

From: [REDACTED]
To: [REDACTED]; [REDACTED]
Subject: Fw: Breaking: Evidence of Ancient Human Life Found in Saudi Arabian Lava Cave
Date: Monday, April 22, 2024 2:08:31 PM

Hi [REDACTED],

Here is one of the KSA MoC pitches I referred to in the other email chain.

Thanks,

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, April 19, 2024 11:04 AM
To: [REDACTED] **Subject:**
Breaking: Evidence of Ancient Human Life Found in Saudi Arabian Lava Cave

Good morning, [REDACTED],

Saudi Arabia has found evidence of an ancient human settlement in its longest lava cave, Umm Jirsan. Given American Archaeology Magazine's coverage of global discoveries, I think you will be interested in this breaking story.

The Saudi Heritage Commission, responsible for documenting and preserving heritage under the Ministry of Culture, has announced that an impressive international team of scientists discovered traces of ancient human habitation in the Umm Jirsan magma cave, located in northwestern Saudi Arabia.

This new understanding of human history in the Arabian Peninsula highlights the importance of multidisciplinary collaboration among international researchers and scientists.

Umm Jirsan Findings At-A-Glance:

- Discovery of ancient settlements dating back to the Neolithic period, extending through the Copper and Bronze Ages.
- Carbon-14 dating confirms human and animal presence as early as 6,000 years BCE.
- Findings suggest a lush landscape, hosting diverse fauna including hyenas, horses, camels, and even extinct species.
- Innovative analysis of human skeletal remains reveals transitions in diet from primarily meat to the inclusion of grains, underscoring the emergence of agriculture.

Photos of the cave and findings can be found [here](#) and the Heritage Commission's **full press release** is below my signature line.

Thank you for your consideration. I am happy to answer any questions you may have.

Best,

[REDACTED]

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The Saudi Heritage Commission reveals research findings from Umm Jirsan, an ancient lava cave in Saudi Arabia, confirming a green past where humans and animals thrived

The Saudi Heritage Commission, responsible for documenting and preserving Saudi Arabia's tangible and intangible heritage under the Ministry of Culture, announced the discovery of human occupation evidence in Umm Jirsan cave, located in Harrat Khaybar, located north of Madinah, in northwestern Saudi Arabia. Measuring 1,500 meters long, 45 meters wide, and with a maximum height of 12 meters, Umm Jirsan is the Kingdom's longest lava cave. The findings have been published in the peer-reviewed journal *PLoS One*. It is considered the first study in the field of archaeological research in caves located in the Kingdom.

A team of Saudi and international researchers, including scientists from King Saud University, the Max Planck Institute from Germany, and the Saudi Geological Survey, have worked collaboratively as part of the Green Arabian Peninsula project. Their multidisciplinary field research focused on preserving and highlighting mankind's shared history in the Arabian Peninsula. Previously reported findings by the Heritage Commission revealed evidence of human habitation in an ancient lake outside Tabuk, in the Kingdom's northwestern regions, dating back around 120,000 years.

Through their archaeological surveys and excavations in multiple parts of the Umm Jirsan cave, the scientists have uncovered ancient settlements dating back to the Neolithic period. Those settlements revealed traces of pastoral groups which could be recorded until the Copper Age and Bronze Age periods. The precise antiquity of the site was determined using carbon-14 dating. The research unearthed traces of animal bones dating back 4,100 years BCE. Also, the oldest human skull found dates to 6,000 years BCE.

The research indicates that prior to the current arid climate and desolate nature of the area, a much more temperate and active environment, including the presence of many now extinct animals, existed. Findings included wood, cloth, rock-carved scenes grazing goats, cows and dogs used for hunting. Among the thousands of animal bones found, were remnants of hyenas, horses, camels, deer, caribou, cows, and domestic donkeys.

Analysis of human skeletal remains, using radioactive isotopes, indicated that humans relied primarily on meat for sustenance; but also, later began nourishing themselves with grains, as evidenced by the emergence of agriculture.

The research indicates the importance of caves used by human groups and ancient volcanic magma paths in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

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Notes to Editors:

For further enquiries email media@moc.gov.sa

Pictures, credits to the Ministry of Culture, are available at this [link](#).

About the Ministry of Culture:

Saudi Arabia has a vast history of arts and culture. The Ministry of Culture is developing Saudi Arabia's cultural economy and enriching the daily lives of citizens, residents, and visitors.

Overseeing 11 sector-specific commissions, the Ministry works towards the support of and preservation of a vibrant culture that is true to its past and looks to the future by cherishing heritage and unleashing new and inspiring forms of expression for all.

Find the Ministry of Culture on social media: X [@MOCSaudi](#) (Arabic); [@MOCSaudi_En](#) (English) | Instagram [@mocsaudi](#)

About the Heritage Commission:

The Heritage Commission, one of the Ministry of Culture's 11 sector-specific Commissions, was launched in 2020 and oversees the Kingdom's heritage sector, showcasing, documenting, and preserving Saudi Arabia's tangible and intangible heritage.

The Commission plans to open a range of archaeological sites to visitors to highlight national heritage, both domestically and internationally. It will also support the preparation and publication of archaeological research.

To learn more about the Heritage Commission, please visit <https://heritage.moc.gov.sa/en> and the commission's page on X [@MOCHeritage](#)

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