Classical Harappan artifacts in large numbers, such as steatite seals and terracotta sealings, etched camelian, other semiprecious stones and faience beads, shell bangles, chert blades, terracotta animal figurines and copper objects. Rare human and animal figures carved in stone are also reported from the site. Pottery assemblage at Dholavira shows the entire repertoire of classical Harappan types, forms and decorative patterns. There is also a cemetery area, following true Indus tradition; it is separated from the habitation by at least 300 meters west of the site. The harappans at Dholavira produces parallel sided blades of chert a siliceous stone imported from sukkurohi in Sindh or from bijapur of Karnataka. . These artifacts are preserved in the museum located near Dholavira site.



Fig. 6: Artifacts and ornaments at museum



Fig. 7: Archaeological museum of Dholavira

E. Issues

During visit at Dholavira following issue are observed regarding tourist facility and many other thing.

- Tourist visit dholavira for particular time in year mainly Rann utsav.
- Cost of stay at the resort near dholavira is high.
- Lack of resources like water.
- Lack of awareness about govt. scheme regarding tourism development
- Tourist doesn't prefer to stay at night or homestay so it creates problem for owner so that he is not able to get proper benefit
- Lack of development near dholavira mainly in khadir bet.
- Lack of culture and heritage development.
- Lack of use of man power for tourism development activity

VIII. CONCLUSION

The existing condition of Dholavira site has been studied. Tourism aspects are also covered. The site has been well preserved but tourist facilities need to be improved. There is lack of cultural development. The land owners of this site who had owned the land before the excavation have not given enough compensation. Government should also look after that. Proper arrangement for night stay should be made available near the site to increase the tourism. Ruins, ornaments and artifacts found from the excavation is well preserved in museum.

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