Week 5

Food, Culture and Identity
Part II: Middle Eastern and Indian Culture
Session Overview

Food, Culture and Identity Part II: Middle Eastern & Indian Culture

- Influences on Middle Eastern and Indian culture
- What defines Middle Eastern culture?
- What defines Indian culture?
- What are the explicit food practices of these populations?
- Influences of Middle Eastern and Indian culture on contemporary food and nutrition practices
Middle Eastern Culture
Middle Eastern Culture

• Understand and analyse the influences of Middle Eastern cultures including
  • Turkey
  • Egypt
  • Lebanon
  • Other surrounding Middle Eastern cultures

• Discuss the defining features of Middle Eastern culture and understand what the explicit food practices of these populations are.

• Understand and discuss the influences of Middle Eastern culture on contemporary food and nutrition practices.
Middle Eastern Religion

- The majority of people are Muslims, however there are a large number of Arab Christians in Lebanon, Syria, Palestine, Iraq and Egypt.

- The UN established the Jewish State of Israel in 1947, but Judaism dates back 4000 years.

- Islam began in the 7th century Saudi Arabia and was revealed to humanity by the Prophet Muhammad.

(Kittler & Sucher, 2016; Cultural Diversity, 2008; Metropolitan Museum of Art)
Мекка
Islam - Middle Eastern Religion

- Muslim eating practices encompass the following rules:
  - Eating no more than two thirds of their capacity.
  - Sharing food is recommended.
  - Food is never to be thrown away, wasted or treated with contempt.
  - Hands and mouths must be washed before and after eating.
  - If utensils are not available then only eat with right hand.
  - Permitted or lawful foods are called *halal*.
  - Can eat or drink prohibited foods under certain conditions.

(Kittler & Sucher, 2016; Cultural Diversity, 2008)
## Halal Foods

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Halal food products</th>
<th>Haram Food products</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Milk (from cows, sheep, camels, and goats)</td>
<td>Animals improperly slaughtered or dead before slaughtering</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Honey</td>
<td>Alcohol and intoxicants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fish</td>
<td>Pork and pork by-products</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fresh or naturally frozen vegetables</td>
<td>Animals killed in the name of anyone other than Allah (God)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plants that are not an intoxicant</td>
<td>Blood and blood by-products</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grains such as wheat, rice, rye, barley, and oats</td>
<td>Foods contaminated with any of the above products</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Legumes and nuts such as peanuts, cashew nuts, pistachios, hazelnuts, and walnuts</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Adapted from: [http://www.itanca.org/Pages/index.aspx](http://www.itanca.org/Pages/index.aspx)
### Cultural Food Groups: Middle East

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Comments</th>
<th>Common Foods</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Milk/milk products</td>
<td>High incidence of lactose intolerance is reported. Fermented dairy is popular.</td>
<td>Cheese (mainly feta), milk, yoghurt.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meat/poultry/fish/eggs/legumes</td>
<td>Lamb most popular. Pork is only eaten by Christians, not by Muslims or Jews. Jews do not eat shellfish. Legumes commonly consumed.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cereals/grains</td>
<td>Some form of wheat or rice usually accompanies the meal.</td>
<td>Unleavened bread, millet, rice.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fruits/Vegetables</td>
<td>Fruits are eaten for dessert or as snacks. Fresh fruit and vegetables are preferred, but if they are not available fruits are served as jams and vegetables as pickles. Eggplant &amp; okra is popular</td>
<td>(Kittler &amp; Sucher, 2016)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Judaism – Middle Eastern Religion

• Estimated to be over 4000 years old and was originally a nation as well as a religion.

• The basic tenet of Judaism is that there is only one God, and His will must be obeyed.

• The foods Jews eat reflect the regions where their families originated.

• Orthodox Jews follow strict dietary laws. Food that is not kosher according to Jewish law is referred to as treyf.

(ABC, 2014; Kittler & Sucher, 2016)
Judaism: Diet

• Certain animals may not be eaten at all. This restriction includes flesh, organs, eggs and milk of the forbidden animals.

