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### New Find of Divine GeoArts in India and Neighbouring Countries

#### INTERACTIVE ARTICLE COVER

#### About the Journal

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#### About the Article

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# **New Find of Divine GeoArts in India and Neighbouring Countries**

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## **Abstract**

GeoArt deals with spectacular creations on the earth (Geo) by Mother Nature in the form of artistic (Art) developments of landforms and landscapes, which are appreciated when viewed from the air or sky-space. Initially Geoart was considered for any artistic natural or geological feature, and irrespective of scale. The stunning beauty of satellite views was brought out by NASA in a book 'Earth as Art' in 2012. Many considered these as 'Geoarts' relating it with geosciences and art. Large numbers of spectacular GeoArts are identified by the author through surfing of Google Earth images of India and neighbouring countries. Most of these are found related to human and animal-bird lives. Some, however, have attained manifestations of divine forms relating to God/ Goddess or their association; hence, are regarded as Divine GeoArts. Brief details of 20 such spectacular Divine GeoArts are presented in the paper. The approachable sites of some of these amazing GeoArts may find its place in future geotourism as these, like other landforms and landscapes, have potentiality to communicate scientific perception for their development through natural agencies or divine forces of Mother Nature.

**Key words:** Divine GeoArt, Google Earth, India-Neighbouring countries, Geotourism

## **Introduction**

The word 'GeoArt' displays 'Geo' for earth (creations of Mother Nature) and 'Art' (human appreciation), thus, merging the scientific and aesthetic aspects of the natural formations. Peng (2000) defined 'Geoart' as 'study and appreciation of the beauty that is found in the landforms, rocks, minerals and fossils of the earth' irrespective of their scales. Muda (2012) too opined for wide-range of scales for natural or geological arts (geoarts) and to be used for geotourism. The term 'GeoArt', however, is applied differently by different people. The book 'Earth as Art' of NASA (Friedl, 2012) was the first to display many stunning views taken by different satellites operating since 1960. The author opines that 'GeoArt' is a unique 'natural artwork', or 'artistic creation with aesthetic aspect' by Mother Nature resulting in development of spectacular landforms and landscapes on our earth. Rarely such landforms-landscapes are developed by human influence as noted in the mining operations (Grover, 2023). For their larger sizes the GeoArts are appreciated only from the air photographs, satellite images or sky-space. The best means to see such 'artworks' or GeoArts is GoogleEarth, a platform available free for all.

## **Divine GeoArt**

The meticulous surfing of Google Earth Pro images of India and neighbouring countries has resulted in identifying large numbers of spectacular, hitherto unreported, GeoArts. These display vivid natural landforms and landscapes developed through prolonged geological and

geomorphological processes or divine forces of Mother Nature; and are related to the known objects and activities of human other beings. Similar to 'Divine Arts', which are said to be inspired by nature and forming source of happiness and perennial inspiration (Shashibala, 2007); some of these 'GeoArts' have attained artistic and aesthetic manifestations of 'divine' i.e. related to God/ Goddesses, or show 'divine' association or activities, hence, are regarded as 'Divine GeoArts' here. Majority of initial artworks too, since Neolithic period, have been considered as based on religious themes. Religious arts still are considered manifestation of the divine.

In present paper the Divine GeoArts are found displaying 'humanoid' forms resembling with Lord Shiva, Brahma, Buddha, Hanuman; Aum symbol, Holy-Cross, temple complex and some events mentioned in sacred scriptures of Hinduism, etc. A brief description of some select individual 'Divine GeoArt', along with its zoomed-in Google Earth image, found in India and neighbouring countries, is presented below arranged in an alphabetic manner.

