

Bamulian—An unique sub-Himalayan Palaeolithic of North India

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CHANDIGARH: The paper published in the Global Journal of Archaeology and Anthropology, archaeologist A.R. Sankhayan says have found evidences that dawn of Bamulion—A unique sub-Himalayan Palaeolithic of North India. His evidences represent very root of existence of sub-Himalayan Palaeolithic in Bam village of Bilaspur district of Himachal Pradesh.

Sankhayan encountered for the first time large flake Acheulian cleavers and hand axes at Kallar-Balghad at the confluence of Seer, Sukkar and Saryali khads. He found 402 Acheulian tools. Dr Sankhayan said that this site had the largest share of 300 Acheulian tools compared to 50 tools found at Atabarpur in Punjab. “These are so varied and unique in typology and some hitherto unknown types found anywhere in north India,” adds he.

Another unique feature is occurrence of gigantic handaxes, cleavers and choppers attesting the might of their use. Dr Sankhyan who is known Palaeoanthropologist and visting Fellow of Anthropological Survey of India, Kolkatta and Dehrudun revealed that the mighty Bamulian man ruled the sub-Himalayan region for long from CA 0.5 to 0.05 million years ago might have pushed the tiny Soan man deep into the Sivalik forests and pushed him to extinction or migrated elsewhere.

He is of the opinion that due to sand and gravel mining at the site most of the artifacts have been lost. Fortunately, the Bam-Tanda Seer Khad site is little mined and therefore preserved the richness and diversity of the Acheulian industry. The artifacts are made of medium to coarse-grained quartzite cobbles and boulders of various hues, mainly light grey, ash grey, ash brown chocolate and ash black.

While talking about his discovery, Dr Sankhyan said that most of the handaxes were unifacial in design but bifacial in appearance with least labour invested.

The tool assemblage from Ghumarwin-Bam-Tanda is characterized by a preponderance of the handaxes (34.3 per cent); over the cleavers (19.2 per cent) or choppers (8.5 per cent). Interestingly, the spears and arrow head points (10 per cent). Such features are unique which was not seen at Atabarpur in Punjab typical Acheulian industry. The bifacial choppers find greater representation compared to the unifacial ones.

Dr Sankhyan further said that such tools have not been reported from Peninsular Indian sites including the central Narmada valley where he had worked for about three decades and heaped over 9000 Acheulian artifacts and 1500 fossils. He wanted that the unique diversity of the Bamulian industry should further analyze to reflect on the various occupations adopted by the prehistoric man. The data points him as a very efficient hunter who preferred the use of projectiles and bow and arrows from a distance.

Processing for digging out the tubers and primeval plantation of certain food plants. Harvesting or cropping of plants is indicated by the sickles. Wood-cutting and wood work is evident from the hafted axes or adzes, chisels and saw cutter and large cleavers, says he.

Dr. Sankhyan said that more exploratory work was needed in the upper reaches of the Satluj and Beas valleys to find out more sites for inhabitat of Acheulian hunter. The present work of his was just a beginning and the government should come forward to unravel more secrets of this unique prehistoric culture, its expansion, routes of migration, bio-cultural evolution and contribution to modern human gene pool and causes of extinction.

A very rare painted pebble and an embryo shaped pendant was discovered from the site indicates of evolution of early portable art of prehistoric man. His findings confirm the hypothesis that the mighty Bamulian man of Ghumarwin-Bam Seer Khad area had captured the major rivers and pushed the small-bodied Soan man deep into the interior of Shivalik forests.