

Footprints of 3 dinosaur species found in Thar

Giant finds are 200 million years old



Jurassic link: Footprints of dinosaurs found in Jaisalmer district of Rajasthan. ■ SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

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In a major discovery, footprints of three species of dinosaurs have been found in the Thar desert in Rajasthan's Jaisalmer district, proving the presence of the giant reptiles in the western part of the State, which formed the seashore to the Tethys Ocean during the Mesozoic era.

The footprints, made in the sediment or silt of the seashore, later became permanently stone-like.

They belong to three species of dinosaurs – *Eubrontes cf. giganteus*, *Eubrontes glenrosensis* and *Grallator tenuis*. While the *giganteus* and *glenrosensis* species have 35 cm footprints, the footprint of the third species was found to be 5.5 cm.

Virendra Singh Parihar, assistant professor, Jai Narain Vyas University, Jodhpur, a member of the team of palaeontologists that made the discovery recently, told *The Hindu* on Friday that the footprints were 200 million years old. They were

found near Jaisalmer's Thaiat village.

All carnivorous

The dinosaur species are considered to be of the theropod type, with the distinguishing features of hollow bones and feet with three digits. All the three species, belonging to the early Jurassic period, were carnivorous, said Dr. Parihar.

Eubrontes could have been 12 to 15 m long and weighed between 500 kg and 700 kg, while the height of the *Grallator* is estimated to have been 2 m, as much as a human, with a length of up to three metres.

Jan Schlogl of Comenius University in Slovakia and Grzegorz Pienkowski from Warsaw University in Poland were the first to discover dinosaur footprints in India after the 'Ninth International Congress on the Jurassic System' was held in Jaipur in 2014.

Dr. Parihar said the possibility of finding more evidence of dinosaurs in the Jaisalmer and Barmer districts is very strong.