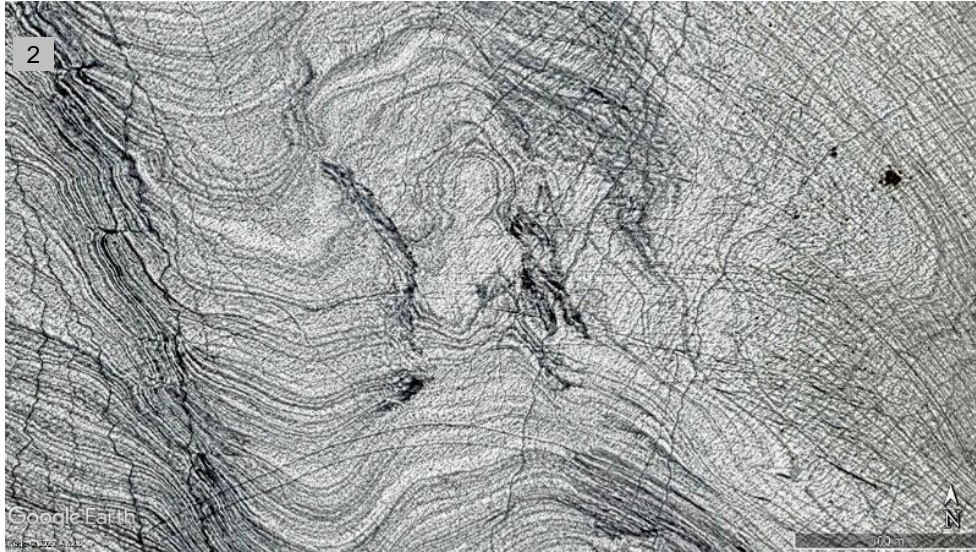
### **Aum Symbol**

Spectacular Divine GeoArt displaying the sacred Hindu symbol of 'Aum' or 'Om' developed by forested quartzite hills around Pandupol in Sariska Tiger Reserve Forest was noted by the author (Grover, 2013). It spans over 40 x 23 km area in Alwar district of Rajasthan, India. Similar large-sized GeoArt depicting 'Aum' is seen near Bhopal city, Madhya Pradesh, India. Two smaller GeoArts depicting 'Aum' are identified by the author by surfing of Google Earth Pro. One is located west of Dhala meteoritic crater in Shivpuri district of Madhya Pradesh, India. The other is developed through water-filled limestone mining pits near Porbandar in Gujarat, India. However, GeoArt displaying 'Aum' in Sariska area is found most realistic and displayed below (Fig. 1).



