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Iduhatty Rock Art Site

Researchers observed found that the five symbols that comprise a rock art site in Iduhatty, Nilgiris district closely resemble geometric signs of Ice Age Europe.

- There are said to be 10 rock art sites in the Nilgiris including the largest rock site [Karikiyoor rock site](#).
- The rock art site in **Iduhatty** is around 20 km from Udhagamandalam town in Nilgiri.
- The site has 20 unique symbols in vibrant red was painted in **ochre**.
- Researchers observed that 5 of those symbols - the circle, cordiform, dot, finger fluting and quadrangle - closely resembles the symbols used at rock and cave painting sites in Europe of Ice Age.
- The resemblance could point to the arrival of modern humans to the Nilgiris during the end of the last Ice Age (between 10,000 and 40,000 years ago).

Ochre is a natural pigment, predominantly just an iron oxide with varying degrees of water molecules, which gives different sort of colours, from yellow to black.

References

1. [The Hindu - Rock art symbols found resembles Ice Age](#)

Carbon Border Tax

The European Union has proposed a policy called the Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism which BASIC countries have opposed.

- The Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism (CBAM) is an initiative of European Union (EU) to prevent carbon leakage from extremely carbon intensive imports.
- Under CBAM, duties will be imposed on imported goods based on the carbon expended in producing them.
- The duty imposed is an **equivalent cost on imports** to level the playing field between foreign and domestic producers.
- From 2026, for the chosen sectors of cement, fertiliser, iron and steel, electricity and aluminium, imports will face an additional tariff.

Opposition to CBAM

- A consortium of countries that includes India has jointly stated that carbon border taxes could result in market distortion and aggravate the trust deficit amongst parties

and must be avoided.

- The BASIC (Brazil, South Africa, India and China) countries calls for unfair shifting of responsibilities from developed to developing countries.
- **India's concerns** - CBAM will negatively impact the Indian industry which has significant export interests in the EU.
- The EU has been the destination for nearly 17% of total Indian exports in the period of 2012-2021. Around 6% of these exports will fall under the purview of the CBAM.

The EU is India's second-largest trading partner after the U.S. and the second largest destination for Indian exports.

References

1. [The Hindu - BASIC countries oppose 'carbon border tax'](#)
2. [The Economic Times - EU's Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism](#)

Moscow Format Consultations on Afghanistan

India joined the latest meeting of the 'Moscow format consultations on Afghanistan' held at Moscow.

- The Moscow format of talks is one of the several dialogue platforms on Afghanistan.
- It began before the Taliban takeover of Kabul.
- The [Moscow format](#) was introduced in 2017 on the basis of the six-party mechanism for consultations between special representatives from Russia, Afghanistan, China, Pakistan, Iran and India.
- At the 4th Moscow format, the participants agreed to continue coordinating regional efforts to promote inter-Afghan national reconciliation and enhance security and stability in the region.
- India emphasised on
 1. Providing immediate humanitarian assistance,
 2. Formation of a truly inclusive and representative government,
 3. Combating terrorism and drug trafficking and
 4. Preserving the rights of women, children and minorities.
- On side-lines of the Moscow format meet, India-Russia-Iran will hold a trilateral meet focusing on Afghanistan with the three having similar concerns over Taliban ruled Afghanistan.

References

1. [The Indian Express - India joins Moscow meet on Afghanistan](#)
2. [The Hindu - India joins Moscow talks for inclusive government in Kabul](#)
3. [Business Standard - India attends Moscow format](#)

CITES COP-19

The 19th Conference of the Parties (COP19) to CITES is being held in Panama.

The Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) is also known as the Washington Convention.

- The COP19 to the CITES is also known as the **World Wildlife Conference**.
- In the CITES COP19, countries have proposals to amend the appendices for wild animals to Appendix I including red-crowned roofed turtle and African Elephant.
- It also proposes to include requiem and hammerhead sharks in Appendix II.
- India has put forward a proposal to better protect the red-crowned roofed turtle (*Batagur kachuga*) under CITES.

Red-Crowned Roofed Turtle

- **The red-crowned roofed turtle (*Batagur kachuga*) is a species of freshwater reptile.**



- **Distribution** - Native to India and Bangladesh.
- **Habitat** - Found in deep flowing rivers with terrestrial nesting sites.
- **Food** - Exclusively of water plants.
- **Threats** - The turtles are at a high risk of extinction.
 1. Habitat loss due to pollution and hydrological projects specific in the Ganga lowlands of northern India and Bangladesh.
 2. Overharvesting the animal for illegal consumption and
 3. Illegal international trade.

Over 11,000 tortoises and freshwater turtles have been seized in India from 2009-2019, a study by TRAFFIC.