• According to the Torah, any animal that has cloven hooves and chews its cud is acceptable to eat, including sheep, cattle, goats and deer. Any animal that does not have both of these qualities is not allowed, including, camel, the hare and pig.
Judaism: diet

• Ritual slaughter is referred to as "shechitah" by the "shochet".

• The method of slaughter is a quick, deep stroke across the throat with a sharp blade – allows for the rapid drainage of blood.

• All blood must be drained from the meat or broiled out of it before it is eaten.
Shochet – Jewish Butcher
# Kosher Dietary Laws

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Kosher (permitted)</th>
<th>Trayf (forbidden)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ritually slaughtered beef, sheep, goats and deer with no flaws or diseases</td>
<td>Pork, camel, rabbit, rodents, reptiles, and any animal that died of natural causes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chicken, turkey, quail, geese</td>
<td>Eagle, hawk, vulture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salmon, tuna, carp, herring, cod</td>
<td>Crab, lobster, octopus, clam, swordfish, sturgeon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meat eaten separately from dairy</td>
<td>Meat with dairy (e.g., cheeseburger, burger with milkshake, chicken cordon bleu, wiener schnitzel, etc.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wine or grape juice made under Jewish supervision</td>
<td>Any other wine and grape juice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Soft cheese and kosher hard cheese</td>
<td>Most hard cheese</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Internet FAQ Archives, 2010)
Judaism: Diet

• Meat cannot be eaten with dairy. Fish, eggs, fruits, vegetables and grains can be eaten with either dairy or meat.

• Utensils that have come into contact with any meat cannot be used with dairy.

• Utensils that have come in contact with a non-kosher food cannot be used with a kosher food and vice versa.

(Wellness, n.d)
Jewish Challah
## Cultural Food Groups
### Middle East

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Additional Foods</th>
<th>Comments</th>
<th>Common Foods</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Seasonings</td>
<td>Lemons are often used for flavouring.</td>
<td>Ajowan, allspice, anise.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nuts/Seeds</td>
<td>Ground nuts are often used to thicken soups and stews.</td>
<td>Almonds, cashews, poppy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beverages</td>
<td>Coffee and tea are often flavoured with cardamom or mint, respectively. Aperitifs are often anise flavoured. Alcoholic beverages are consumed in most of the Balkans, Turkey and Israel.</td>
<td>Coffee, date palm juice, fruit juices, tea.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fats/oils</td>
<td>Olive oil generally used in dishes that are to be eaten cold. Corn or nut oil used for deep frying. Clarified butter is popular and sheep’s tail fat is a delicacy.</td>
<td>(Kittler &amp; Sucher, 2016)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Flavour Principles

Allspice
Ajowan
Mint
Sheep Tail Fat

Fat-tailed sheep pulling a cart to protect its tail as depicted in Job Ludolphus' (Ludolf the Elder's) A New History of Ethiopia (1684).

https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/2/20/Fat-Tailed_Sheep.png
Turkey
Turkey

• Turkey’s culinary traditions have survived over 1300 years because of its favourable location and Mediterranean climate.

• Its position between the Far East and the Mediterranean Sea helped the Turks gain complete control of the major trade routes.

• The Turkish people are descendants of nomadic tribes from Mongolia and western Asia who moved westward and became herdsmen in around 600 AD.

(Food in Every Country, 2014)
Turkey

• The herdsmen’s staples included dairy foods, bulghur wheat and barley.

• Early influences from China and Persia included noodles and manti often covered in yoghurt sauce, rice, various nuts, meat and fruit stews.

• As they moved further west into Anatolia by 1200AD, they encountered chickpeas and figs, as well as Greek olive oil and an abundance of seafood.

(Food in Every Country, 2014)
Turkey

• By the beginning of the Ottoman Empire's 600 year reign (mid-1400s), Turkish cuisine was well established.

• Yoghurt salads, fish in olive oil, stuffed and wrapped vegetables became Turkish staples.