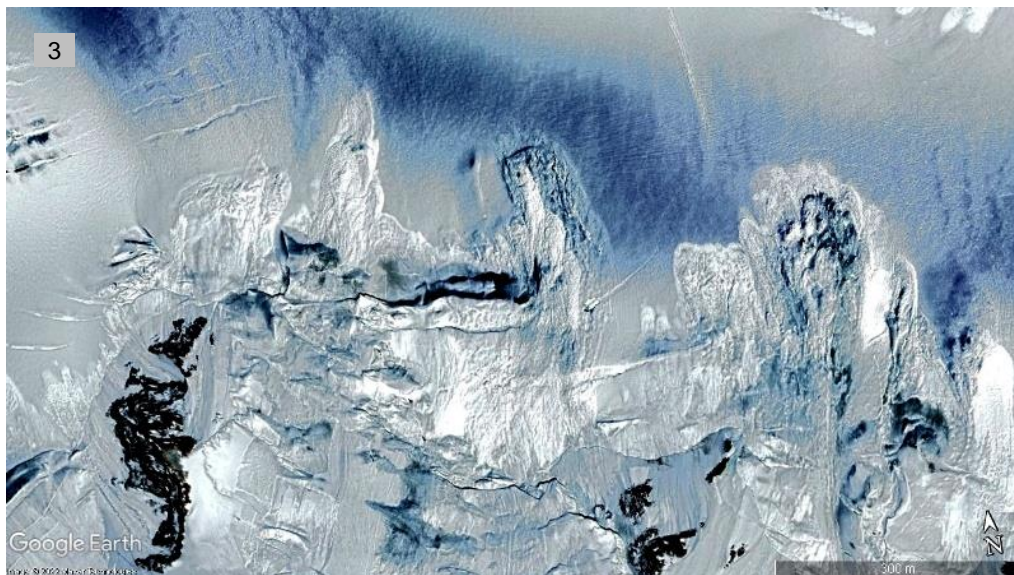
### **Buddha in Meditation**

Beautiful GeoArt of a 'Humanoid' is seen developed within banded and folded snow-layers of a glacier at about 38 km north of Badrinath in Chamoli district of Uttarakhand, India. The clean-shaved head of the 'Humanoid' with an aura-like feature behind its head looks very similar to 'Lord Buddha as if in meditation' (Fig. 2).



### **Divine Family**

This GeoArt is an amazing and most spectacular creation of Mother Nature displaying a 'Divine Family'. It shows a couple of 'Humanoids' and got developed by fresh, bluish shaded and frozen snow over a glacier spanning over one km stretch. It shows very high resemblance with the family of Hindu 'Lord Shiva, Parvati and Ganesha', who are believed to reside in Mount Kailash in cold region of Tibetan Plateau, China. This beautiful 'Divine GeoArt' has been identified at about 50 km east of Shimshal in Hunza district of Gilgit-Baltistan. The easternmost humanoid form looks exactly similar to Lord Ganesha as shown in the image below (Fig. 3).



### **Flying Hanuman**

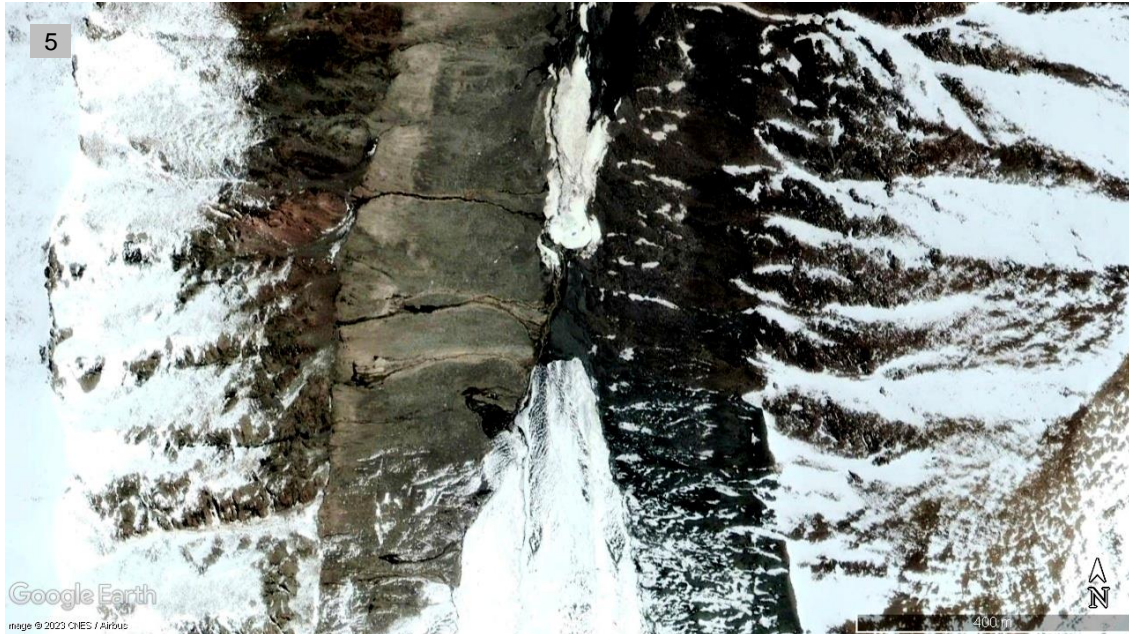
The amazing GeoArt depicting a 'Flying Humanoid' holding something in hand shows very high similarity with a scene of Ramayana. God Hanuman brought Sanjeevani medicine for unconscious Lakshman by holding mountain of medicine in His hand while flying back from Himalaya during Rama-Ravana war. This Divine GeoArt is developed through 1.2 km long island at the southern end of a frozen lake called Jiaomuchaka. It was created by Mother Nature at about 55 km northeast of Rongma Town in Tibet-China (Fig. 4).



