



Birth Anniversary of Vishnu Shridhar Wakankar

Why in News?

On 4 May 2025, **Dr. Vishnu Shridhar Wakankar's birth anniversary** was celebrated by remembering his contributions in a **lecture series organised in Ujjain**.

Key Points

▪ About Dr. Vishnu Shridhar Wakankar:

- He was a great archaeologist, painter, historian and cultural researcher of India.
- He was born on **4 May 1919** in Neemuch, Madhya Pradesh.
- **Contribution:**
 - In 1957, Dr. Wakankar **discovered the ancient rock paintings of [Bhimbetka caves](#) located near Bhopal**, which are evidence of the ancient human civilization.
 - **By exploring the direction of flow of the extinct [Saraswati river](#) in Gujarat region**, he proved that it **flowed in India only**, thus providing new evidence to the **[Indus Saraswati civilization](#)**.
 - His research challenged the **Aryan-Dravidian invasion theory and showed that the continuity of Indian civilization developed on Indian soil itself**.
 - **He discovered thousands of rock shelters** in different parts of India and **photographed, analysed and exhibited them** at home and abroad.
 - He excavated in the areas of Maheshwar, **Nawada Toli**, Manoti, Awara, Indragarh, Kayitha, Mandsaur, Azadnagar, Dangwara etc.
 - He proved the historicity of **[Vikram Samvat](#)** by obtaining **the seal from the reign of Emperor Vikramaditya**.
 - He also **founded the Wakankar Indological Cultural Research Trust** in Ujjain.
- **Honors**
 - Recognizing his contribution, the Government of India honored him with **[Padma Shri](#) in 1975**.
 - **The Madhya Pradesh government** has named its **eighth [tiger reserve](#) ([Ratapani Tiger Reserve](#))** as **Dr. Wakankar Tiger Reserve** in his honour.
 - **Dr. Wakankar Research Institute located in Ujjain** is active in the preservation and propagation of his work.

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Bhimbetka

- **Location:** It is situated **south of Bhopal** in the **Vindhya mountain range** of Madhya Pradesh, where there are rock shelters with more than 500 rock paintings.
 - Bhimbetka caves were discovered by **V.S. Wakankar in the year 1957-58.**
 - It was declared a **UNESCO World Heritage Site in the year 2003.**
- **Time period:** The **oldest paintings are estimated to be 30,000 years old** and are still preserved due to their location inside caves.
 - The paintings of Bhimbetka date back to the **Upper Paleolithic, Mesolithic, Chalcolithic, Early Historic and Medieval periods.**
 - However most of the paintings are from the **Mesolithic era.**
- **Painting Technique:** It uses various colours obtained from natural resources like red ochre, purple, brown, white, yellow and green etc.
- **Themes of the paintings:** Everyday life of prehistoric men often depicted in stick-like human figures.
 - Various animals such as elephants, bison, deer, peacocks and snakes are depicted.
 - Hunting scenes and battle scenes with men at arms.
 - Simple geometric designs and symbols.

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