• The empire used its land and water routes to import exotic ingredients from all over the world.

• By the end of the 1500s, the Ottoman court housed 1400 live-in cooks and had passed laws on regulating the freshness of food.

(Food in Every Country, 2014)
Traditional Foods

- Fats & Oils: Butter and olive oil
- Dairy: Yoghurt and cheese
- Fish: Hamsi - similar to the anchovy
- Sweetener: Honey, currants
- Cereals: Rice, bulgur wheat, Pide bread
- Meat: offal, lamb, Pastirma
- Legumes: chick peas
- Flavourings: dill, cumin, cinnamon chilli peppers, mint, parsley

- Traditional Dishes: Pilaf, Kebab, Borek, Gozleme, Helva, Tarhana, Dolmas (stuffed vegetables); desserts; sweet pastries, Turkish Delight

(Weichselbaum et al, 2005)
Turkish Cuisine

Doner kebab; sarma & dolma
Turkey: Traditional Dishes

Baklava

Tarhana
Egypt
Egypt

- Ancient Egyptians had a great love for food and left evidence of this through well-preserved wall paintings and carvings depicting large feasts and a variety of foods.

- Popular foods of ancient times include marrows, peas, beans, lentils, onions, leeks, cucumbers, dates, figs, melons, grapes, fish and poultry.

- Wheat and barley, ancient staple crops, were used to make bread and beer.

(Food in Every Country, 2014; Lambert, n.d)
Egypt

• The unique Egyptian cuisine has been influenced throughout history by its neighbours from the Middle East.

• Persians, Greeks, Romans, Arabs, and Ottomans first influenced Egyptian cuisine thousands of years ago and more recently neighbouring Middle Eastern and North African countries.

• Approximately 94.9 percent of Egyptians are Muslims

• Approximately 5.1 percent of Egyptians are Christians

(PewForum Report on Religious Diversity 2014; Food in Every Country 2014)
Egypt

- Molokhiyya
- Ful mudammas
- Tahini
- Koushari
- Kebab
- Aish baladi
- Kofta

Sourced from public domain: http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Tahini.jpg
Lebanon
Lebanon

- A unique cultural history has helped to make Lebanese food the most popular of all Middle Eastern cuisines.

- From 1516 to 1918, the Ottoman Turks controlled Lebanon and introduced a variety of foods that have become staples in the Lebanese diet, including olive oil, bread, baklava, leben, stuffed vegetables, variety of nuts and lamb.

- After the Ottomans were defeated in World War I, France took control of Lebanon until 1946, when the country won its independence.

(Food in Every Country, 2014)
Lebanon

- The French introduced some of their most widely eaten foods, particularly flan, a caramel custard dessert, and buttery croissants.

- Ancient tribes of Lebanon journeyed throughout the Middle East, carrying food that would not spoil easily, such as rice and dates. These foods slowly became part of the Lebanese diet.

- Approximately 61.3 percent of Lebanese are Muslims

- Approximately 38.3 percent of Lebanese are Christians

(Food in Every Country, 2014; PewForum Report on Religious Diversity, 2014)
Lebanon

- Lebanese cuisine features such staples as kibbeh (ground lamb with bulgur wheat) and tabouleh (parsley, mint and bulgur wheat salad).

- The food is simply prepared, with the flavors blending together into a complex medley of earthy, fruity tastes and scents.

- Falafel, Baklava, Halva, Kufta, Leben and Baba Ghanoush all feature as popular Lebanese food.

(Health and Beyond, n.d)
Lebanese Foods

Tabbouleh

Kibbeh
India
Indian Culture

• Understand and analyse the influences of Indian culture.

• Discuss the defining features of Indian culture and understand what the explicit food practices of this population is.

• Understand and discuss the influences of Indian culture on contemporary food and nutrition practices.
India
Indian Culture

• Culturally complex democratic country with a population of more than 1.25 billion.

• People from virtually every racial and religious group have migrated to, or invaded India at some time in history, and each group has brought its own language, customs and cuisine.