### **Ganga descending on Lord Shiva**

Another most spectacular GeoArt is depicting an event of 'Humanoids' resembling with Lord Shiva, and high-altitude river as if Holy Ganga; is identified on Google Earth Pro close to Mount Kailash (Kangrinboqe Peak) in Tibet, the abode of 'Lord Shiva'. Amazingly the river (Holy Ganga) is in the form of a snow-white lady with upside-down posture and open-hands as if sky-diving from the heaven to down below on earth. The Humanoid form (Lord Shiva) exactly below is looking upwards towards the river/ Holy Ganga as if ready to bear Her descend.

The event of 'Holy Ganga descending on Lord Shiva' created by Mother Nature with both of its characters is crystal clear in this beautiful GeoArt image presented below (Fig. 5).



### **Hanuman in War**

This amusing GeoArt is of a 'Humanoid' with face resembling with Hindu God 'Hanuman' with his mace as if in a war-like form and situation, and as viewed from the sky up. The Humanoid form is 1.7 km tall and developed through sub-horizontally bedded rocks of Bijawar Group (Fig. 6). Mother Nature has created this beautiful view at about 15 km southeast of Bijawar town in Chhatarpur district of Madhya Pradesh, India.



### Hanuman as Bambino

This spectacular GeoArt is of an unusual greyish lacustrine landform in the form of a small bambino or 'baby monkey. Its mouth resembles very much with the Hindu God 'Hanuman' (Fig. 7) when infant. Mother Nature has created this amazing 'Divine GeoArt' through frozen lake of 150 x 75 m size at about 17 km north-northwest of Saidu in Lhuntse district of Bhutan.



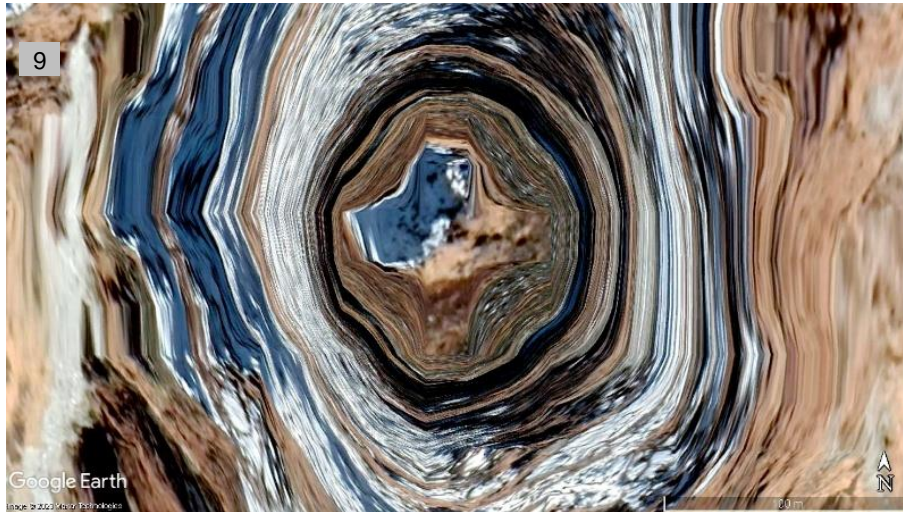
### Hanuman with Mace

An amazing development of a small (270 x 125 m) high-altitude lake into a beautiful GeoArt is found depicting a 'Humanoid with an object in hand'. The GeoArt displays high similarity with Hindu God 'Hanuman holding His mace'. This splendid GeoArt is created by the divine forces of Mother Nature at about 6 km WSW of Barobas in Diamer district of Gilgit-Baltistan (Fig. 8).



