

Ancient ashes found buried in Rome

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Archeologists have reportedly found the ashes of an ancient chief or priest who lived three centuries before the legendary founding of Rome.

The remains, dating to about 1,000 B.C., were discovered last month in a funerary urn at the bottom of a deep pit, along with several bowls and jars -- all encased in a hutlike box near the center of modern Rome, National Geographic News reported.

A team of archaeologists, led by Alessandro Delfino of Rome's Department of Cultural Heritage, discovered the prehistoric tomb while excavating the floor of Caesar's Forum, the remains of a square built by Julius Caesar around 46 B.C.

"We knew there should be very ancient tombs (at the site)," Delfino told NGN. "We had previously found two graves in the same site. They were small, less than a meter (about 40 inches) deep."

The newly found pit is six feet deep and four feet wide.

Officials said the prehistoric tribes probably placed the ashes of the low-ranking dead in surface buildings and buried only ashes of the notables.

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