• With its many languages (18 official languages; 1600 dialects), cultures and religions, few countries in the world have such diversity as India.

(World Bank 2014; Sen 2004; WHO 2017; Kittler & Sucher, 2016)
Indian Religion

- Hindu 80.5% of population – 1.04 billion
- Muslims 13.4% of population – 174 million
- Christian 2.3% “ – 30 million
- Sikh 1.9% “ – 25 million
- Jainism 0.4% “ – 5 million
- Buddhism 0.8% “ – 10 million
- Judaism, Parsis (Zoroastrians), Animism (worshippers of nature gods and spirits) and others – 0.1% 1.3 million

(Sen, CT, 2004; Govt India, 2011)
Indian Caste System

- About 1500 BCE, powerful nomadic warriors known as Aryans appeared in northern India, and established the caste system.

- There are four castes in Hindu society.
  - The Brahmins - Priests
  - The Kshatriyas - Soldiers
  - The Vaishyas – Merchants or farmers
  - The Sudras – Serfs

- The Dalits – non-caste – approximately 15% of the population

(Kittler & Sucher, 2016)
Indian Traditional Food Habits

• The Aryan-speaking peoples who entered India between 1500 and 1000 B.C used leafy vegetables, lentils, and milk products such as yogurt and ghee (clarified butter).

• The Aryans also used spices such as cumin and coriander. Black pepper was widely used by 400 A.D.

• The Greeks brought saffron, while the Chinese introduced tea.

• The Portuguese and British made red chili, potato and cauliflower popular after 1700 A.D. (Food in Every Country, 2014)
Indian Dietary Practices

• Feasting and fasting affect the daily dietary practices in India and are complex and vary greatly as with other Indian food habits.

• The role of women in food preparation is extremely important. Feeding the family is an Indian woman’s primary household duty.

• In India cows are sacred and not eaten because they produce oxen, castrated male cows - a beast of burden.

(Civitello, 2011, Kittler & Sucher, 2016)
India’s Health Status

• In last few decades, India has experienced the Improvements malnutrition and health infrastructure, social development and eradication of major killer diseases.

• Nutrition transition in India is well underway, with an increase in consumption of energy dense foods and sedentary lifestyles. Diet related non-communicable chronic disease has grown at an alarming rate and will become a major public health challenge.

(Misra et al, 2011)
Northern Indian Dietary Practices

- Characterised by the use of wheat, tea, eggs, garlic, dried or pickled fruits and vegetables, and use of dry *masalas* that are aromatic rather than hot.

- Boiling, stewing and frying most common forms of cooking.

- Meatballs (*kofta*), *dal*, *kababs* (skewered roasted or grilled meat), *korma* (curried lamb with nut and yoghurt thickened sauce) and *masala* feature.

(ThinkQuest, nd; Kittler & Sucher, 2016)
Southern Indian Dietary Practices

- Food here is non-greasy, featuring steamed (and fried) rice which is a staple component of every meal.

- Rice, coffee, fresh pickles, *pachadi*, “wet” spicy-hot *masalas*, and fresh fruits, vegetables, herbs and spices also feature.

- Coconut is an important ingredient in all South Indian food.

- Coastal regions enjoy seafood specialties and fish prepared a number of ways – fried, steamed, boiled, curried, and stuffed.

(ThinkQuest, nd; Kittler & Sucher, 2016)
Indian Religion - Hinduism
Indian Religion - Hinduism

• The goal is not to make humans perfect beings but to make them one with the Universal Spirit or Supreme Being.

• There are four goals of Hinduism:
  • To achieve divine peace
  • To achieve wealth and power
  • To have responsibility
  • and physical pleasure

(Kittler & Sucher, 2016)
Indian Religion - Hinduism

- Dietary practices can be very strict.
  - Most Hindus are vegetarian
  - Although the consumption of meat is allowed, the cow is considered sacred and is not to be killed or eaten.
  - If meat is consumed pork and beef are avoided.
  - No fish or meat should be consumed if it has not been sanctified by the repetition of mantras offering it to the gods.
- Feast and fast days are also an important component of Hinduism.