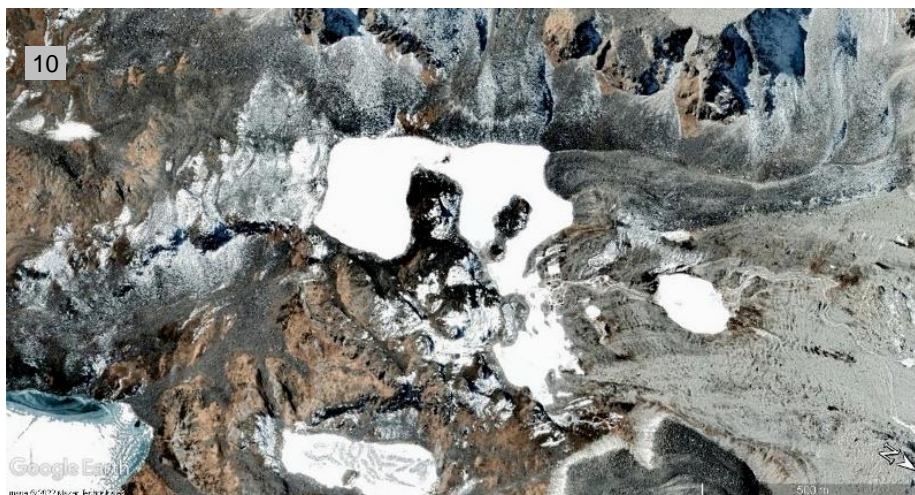
### Holy Cross

An unusual but very spectacular GeoArt displaying an oval lined-structure of 150 x 125 m size has been identified at about 32 km ESE of Etalin in Arunachal Pradesh, India. It is amazing to see the formation of 'Cross' at its centre, and a 'Humanoid' face within the bluish part of the Cross (Fig. 9). Seeing it, the Christian disciples may think it as a natural manifestation of 'Holy-Cross with Jesus inside'. In author's opinion this unusual GeoArt might have been generated due to computer correction of very high-slope part of the image; the view is based on observing somewhat similar lined-structures (without cross) in many other steep-slope areas of Himalayan Mountains.



### Man with Damaru

A beautiful GeoArt depicting a 'Humanoid' with Damaru (two-headed drum) like object in hand is seen developed on the bank of 600 m wide snowy lake amidst rocky terrain (Fig. 10). 'Damaru' is considered a divine instrument of Lord Shiva to create cosmic sounds; thus, correlating the Humanoid of this GeoArt with Lord Shiva. This 'Divine GeoArt' is created by Mother Nature at about 22 km northwest of Saidu in Lhuntse district of Bhutan.



### Man of Om Parvat



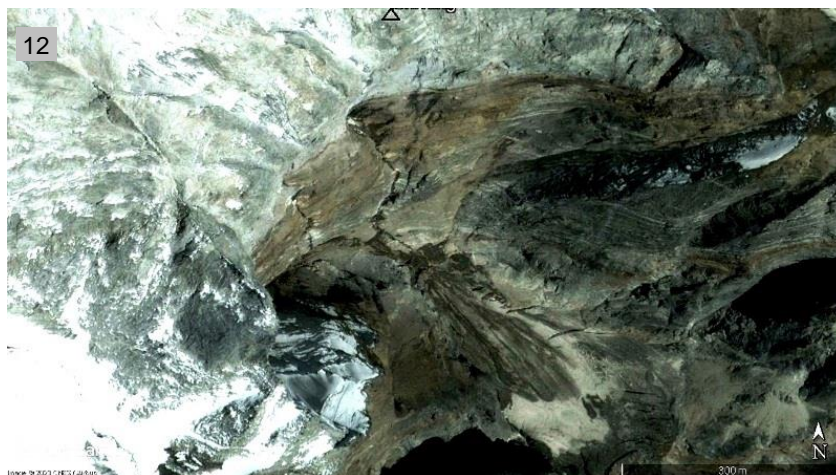
Om Parvat is quite famous mountain peak in Pithoragarh district of Uttarakhand in India. It displays perfectly a large-sized sacred Hindu symbol of 'Aum' through the white snow. The sacred symbol is best appreciated from a distance in that area.

