

Rakhigarhi, About, Archaeological Findings & Significance

July 11, 2026 • vajiramandravi.com



Rakhigarhi is an ancient site of the **Indus Valley Civilization**, located on the banks of the now-dried Sarasvati River in the Hisar district of Haryana. Rakhigarhi has emerged as an important site, providing valuable insight into the Pre-Harappan and Harappan cultures that thrived in the region.

Rakhigarhi is one of the five largest known townships of the Harappan civilisation on the Indian subcontinent. The other four are **Harappa**, **Mohenjodaro**, and **Ganweriwala** in Pakistan and **Dholavira** in Gujarat, India.

About Rakhigarhi

Rakhigarhi, about 150 km northwest of Delhi, is a village and an archaeological site belonging to the **Indus Valley Civilisation** in the Hisar District of Haryana. The site, excavated by **Amarendra Nath** of the Archeological Survey of India, is located in the **Ghaggar-Hakra River plain**.

- It comprises two villages, **Rakhi Shahpur** and **Rakhi Khas**, which extend across nine mounds, of which two — mounds four and five — are thickly populated.

- It belonged to the Indus Valley Civilization's mature phase, which spanned 2600–1900 BCE. At Rakhigarhi, three layers representing the Early, Mature, and Late stages of the Indus Valley civilisation have been discovered.

Major Findings of Rakhigarhi

The Harappan civilisation site excavated by the Archaeological Survey of India revealed a large number of findings that provide further insight into the **Indus Valley civilisation**. These include skeletons, town planning, rituals and burials, and others.

- **DNA analysis of Skeletal:** While excavating the site, the Archaeological Survey of India found many skeletal remains. Subsequent DNA analysis revealed that the inhabitants of the Harappan civilisation had a distinct origin. This study negates the theory that the Harappan people have **steppe pastoral** or ancient Iranian farmer ancestry.
- **Town Planning:** Land townships were enclosed with mud and burnt brick homes, each having an efficient drainage system and proper sanitation. Excavations at Mound number 3 have revealed the existence of an **aristocratic settlement** with burnt brick walls alongside mud-brick walls.
- **Lapidary:** A large number of **steatite** beads, beads of semi-precious stones, shells, and objects made of agate and carnelian have been recovered. This discovery signifies that trading was a flourishing occupation. Various hunting tools, such as fish hooks, were also excavated at Rakhigarhi.
- **Granary:** The granary discovered at Rakhigarhi was made of mud bricks, and the floor was rammed earth plastered in mud. It was enclosed within **seven rectangular** or square chambers, with traces of lime and decomposed grains suggesting a granary, possibly public or privately owned by the elite at the **Rakhigarhi** site.
- **Rituals and Burials:** A ceremonial system was discovered when fire altars on mudflows were excavated, and traces of **animal sacrifices** were also located. The sacrificed animals' bodies were covered with mud walls and triangle fire altars.
 - Two 5,000-year-old female skeletons were discovered at Mound No. 7, along with pots and artefacts, indicating funerary rituals.
- **Pottery and Seals:** A seal with an alligator symbol was discovered, with five Harappan letters on one side and a symbol on the other.
 - The site also yielded various antiquities, such as blades, shell bracelets, stone beads, animal figurines, and copper artefacts.
 - The redware ceramics collection included dishes-on-stands, vases, jars, bowls, beakers, perforated jars, goblets, and handles.

Significance of Rakhigarhi

The Rakhigarhi site provides valuable insights into the Indus Valley Civilization, revealing its distinct origins and advanced cultural practices. Notably, it will be home to the largest museum in the world devoted to Harappan culture, emphasising how important this culture is to comprehending ancient history.

- **Largest museum of Harappan culture:** Rakhigarhi is among the five iconic sites announced in the Union Budget 2020. The ASI, the state, and the central governments signed an MoU in 2022 to develop the **Rakhigarhi Museum**, which will be the world's largest museum dedicated to Harappan culture.
- The **DNA analysis** revealed that the inhabitants of the Harappan civilisation had a distinct origin. This study refutes the theory that the Harappans had Steppe pastoral or ancient Iranian farmer ancestry.
- **Harappan sealings** (impression of a seal on a surface) found at Rakhigarhi indicate that seals were used to mark objects belonging to specific people or communities.
- Excavation of a wide variety of tools indicates the presence of **toy culture** in the area. Jewellery, stamps, and weights were also found, which led to the idea that **standardised weight systems** were followed in the Rakhigarhi.
- In 2012, the watchdog Global Heritage Fund listed Rakhigarhi as one of Asia's ten most endangered heritage sites.

Rakhigarhi UPSC PYQs

Question 1: Which one of the following ancient towns is well-known for its elaborate system of water harvesting and management by building a series of dams and channelizing water into connected reservoirs? **(UPSC Prelims 2021)**

- (a) Dholavira
- (b) Kalibangan
- (c) Rakhigarhi
- (d) Ropar

Ans. (a)

Other Related Posts	
Prehistoric Period	Indus Valley Civilization Sites
Chalcolithic Age	Rakhigarhi
Megalithic Culture	Lothal
Town Planning of Harappan Civilization	Kalibangan

Source: <https://vajiramandravi.com/upsc-exam/rakhigarhi/>

© Vajiram & Ravi. For personal use only.