(Kittler & Sucher, 2016)
Indian Religion - Buddhism
Indian Religion - Buddhism

• Arising in India in the 5th century B.C.E, Buddhism flourished in India.

• Founded by Siddhartha Gautama (Buddha) seeking to understand the cause of the suffering in the world.

• Buddhism rejected the caste system of Hinduism, appealing to the lower classes.

• Buddha declared the flesh of many animals, including human, should not be eaten.

(Civitello, 2011)
Indian Religion - Buddhism

- Buddhist doctrine forbids the taking of life; many are lacto-ovo-vegetarians

- To enter the Buddhist community, a person must take the Three Refuges (Jewels) and the Five Precepts.

- Do not believe in a Creator God and view the world as *samsara*.

- Buddhists believe in *karma*.

(ABC 2014; Kittler & Sucher, 2016)
## Common Religious Food Practices

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<tr>
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<th>ADV</th>
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<th>JEW</th>
<th>MOR</th>
<th>MUS</th>
<th>RCA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Beef</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>X</td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pork</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>X</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All meat</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>R</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>R</td>
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<td>R</td>
<td>R</td>
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<tr>
<td>Eggs/dairy</td>
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<td>Fish</td>
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<td>Shellfish</td>
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<tr>
<td>Alcohol</td>
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<td>A</td>
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<tr>
<td>Coffee/tea</td>
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<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td>A</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

X = Prohibited or strongly discouraged  
A = Avoided by most devout  
R = Some restrictions  
O = Permitted but may be avoided at some observances  
+ = Practiced

(Kittler & Sucher, 2008, p. 86)
## Common Religious Food Practices

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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<th>MOR</th>
<th>MUS</th>
<th>RCA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Meat &amp; dairy at same time</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Leavened foods</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>R</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Ritual slaughter of meats</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
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<tr>
<td>Moderation</td>
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<td>+</td>
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**X** = Prohibited or strongly discouraged  
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**R** = Some restrictions  
**O** = Permitted but may be avoided at some observances  
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(Kittler & Sucher, 2008, p. 86)
Summary

• Review the influences of Middle East and Indian culture.

• What defines Middle East and Indian culture?

• What are the explicit food and religious practices of these populations?

• Influences of Middle Eastern and Indian culture on contemporary food and nutrition practices
References


References

• International Humanist and Ethical Union (2005) Untouchability in India - An Overview.
References

• International Humanist and Ethical Union (2005) Untouchability in India - An Overview.
Image References

Slide 3 – Middle East map – retrieved 24 March, 2017
   from: https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/7/72/Map_of_Middle_East.png

Slide 6 – Mecca - The Great Mosque, Mecca. Retrieved from
   http://sacredsites.com/middle_east/saudi_arabia/mecca.html

Slide 13 – Shochet Jewish Butcher. Retrieved from:
   http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/0/0a/Butcher_sign_in_the_Ward.jpg
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Slide 16 – Jewish Challah. Retrieved from:

Slide 18 – Flavour Principles. Retrieved from public domain:
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Image References

Slide 20 – Sheep Tail Fat with cart
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Slide 25 – Doner Kebab, Sarma and dolma. Retrieved from public domain:
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http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Two_kinds_of_tarhana.JPG


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Slide 36 – Map of India. Retrieved from: Adrian Lander Photography:

Slide 38 – topographical map of India. Retrieved 24 March, 2017 from:
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Slide 50 – Indian religion, Buddhism. Retrieved from public domain: [http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/9/9c/Buddha%27s_statue_near_Belum_Caves_Andhra_Pradesh_India.jpg/415pxBuddha%27s_statue_near_Belum_Caves_Andhra_Pradesh_India.jpg](http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/9/9c/Buddha%27s_statue_near_Belum_Caves_Andhra_Pradesh_India.jpg/415pxBuddha%27s_statue_near_Belum_Caves_Andhra_Pradesh_India.jpg)
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