



Footprints of 3 Dinosaur Species: Rajasthan

Why in News

Recently, in a major discovery, **footprints of three species of dinosaurs have been found in the Thar desert** in Rajasthan's Jaisalmer district.

- It proves the **presence of the giant reptiles in the western part of the State.**



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Key Points

- **About the Discovery:**
 - The footprints belong to **three species** of dinosaurs - ***Eubrontes cf. giganteus*, *Eubrontes glenrosensis*** and ***Grallator tenuis***.
 - The footprints were **200 million years old**.
 - The **dinosaur species are considered to be of the theropod type**, with the distinguishing features of hollow bones and feet with three digits (like fingers).
 - Theropod is any member of the **dinosaur subgroup Theropoda**, which includes all the **flesh-eating dinosaurs**.
 - All the three species, belonging to the **early Jurassic period, were carnivorous**.
 - The '**Age of Dinosaurs**' (the **Mesozoic Era - 252-66 Million Years Ago - MYA**) included three consecutive geologic time periods (the Triassic, Jurassic, and Cretaceous Periods). Different dinosaur species lived during each of these three periods.
- **Thar Desert:**
 - **Naming:** The name 'Thar' is **derived from thul**, the general term for the region's sand ridges. It is also called the '**Great Indian Desert**'.

- **Location:** Partly in Rajasthan state, **northwestern India**, and partly in Punjab and Sindh provinces, **eastern Pakistan**.
 - It is **bordered by** the irrigated Indus River plain to the west, the Punjab Plain to the north and northeast, the Aravalli Range to the southeast, and the Rann of Kachchh to the south.
- **Features:**
 - An **arid region** that covers over 2,00,000 sq km.
 - The surface **consists of aeolian (wind-deposited) sand** that has accumulated over the past 1.8 million years.
 - Presents an **undulating surface**, with high and low sand dunes separated by sandy plains and low barren hills, or **bhakars**, which rise abruptly from the surrounding plains.
 - **Barchan**, also spelled **Barkhan**, **crescent-shaped sand dune** produced by the action of wind predominately from one direction.
 - Several **playas (saline lake beds)**, locally **known as dhands**, are scattered throughout the region.
 - The desert supports a relatively **rich biodiversity** with several large mammals, notably the blue bull, blackbuck, and Indian gazelle or chinkara.



Geologic Time Scale

Eon	Era	Period	Epoch	MYA	Life Forms			
Phanerozoic	Cenozoic (CZ)	Quaternary (Q)	Holocene (H)	0.01	Age of Mammals	Extinction of large mammals and birds Modern humans		
			Pleistocene (PE)	2.6				
		Tertiary (T)	Neogene (N)	Pliocene (PL)		5.3	Age of Reptiles	Placental mammals Early flowering plants Dinosaurs diverse and abundant
				Miocene (MI)		23.0		
			Paleogene (PG)	Oligocene (OL)		33.9		
		Eocene (E)		56.0				
		Paleocene (EP)		66.0				
		Mesozoic (MZ)	Cretaceous (K)	145.0		Age of Reptiles	Placental mammals Early flowering plants Dinosaurs diverse and abundant	
			Jurassic (J)	201.3				
			Triassic (TR)	251.9				
	Paleozoic (PZ)	Age of Amphibians	Permian (P)	298.9	Age of Amphibians	Coal-forming swamps Sharks abundant First reptiles		
			Pennsylvanian (PN)	323.2				
			Mississippian (M)	358.9				
			Devonian (D)	419.2				
		Fishes	Silurian (S)	443.8	Fishes	First land plants Mass extinction First amphibians First forests (evergreens)		
			Ordovician (O)	485.4				
		Marine Invertebrates	Marine Invertebrates	Cambrian (C)	541.0	Marine Invertebrates	Primitive fish Trilobite maximum Rise of corals Early shelled organisms	
	Proterozoic	Precambrian (PC, W, X, Y, Z)			541.0	Complex multicelled organisms		
					2500	Simple multicelled organisms		
					4000	Early bacteria and algae (stromatolites)		
				4600	Origin of life			
Hadean				4600	Formation of the Earth			



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