When the author attempted to look at the Om Parvat on Google Earth Pro images of different time periods, the following Divine GeoArt of a 'Humanoid' has appeared (Fig. 11) almost at the Om Parvat location (white triangle in image). The visible part of the 'humanoid' face is 185 m in height. Its presence exactly at the Om Parvat is quite amazing. Religious Hindus may consider it as a manifestation of Trinity God Shiva Himself on this Om Parvat.



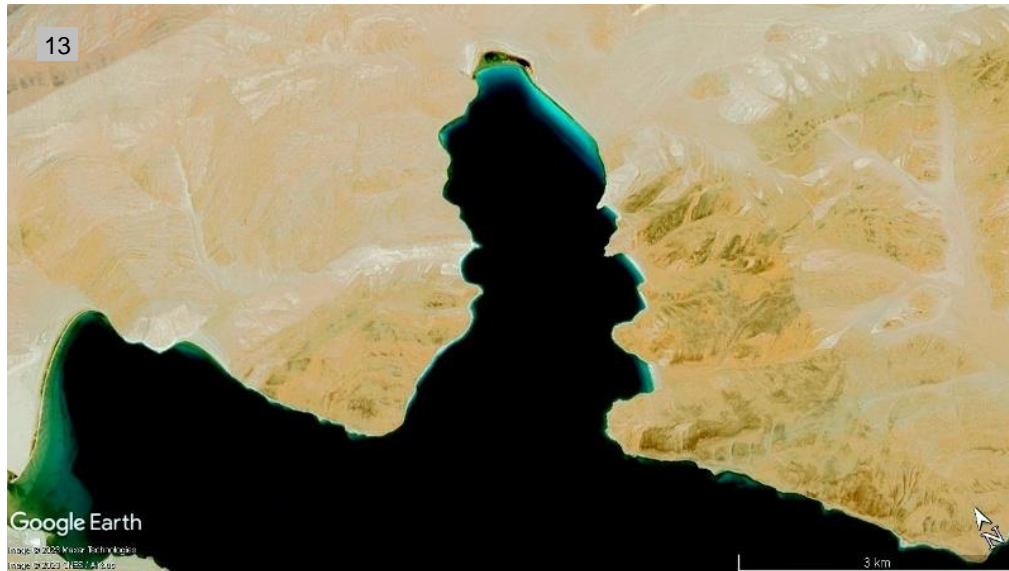
### Man of Mount Shivling

Like Om Parvat, the Shivling Peak is also famous as its summit shows similarity with the form of Shivling. It is located in Uttarkashi district of Uttarakhand in India. The author's attempt to look Mount Shivling through Google Earth Pro images of different time-periods resulted in seeing an unusual GeoArt displaying a Humanoid figure. Religious Hindus may consider it as a manifestation of Trinity God Shiva in this unusual form (Fig. 12). The black triangle represents the location of Shivling Peak in the image, which is just 100 m north of it.



