



Rajasthan Artisans Craft at UAE's First Hindu Temple

Why in News?

The artisans from **villages in Rajasthan's Makrana** are beaming with pride as their craft has found a place in **Abu Dhabi's first Hindu temple, set to be inaugurated.**

Key Points

- The temple is being built by the **BAPS Swaminarayan Sanstha** on a 27-acre site in Abu Mureikhah, near Al Rahba off the Dubai-Abu Dhabi Sheikh Zayed Highway.
- The temple's facade features exquisite marble carvings set against a sandstone backdrop, crafted from more than **25,000 pieces of stone by skilled artisans from Rajasthan and Gujarat.**
 - A substantial number of **pink sandstone** were transported **from northern Rajasthan to Abu Dhabi for the temple.**
- Architectural elements include **two ghumats (domes), seven shikhars (spires) that symbolise the seven UAE's seven emirates, 12 samrans (dome-like structures) and 402 pillars.**
- Within each shikhar, intricate carvings depict stories from **the Ramayana, Shiv Purana, Bhagavatam and Mahabharata,** as well as **narratives of Lord Jagannath, Lord Swaminarayan, Lord Venkateshwara and Lord Ayyappa.**
- The **'Dome of Harmony'** serves as a unique portrayal of harmony of the five natural elements- earth, water, fire, air and space.
- **The camel - a symbol of persistence, commitment and endurance,** has also been etched into the carvings while drawing inspiration from the landscape of the UAE.

Pink Sandstone

- Sandstone is a sedimentary rock largely made up of sand grains in size ranging from 2 mm to 120 mm of varying compositions. The sand may consist of grains of quartz, feldspar and other detrital minerals with interstitial cementing material.
 - The pink color of sandstone is primarily due to the presence of **iron oxide** minerals.
- Like other sandstones, pink sandstone is mainly composed of sand grains, which can be quartz, feldspar, and other minerals.
 - The cementing material that binds these grains together can be calcite, silica, or iron oxide.
- Pink sandstone is prominently found in India, primarily in Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, and Gujarat.
 - Notable locations include Dholpur in Rajasthan, known for its Dholpur Pink Sandstone; Jodhpur, Rajasthan, producing Jodhpur Pink Sandstone; Bhuj in Gujarat, renowned for Bhuj Pink Sandstone; and Shivpuri in Madhya Pradesh, which yields Shivpuri Pink Sandstone.

Bochasanwasi Akshar Purushottam Swaminarayan Sanstha

- It is a Hindu denomination within the Swaminarayan Sampradaya.
- It was formed in 1905 by Yagnapurushdas following his conviction that Swaminarayan remained present on earth through a lineage of gurus starting with Gunatitanand Swami.



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