- **Conservation**

1. IUCN - Critically Endangered
2. CITES - currently Appendix II (India proposed to move it to Appendix I)

African Elephant

- African countries have demanded the [African elephant](#) be considered for Appendix I.
- **Distribution** - The elephant population is spread across 37 countries in sub-Saharan Africa.
- **Threat** - Increasing ivory trade demand.
- **Conservation**

| | African Elephants | Asian Elephants |
|--------------|--|------------------------|
| IUCN | Vulnerable | Endangered |
| CITES | Appendix II (proposed to move it to Appendix I) | Appendix I |

Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES)

- CITES is an international agreement between governments and is **legally binding** on the Parties.
- Its aim is to ensure that international trade in specimens of **wild animals and plants** does not threaten the survival of the species.
- It has **3 appendices** to protect threatened and vulnerable species.
 1. Appendix I - For species currently threatened with extinction.
 2. Appendix II - For species not necessarily threatened with extinction but demands intervention to keep a check on trade and avoid its utilisation that may threaten their survival.
 3. Appendix III - For a given species, when a specific country wants to regulate trade.

References

1. [Down To Earth - India's freshwater turtle in danger of extinction](#)
2. [CITES - COP19](#)
3. [Wildlife Institute of India - Red Crowned Roofed Turtle](#)

Prime Minister's gifts for G20 leaders

The Prime Minister at G20 meeting, presented artworks and traditional items representing the rich heritage of Gujarat and Himachal Pradesh to world leaders.

Kangra Miniature Paintings (Kangra, Himachal Pradesh)



- Kangra miniature paintings generally portray depictions of love (Shringar Rasa) on a natural backdrop.
- The sentiment of love as a metaphor for devotion to the divine is the central theme of these **Pahari paintings**.
- The art originated in a small hill state '**Guler**' in the first half of the 18th century when a family of Kashmiri painters trained in the Mughal Style of painting sought shelter at the court of Raja Dalip Singh of Guler.
- This style reached its zenith during the reign of Maharaja Sansar Chand Katoch, a great patron of Kangra art.
- Today, these paintings are made by master painters from Himachal Pradesh using **natural colours**.

Mata Ni Pachedi (Ahmedabad, Gujarat)



- Mata Ni Pachedi is a handmade textile of Gujarat meant to be an **offering in the temples** which house the Mother Goddess.
- The name in Gujarati means - 'Mata' - 'mother goddess', 'Ni' - 'belonging to' and 'Pachedi' - 'backdrop'
- The goddess forms the central figure in the design, flanked by other elements of her story.
- Mata Ni Pachedi was crafted by the nomadic community of **Waghri**s as a homage to the **various incarnations of Mata**.

Pithora Paintings (Chhota Udaipur, Gujarat)



- Pithora is a ritualistic tribal folk art by the Rathwa artisans from Chhota Udaipur in Gujarat.
- These paintings are depictions of the cave paintings that tribals used to make.
- A Pithora as a mural has a special significance in the annals of cultural anthropology.
- These paintings bear a striking resemblance to the Aboriginal dot painting from the indigenous communities of Australia.

**Patan Patola (scarf)
(Patan, Gujarat)**



- The Double-Ikat Patan Patola textile is woven by the Salvi family in the Patan area of Northern Gujarat.
- Patole is a term derived from the Sanskrit word 'Pattu' (silk fabric).
- The complex motifs placed in this Dupatta (scarf) are inspired by the 'Rani ki Vav', a stepwell in Patan, built in the 11th century AD.
- The Patan Patola Dupatta is packed in a **Sadeli box**, which in itself is a decorative piece.
- Sadeli is a highly skilled wood craft, native to the Surat area of Gujarat.
- It involves precisely cutting geometric patterns on wooden articles to produce aesthetically appealing designs.

**Agate Bowl
(Kutch, Gujarat)**



- Agate is the semi-precious stone formed of chalcedonic-silica.
- It is found in underground mines of Rajpipla and Ratanpur in riverbeds.
- Agate bowl craft has been passed down through generations since the Indus Valley civilization days.
- It is currently practised by Artisans of Khambat.
- Agate is seen in various contemporary designs and attributed with healing powers.

**Silver Bowl
(Surat, Gujarat)**



- The unique and finely crafted bowl is made of pure silver.
- This century-old craft is perfected by the traditional and highly skilled metalsmiths of the Surat region, Gujarat.

**Kanal Brass Set
(Mandi & Kullu, Himachal Pradesh)**



- Kanal is a large, straight brass trumpet, over a metre long, played in parts of Himalayan India.
- It has a prominent bell resembling a datura flower.
- It is used on ceremonial occasions, such as the processions of village deities.
- It is also used to welcome the leaders of Himachal Pradesh.

**Kinnauri Shawl
(Kinnaur, Himachal Pradesh)**



- The Kinnauri shawls has its roots in the ancient tradition of wool milling and textile manufacturing in the region.
- The designs show influence from Central Asia and Tibet.
- The shawls are made using the extra-weft technique of weaving producing the lift in the pattern formed.

References

1. [The Indian Express - PM's gifts for G20 leaders](#)
2. [CNBC - Gifts PM Modi presented to world leaders at G20](#)