

WRAP Exams · wrapexams.com

Prelims PYQ, Mains model answers, and copy evaluation. Write to the desk for this paper, a doubt, or the AI waitlist.

ask@wrapexams.com · +91 85951 84903 · wrapexams.com

Q2(b)

Delineate the salient characteristics of 'Narmada Man' and examine its phylogenetic significance

UPSC Civil Services Mains 2016 · Anthropology GS 2 · 15 marks · Palaeo-Anthropological evidences from India with special reference to Siwaliks and Narmada basin (Ramapithecus, Sivapithecus and Narmada Man).

1.2 Palaeo-Anthropological evidences from India with special reference to Siwaliks and Narmada basin (Ramapithecus, Sivapithecus and Narmada Man).

Core demand of the question

- Delineate the salient characteristics of 'Narmada Man' and examine its phylogenetic significance
- Keep the answer to a 15-mark length of about 200 words

Revision summary

Narmada Man is the **Hathnora** skull-cap from Narmada alluvium.

It is thick, robust, and **Middle Pleistocene** in context.

Sonakia reported it; species assignment remains disputed.

It proves hominin presence in Ice-Age India beside Acheulian tools.

One fossil cannot finish phylogeny; it ends the empty-India myth.

Introduction

Narmada Man is a **Middle Pleistocene** calvaria from **Hathnora** on the Narmada. It is India's most famous hominin fossil, and its phylogenetic seat is still argued.

Body

Salient characteristics

- A robust, thick-boned skull-cap found with **Middle Pleistocene** fauna and Acheulian-related context in the Narmada alluvium.
- Cranial capacity and brow are often read as archaic, larger and later than typical small *Homo erectus* from some Asian sites.
- **Arun Sonakia** reported the find. Later workers have stressed mix of erectus-like thickness and more sapient vault traits.

Phylogenetic significance

- It places a hominin on the Indian peninsula in the **Middle Pleistocene**, filling a fossil gap beside abundant tools.
- Some treat it as *Homo erectus*, others as archaic *Homo sapiens* or a distinct Narmada grade. Exclusion from erectus is argued from capacity and some vault features.

- **Significance is geographic:** South Asia was occupied by heavy-browed humans, not empty land waiting for **Harappa**.
- One calvaria cannot close the human family tree. It can refuse an India-without-fossils story.

Flow diagram

Hathnora calvaria -> Archaic robust vault
Hathnora calvaria -> Erectus vs archaic sapiens debate
Hathnora calvaria -> Peninsular Pleistocene presence

Conclusion

Narmada Man is a robust **Middle Pleistocene** Indian calvaria. Phylogenetically it is an archaic human of disputed species label, crucial as presence, not as a final ancestor chart.

Facts & figures

Hathnora

Narmada site of the calvaria called Narmada Man.

Arun Sonakia

Geological Survey scientist who reported the fossil.

Middle Pleistocene

Broad age assigned from fauna and deposits, not from a complete skeleton.

Acheulian context

Biface world of the Narmada that the fossil helps to people.

WRAP Exams · Write. Read. Analyse. Practice. · <https://wrapexams.com/upsc/mains-answers/anthropology-gs-2/2016/delineate-the-salient-characteristics-of-narmada-man-and-examine-its-phylogenetic-significance/> · ask@wrapexams.com · wrapexams.com