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Q1(a)

Significance of Mesolithic findings from Belan Valley

UPSC Civil Services Mains 2016 · Anthropology GS 2 · 10 marks · Evolution of the Indian Culture and Civilization

1.1 Evolution of the Indian Culture and Civilization-Prehistoric (Palaeolithic, Mesolithic, Neolithic and Neolithic-Chalcolithic), Protohistoric (Indus Civilization). Pre-Harappan, Harappan and post-Harappan cultures. Contributions of the tribal cultures to Indian civilization.

Core demand of the question

- Write a note on significance of Mesolithic findings from Belan Valley
- Keep the note to a 10-mark length of about 150 words

Revision summary

Belan Valley Mesolithic sites include **Chopani-Mando**, **Mahadaha**, and Sarai Nahar Rai.

Microliths, bone, burial, and wild plant traces mark late foragers.

Nearby **Koldihwa** ties the valley to early rice and cattle experiments.

Sankalia set the belt in India's prehistoric sequence.

The significance is a North Indian hunt-to-farm bridge.

Introduction

The Belan Valley Mesolithic is a Ganga-margin sequence of microliths, hearths, and early food remains. It shows how late hunters in North India moved toward village life.

Body

Finds

- Sites such as **Chopani-Mando**, **Mahadaha**, and **Sarai Nahar Rai** on the Belan-Ganga belt yield microliths, bone tools, and burial.
- Animal bone, wild rice traces, and later Neolithic pottery in the same valley, including **Koldihwa** nearby, mark a hunt-to-farm slide.
- **H. D. Sankalia** and Allahabad University teams placed this belt in the all-India Mesolithic map.

Significance

- It dates a long foraging occupation after the Upper Palaeolithic and before full farming.
- It is a North Indian story, not a copy of **Bhimbetka** alone, and not yet **Harappa**.
- Burials and ornaments show social life, not only a tool type.

Flow diagram

Belan Valley -> Microlith sites
Microlith sites -> Koldihwa early farm
Belan Valley -> Sankalia sequence

Conclusion

Belan Mesolithic findings matter because they document a dated North Indian transition from microlithic hunt to early food production on the Ganga fringe.

Facts & figures

Chopani-Mando

Belan site with a long Mesolithic to early food-producing sequence.

Mahadaha

Ganga-plain Mesolithic site with burials and bone tools.

Koldihwa

Nearby Neolithic site often paired with Belan for early rice claims.

H. D. Sankalia

Framed these finds inside a national Mesolithic archaeology.