



DODDALATHUR EXCAVATION SITE : HISTORY

NEWS : Excavations commence at Doddalathur megalithic burial site in Hanur taluk

WHAT'S IN THE NEWS?

A team from the University of Mysore is excavating megalithic burial sites in Chamarajanagar district to study Iron Age culture. The project aims to explore the region's historical significance and provide field training for archaeology students.

Doddalathur Excavation Site (Karnataka, India)

- **Location:** Doddalathur village, Hanur taluk, Chamarajanagar district, Karnataka, near Male Mahadeshwara Hill ranges.
- **Period:** Dates back to the Megalithic Period (Iron Age) in South India, roughly between 1200 BCE - 300 CE.
- **Discovery:** First identified in 1961 by C. Krishnamurti of the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI).
- **Burial Sites:** The village had over 1,000 megalithic burials, many disrupted due to agriculture and settlement, but several remain intact.
- **Nearby Excavations:** Budipadaga, a similar habitation-cum-megalithic burial site, 20 km from Doddalathur, was excavated in 2021-2022.

Megalithic Culture

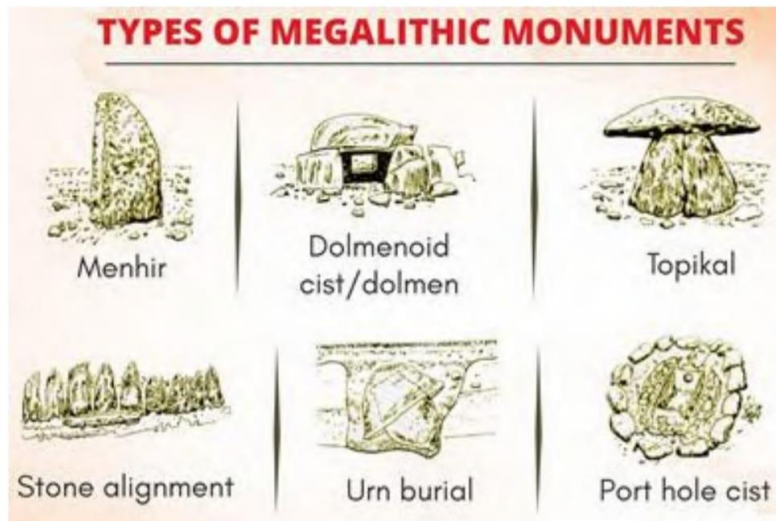
- **Definition:** Large stone structures associated with burial and monuments. The term comes from Greek, "mega" (large) and "lithos" (stone).
- **Chronology:** In India, megaliths date as far back as 5000 BCE, coinciding with the Iron Age (1200 BCE-300 CE).
- **Geographical Spread:** Found in peninsular India (Maharashtra, Karnataka, Kerala, Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh) and parts of central and northern India.

Types of Megaliths

- **Menhirs:** Single standing stones for commemoration or religious purposes.
- **Dolmens:** Table-like structures with a large stone slab placed over upright stones, used for burials.
- **Cairns:** Heaps of stones marking graves.
- **Stone Circles:** Circular stone arrangements around burial sites.
- **Capstone Style:** Single flat stones placed horizontally over burial chambers.



- **Cist:** Small stone boxes or coffins for holding the dead.



Iron Age Settlement Patterns

- **Technological Impact:** Iron tools and weapons revolutionized agriculture, trade, and warfare.
- **Burial Practices:** Complex burials with large stones arranged in circular patterns, reflecting social structures.
- **Settlement Locations:** Typically found in fertile valleys near hills, such as Male Mahadeshwara Hills, where resources were abundant.

Source: <https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/karnataka/excavations-commence-at-megalithic-burial-site-in-hanur/article68724628.ece#:~:text=The%20excavations%2C%20which%20commenced%20on%20%20km%20southwest%20of%20Doddalathur.>