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Q4(b)

Describe briefly the proto-history of Gujarat. Discuss the significance of Gujarat's proto-history in international trade

UPSC Civil Services Mains 2022 · Anthropology GS 2 · 15 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

- Describe briefly the proto-history of Gujarat. Discuss the significance of Gujarat's proto-history in international trade
- Keep the answer to a 15-mark length of about 200 words

Revision summary

Gujarat proto-history is Harappan urban and village settlement on Kachchh and Saurashtra.

Dholavira and **Lothal** are the chief towns; **Rangpur** and **Rojdi** are regional villages.

Lothal's craft and basin point to Gulf trade.

Weights and beads tie Gujarat to the Indus measure system.

The peninsula was an international door, not a provincial copy.

Introduction

Proto-history of Gujarat is the Harappan and immediately related settlement of the peninsula and the Rann edge, after pre-Harappan camps and before the full historic period. Its importance is a sea and desert door between the Indus world and the Gulf.

Body

The Gujarat sequence

- Pre-Harappan and Early Harappan camps appear in north Gujarat and Kachchh. Mature Harappan towns then rise at **Dholavira** in Kachchh and **Lothal** on the Gulf of Khambhat.
- **Rangpur** and **Rojdi** show Sorath Harappan village life in Saurashtra, with local pottery beside Indus weights and beads.
- **Surkotada** adds a fortified Kachchh outpost. Late Harappan and Lustrous Red ware levels mark the regional afterlife of the urban system.

International trade

- **Lothal**'s basin, warehouse, and bead factory are read as a dock-and-craft port toward Magan and **Dilmun**, the Gulf partners named in Mesopotamian texts.
- **Dholavira**'s water works, seals, and cubical weights show the same measure system as Sindh and Panjab, which is the hardware of long-distance trust.

- Carnelian, shell, and ivory moved out. Copper and Gulf goods moved in. Gujarat is the western gate, not a backwater of Mohenjo-daro.

Limit

- A dock label at **Lothal** is debated in detail. The trade fact does not depend on one basin. Beads, weights, and Gulf parallels already prove the door.

Flow diagram

Dholavira -> Weights seals water
Lothal -> Port craft Gulf
Rangpur Rojdi -> Sorath villages
Port craft Gulf -> Dilmun Magan

Conclusion

Gujarat's proto-history is a Harappan coastal and Rann urbanism centred on **Dholavira**, **Lothal**, and **Rangpur**. It mattered because it joined Indian craft to Gulf and Mesopotamian exchange.

Facts & figures

Lothal

Harappan town on the Gulf of Khambhat with warehouse, bead-making, and a debated dock basin.

Dholavira

Kachchh Harappan city with elaborate water harvesting, gates, and seals.

Rangpur

Saurashtra site used to define a regional Sorath Harappan village sequence.

Dilmun

Gulf trading partner in Mesopotamian texts, the likely western node for Gujarat goods.

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