

## ROCK ART EXHIBITION OPENS AT IGRMS

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Indira Gandhi Rashtriya Manav Sangrahalaya (IGRMS), Bhopal, in collaboration with the Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts (IGNCA), New Delhi, is organizing an exhibition on 'The World of Rock Art' at Avritti Bhawan, IGRMS, Bhopal.

A workshop and lecture was organized on Thursday which was addressed by BL Malla (Project Director, Adi Drishya Department, IGNCA, New Delhi) and Prof Sarit K Chaudhuri (Director, Manav Sangrahalaya). Prof Chaudhuri said, "The exhibition is in fact a part of IGRMS's and IGNCA's National Project on Rock Art which gives top priority on creating general awareness among schoolchildren, college and university students and general public about this first creative art of humankind. Rock art of the world is a fascinating saga of human endeavour to translate his aesthetic sensitivity into reality."

"From time immemorial the early man started to record his world around him and his activities for the life sustenance and to bring forth his progenies to flourish. He lived in the natural caves and shelters which he decorated with paintings and engravings; the subject matter he could see in nature and life around him. This prehistoric art comes to signify underlying philosophies and the worldview of the ancient people, and tells us about the soul of the community, its thoughts, beliefs and emotions. These records with high maturity as estimated by scholars perhaps go back to 40,000 years," stated BL Malla, Project Director, IGNCA, New Delhi.

In India, Madhya Pradesh is one of the richest zones in rock art heritage. Rock art sites have been reported from as many as twenty eight districts of the state. Among these, Hoshangabad, Raisen, Sagar, Mandsaur, Sehore and Bhopal account for the largest concentration of rock art sites.

The important sites in the state are Bhimbetka group, Adamgarh-Pachmarhi group, Kathotia, Jaora, Firangi, Shyamla hills, Mahadeo, Chhibar Nala, Chaturbhuj Nala, Gandhi Sagar Dam, Nagauri, etc.

The rock art sites in this part of the sub-continent are distributed in a variety of geological and ecological niches which in turn manifest in the thematic diversity of the rock art data. The present exhibition on 'The World of Rock Art' displays thematic universality of this art form, to which both tangible and intangible aspects of the heritage are associated.