

## Lost continent

LONDON, Nov 14: Some 225 million years too late, scientists have located the site of the "lost continent" of Pacifica, the science journal Nature was reported, says Reuter.

Drs Amos Nur of Stanford University, Calif. and Zviben Avraham of the Weizmann Institute, Israel, said that continent, which once existed in the middle of the Pacific, has completely dispersed.

Large chunks of it have since collided with Alaska and eastern Siberia, South East Asia and Western, North and South America, shoving up mountain ranges where these collisions took place.

Another chunk of Pacifica remains under the ocean, they believe, and may explain the origins of large submerged platforms in the southwest Pacific.

But Pacifica itself may provide the continental connection between western North America, southeast Asia and South America needed to explain the evolutionary history of flora and fauna and mammals around the Pacific.

In fact the concept of a Pacifica was first introduced by bio-geographers to explain the relation between species and families surrounding the Pacific," the authors said.

Much of the article is a summation of geological and magnetic studies tending to support the idea that a large continent once existed about where Australia is now.

When it disintegrated large pieces of it rode on the four main Pacific plates, being carried to their present locations.

The authors note that Africa is even now undergoing a very slow process of similar disintegration due to plate rifting.

Thus Pacific would do for the Pacific what the proposed prehistoric continent of "Gondwanaland" did for the Atlantic and Indian Oceans.