

Gujarat was wetter 10,000 years back?

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Ahmedabad: Gujarat weather is marked by an arid and dry climate. But what kind of weather existed more than 10,000 years back? Various studies suggest that the state had a slightly wetter climate more than 10,000 years back, say experts from Archaeological Survey of India (ASI).

Based on botanical remains in Dholavira, Indian Institute of Technology, Gandhinagar (IIT-Gn) is also conducting a study on what type of climate existed more than 10,000 years back in the state.

“We’re studying three broad categories of botanical remains — phytolith, diatom and pollen. Based on various pollen studies, it has been found that it was slightly wetter in that era. After Harappan civilization, the climate started drying up,” said VN Prabhakar, visiting faculty at IIT-Gandhinagar, who is also superintending archaeologist, ASI.

“We’ve collected sub-surface sediment (soil) samples and are processing them using standard procedures. Diatom being very sensitive to environmental fluctuation gives the precise environmental conditions of an area. Using these biological proxies, evolution

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of agriculture, diet of modern man, climate and vegetation dynamics under varying natural and anthropogenic (human induced) impacts can be understood at spatial and temporal scale,” said Dr Sandhya Sharma, faculty, archaeological science centre, IIT-Gn. She said that the type of climate that exactly existed in those times will only be confirmed after the study gets over.

An IIT-Gn team has also found certain angular features along the Rann of Kutch which are not natural and are man-made, said Vinod V, postdoctoral fellow, archaeological science centre. In December, the team will also be joined by French professor Michel Danino, who is also a guest professor, humanities and social sciences, IIT-Gn. Danino has been living in India since 1977. A student of Indian civilization and its early development, he visits IIT-Gn every year to teach ancient India.