



The Harappan site of Dholavira, India. Photo by Dr. Mark Kenoyer

# Indus Heritage Centre, India

The world's first museum and research institute devoted exclusively to South Asia's ancient Harappan Culture

## Project Significance

South Asia's first cities emerged in the region around the Indus and Ghaggar-Hakra-Saraswati rivers between 2600 BC and 1900 BC, sharing a common culture across a 1,000-mile area in what is now Pakistan and northwest India. This civilization developed at approximately the same time as the early cities in Egypt and Mesopotamia and maintained extensive trade contacts with these contemporaneous civilizations, but the Indus Civilization - or Harappan Culture as it is now commonly referred to - was not discovered until the 1920s. To date only about two dozen of these sites have been excavated, and many more are being destroyed through modern settlement expansion, agricultural practices, neglect and ignorance. The Indus Heritage Centre thus seeks to raise awareness of this unique civilization and to protect its remaining sites before they are lost forever.

## Project Goals

Indus Heritage Trust, with GHF support is helping to establish the Indus Heritage Centre as a museum for the dissemination of knowledge about the largest first civilization in human history and a research and training institute for the conservation of Indus artifacts and sites.

## Preservation by Design®

### Planning

To be established on Deccan College Campus in Pune, Maharashtra, the Indus Heritage Centre will be the first public institution in the world exclusively devoted to the Harappan or Indus Civilization. It will be a repository of academic knowledge about the Indus Civilization, and showcase for interpretation of Indus artifacts and sites. This Centre, comprising a museum and a research institute equipped with a conservation lab, will be constructed on Deccan College land provided by Deccan College Trust. The



### Threats

Lack of Systematic Planning  
Neglect  
Lack of Resources

### Start Date

2005

archaeological collections of the Deccan College Department of Archaeology will be the core of the exhibition and research institute.

### Project Partnerships

- Indus Heritage Trust
- Deccan College Post Graduate & Research Institute, Pune, Maharashtra
- Department of Archaeology and Ancient History, Faculty of Arts, Maharaja Sayajirao University of Baroda, Gujarat
- Department of Anthropology and Center for South Asia, University of Wisconsin, Madison
- Conservation Research Dept, Freer-Sackler Gallery, Smithsonian Institution

### Conservation Science

Conservation within the Indus Heritage Centre project primarily involves support for the installation or upgrading of conservation facilities such as those at Maharaja Sayajirao University. Additionally, however, GHF is supporting on-site conservation at the

Shikarpur Indus site, including assistance with displays for an interpretation center at Shikarpur. Similar efforts are being explored for on-site conservation support at the Indus excavation site of Farmana and Rakigarhi led by Deccan College, Pune.

A Deccan College database project has been initiated for digital archiving of Indus artifacts. Highlight objects from the recent Deccan led Farmana excavations have already been documented.

### Community

Public outreach will be a central component of the Indus Heritage Centre's mission. In addition to providing research facilities to academics and university students, school children will also benefit from the educational value of the museum, as will national and domestic tourists.

### Recent Accomplishments

- An agreement with Deccan College Post Graduate & Research Institute awaits formal signing for land allocation for the Indus Heritage Centre
- Upgrades to the Department of Archaeology and Ancient History MSU Conservation Laboratory have been completed
- New computers have been installed in the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI), Purana Qila lab in Delhi.
- Site and artifact conservation at the Indus site of Shikarpur has been initiated, with assistance for setting up an onsite interpretive center
- A Deccan College database project has been initiated for digital archiving of Indus artifacts, a pioneering effort.



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**The Indus Heritage Centre showcases the most important archaeological sites and artifacts of the Indus civilization and related cultures.**



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