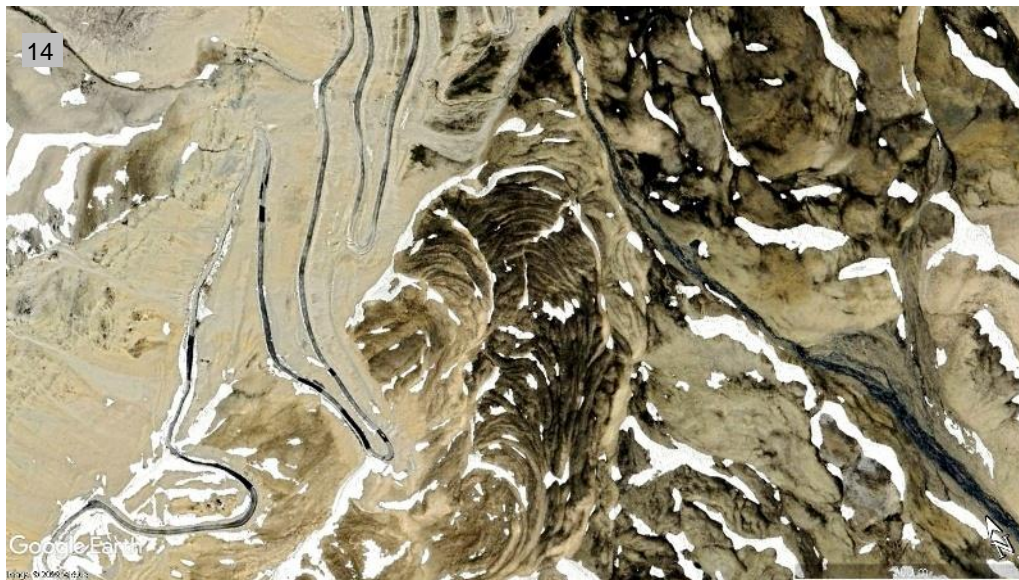
### Shiva on Nandi

Spectacular 'Divine GeoArt' displaying a 'Humanoid' as if riding an animal has been identified at about 7 km ESE of Lukung in Leh district of Ladakh, India. It is exhibiting high resemblance with Hindu's 'Lord Shiva' riding His transport 'Nandi' (bull). Mother Nature has created this Divine GeoArt through the waters of Pangong Lake at its north-western end. The size of Humanoid head is nearly 180 x 180 m (Fig. 13).



### **Smiling Shiva**

It is a wonderful GeoArt displaying a brownish 'Humanoid' face with a broad smile. It shows high resemblance with Hindu Trinity God 'Shiva'. This 'Divine GeoArt' is developed by the interaction of rocks and the snow on high-slope areas (Fig. 14). The Humanoid face is 370 m tall. The GeoArt is created by Mother Nature at about 500 m east of Indian border in Tibet-China; located at about 11 km almost east of Kalapani of Uttarakhand.



