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## **Miocene giant rhinoceroted *Baluchitherium* from the Bugti Hills, Pakistan and its paleobiogeographic importance**

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The Neogene vertebrate mammalian faunas from the Siwalik Group rocks of the Himalayan Foreland basin of Pakistan and adjoining regions of India documents several immigration events from Africa, Central

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Asia and Europe along with *in-situ* speciation in some taxa. Five major immigration events have been recognised in the Miocene and Pliocene whereas *in-situ* speciation are well documented in Murids, Rhizomyids, Rhinocerotids, Bovids and Tragulids. One of the earliest immigration events in the earliest Miocene times (circa 20-22 Ma) brought several large mammal taxa mainly from Central Asia whose remains are found in the Chitarwata Formation of the Bugti Hills in Central Pakistan. The deposits suggest a peneplain landform near to the shore-line with climate supporting luxuriant forests. The vertebrate fauna recovered from the early Miocene Chitarwata Formation is dominated by rhinocerotids and anthracotheriids, most of which have affinities with Central Asia, Mongolia, and North Africa. This large-mammal dominated fauna from the Chitarwata Formation is replaced upwards by medium and small-sized mammals of mainly East African origin. Included in early Miocene/Chitarwata fauna are the fossil remains of the largest land-mammal, the *Baluchitherium*, *Baluchitherium* from the Bugti Hills so far was mainly known from the limb bones, pelvic and podial fragments. Most of these collections came from the Chur Lando Quarry. The recent Geological Survey Expedition has discovered a well-preserved skull with associated mandible from an area perhaps close to the Chur Lando Quarry. This single cranium specimen from the Bugti Hills appears to be a bit smaller than the *Baluchitherium grangeri* from the Loh area, Mongolia. It has simple rhinocerotid molar and premolar patterns with a domal skull without nasal horns.