

THE HINDU LAUNCHES BOOK ON HARAPPAN CIVILISATION

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A sense of ownership must be created among the local people about the importance of preserving the archaeological findings, particularly in less-known places, Thangam Thennarasu, Tamil Nadu Minister for Industries, Tamil Development and Archaeology, said on Tuesday while launching *The Hindu*'s book *The Wonder That Was Harappan Civilisation* at the newspaper's office here.

N. Ram, Director, The Hindu Group, received the first copy of the book.

Lauding the extensive book that has intricate details of the Harappan civilisation, Mr. Thennarasu said it would serve as an eye-opener. Noting that there were several archaeological sites that faced disturbances and encroachments, he said local people must be involved in preserving the exquisite findings. Elaborating on the remarkable changes in archaeological explorations after the progress in the Keezhadi excavation, he said more research needs to be done on the possible links of Keezhadi with the Harappan civilisation. The Minister pointed as examples the Adichanallur excavations bearing several similarities with the Harappan civilisation, and the punch mark coins discovered at the Keezhadi site revealing trade links between north and south, remarking that there are many opportunities to establish Tamil Nadu's links with the northern civilisation.

Citing epigraphist Iravatham Mahadevan who recorded similarities between the script in the Indus Valley and an early form of Dravidian language, Mr. Thennarasu said the State government has also allocated funds to study the possible links.

The 356-page book curated by T.S. Subramanian, former Associate Editor, *Frontline*, has about 600 photographs, maps and several illustrations. Besides articles by Mr. Subramanian, the book has articles by several scholars. Appreciating the book as substantial work by *The Hindu* team, Mr. Ram recalled his involvement with the subject during a recent visit to the earliest site of the Harappan civilisation. Other civilisations such as Sumerian, Mesopotamian and Egyptian were better researched, he added. The Harappan civilisation was also an extensive civilisation and a fascinating subject; several Harappan sites have been discovered but not all have been excavated yet, he said.

Mr. Subramanian said the book was being launched to mark the centenary in 2024 of the announcement of the discovery of the Harappan civilisation, UNESCO recognition for the Harappan-era city Dholavira in 2021 as World Heritage Site and the centenary of the first excavation that took place in Mohenjo-daro in 1922-23.

Nirmala Lakshman, Publisher and Director, The Hindu Group, and Suresh Nambath, Editor, *The Hindu*, were present. R. Srinivasan, Head, Magazines and Special Publications, *The Hindu*, spoke at the event. The book is available online at <https://publications.thehindugroup.com/> with a 20% discount in price.

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