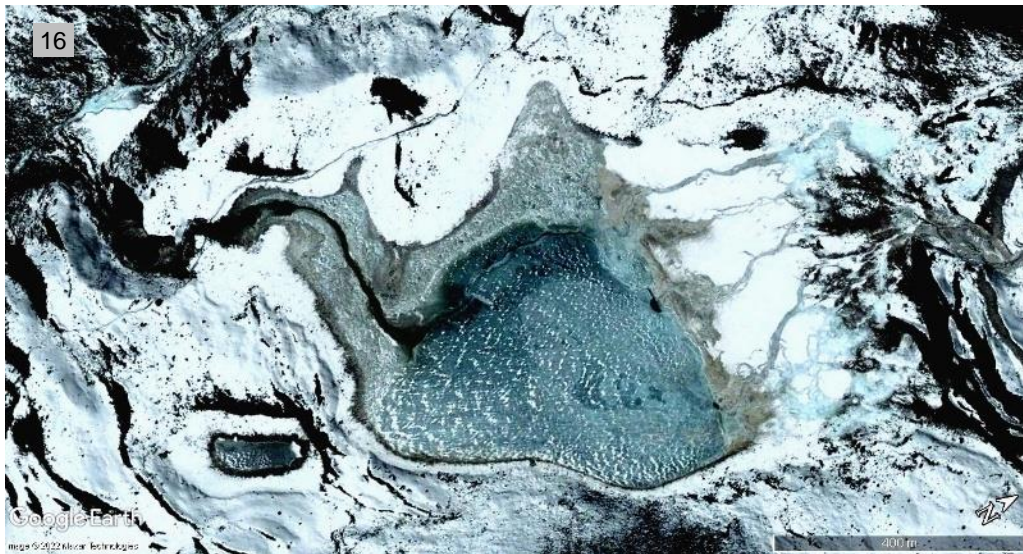
### **Struggling with Calamity**

A rare GeoArt of a few 'Humanoids with children in laps' as if they are highly frightened and are on movement. It is identified within the coastal waters at 2.5 km west of Surakaradi, and about 20 km north of Dwarka in Gujarat State, India. It reminds the scene of Mahabharata mentioning the end of relatives and friends of Lord Krishna and the residents of Dwarka after the death of Lord Krishna. At that time it was said that Krishna clan people will end by fighting with each others; others will die due to submergence of Dwarka city under sea (Fig. 15).



### Swan Rider

This beautiful GeoArt displaying a 'Swan-like' formation and a 'Humanoid' riding over it, shows good resemblance with Hindu Trinity God 'Brahma' whose transport is a Swan (Fig. 16). It is developed by a frozen lake of 600 x 1000 m size. The 'Divine GeoArt' is created by Mother Nature at about 30 km N10E of Lung Chen; and about 77 km northeast of Thimphu in Bhutan.



### Temple Complex

Highly spectacular GeoArt of the landscape, very similar to a 'Temple Complex', has been found developed by weathering of different Deccan trap flows; and decorated with green vegetation. It has been created by Mother Nature at about 7 km southwest of Lonavala in Pune district of Maharashtra, India. The length of the central elongated temple-like structure is 2.6 km (Fig. 17).



### Travelling after Death

It is very unique and amusing GeoArt, which is depicting a scene something like 'human-soul travelling after death' (Fig. 18). It is developed by a small (100 x 30 m) high-altitude linear lake like a dead-body (dark coloured) over the surface of a large lake covered with fresh snow. It appears that darker lake area is of very high slope acting as a snow-shadow zone. Mother Nature has created this Divine GeoArt at about 240 km northeast of Leh in Ladakh, India.



### Yogi in Cave

Amazing GeoArt displaying a greyish white 'Humanoid' in a yogic posture is seen sitting inside a temple-like dark cave. It is developed by 620 m long partly frozen high-altitude lake (Fig. 19). The GeoArt has been created by Mother Nature at about 20 km SSE of Medog County in Tibet-China; and located at about 5 km NW of Indian border.



### Zen Monk or Chinese King

An amazing and spectacular GeoArt depicting an old 'Humanoid' is found developed at the place where one frozen lake is located. It looks like a 'Zen monk' in a thoughtful posture. The GeoArt also shows some similarity with the Emperor Hongwu (1328-1398 AD), the founder of Ming Dynasty (Fig. 20). It is interesting to note that the frozen lake is visible on 2015 image, while the Humanoid character appears at the same lake in 2014 image. However, the present-day image area of this lake is totally obscured by clouds.



### Discussion

GeoArts are very amazing creations (natural landforms and landscapes on the earth) of Mother Nature displaying artistic manifestations with aesthetic ingredient. For their larger sizes, these are identified and best appreciated from the air or sky-space. The subject of GeoArt is an emerging one throughout the world including India. Similar to 'Divine Art', which is ubiquitous in religious traditions, the 'Divine GeoArts' being the natural creations by special forces of Mother Nature, display expressions of divinity or deities or their association in a beautiful manner. Such Divine GeoArts have been identified from India and its neighbouring countries for the first time, and described in this paper. Some of the approachable sites of these GeoArts can play its role in promoting future geotourism, as these too like other natural landforms and landscapes can communicate scientific perception for their development through natural agencies. Students, amateurs and experts of Geosciences and Fine Arts may find this subject highly amusing besides being educative. Searching 'Divine GeoArt' in any country or territory on the globe using Google Earth Pro or similar platforms can be an educational amusement in coming days especially with geoscience and art lovers.

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