

Ancient Rock Paintings Inside Rock Shelters in Abchand Reserve Forest, Sagar District, Madhya Pradesh

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The prehistoric rock paintings represent the most fascinating aspect of ancient civilization which are crucial in accessing the mindset and lifestyle of our ancestors. Rock paintings has been reported in various locations, such as caves, cliffs, and boulders, and are often associated with sacred sites or areas of spiritual importance. The rich cultural heritage has been exhibited in rock paintings through combination of symbols, colors, animal life, lifestyle, and forms inside the rock shelters in different regions. These rock paintings provide a glimpse into the lives of the indigenous people who inhabited the land.

In February, 2024, beautiful rock paintings inside rock shelters along left bank of Gadheri river at 23°47'31"N, 79°02'22"E have been recorded by the team of Geological Survey of India, State Unit Madhya Pradesh, Bhopal during the geological field traverse in Abchand Reserve Forest area. The team carried out regional geological traverse along the left bank of the Gadheri river which was aimed to trace the geological contact between Rewa and Bhandar groups of rocks of Vindhyan Supergroup. The Abchand Reserve Forest area is geologically represented by thick succession of ferruginous sandstone of Govindgarh Formation, belonging to Rewa Group of Vindhyan Supergroup of Neoproterozoic age. The sandstone is medium to very fine grained, iron pigmented and arenaceous in nature. The Gadheri river is flowing at about 100m deep with sharp vertical cliffs at places. Along the section, numbers of rock shelters have been observed, however the paintings have been recorded only in four rock shelters.

The largest rock shelter is of about 15-20m long and 5-7m wide.

The evidences of ancient civilization and life style has been represented in the form of rock paintings inside the rock shelters observed in Abchand Reserve Forest. The rock paintings are primarily made from four different colors i.e. brick red, white, red and yellowish white. The color super-imposition and mixing of different colors has been observed in rock paintings. Mixing of two colors i.e. white and brick red colors has been used in making painting which is unique of its kind. The painting clusters are depicting dancing scenes, war scenes, hunters etc. The paintings here include animals like elephant, tiger, deers, antelope, rhinoceros, boar, spotted deer etc. The hunting scenes represent individuals or group of hunters (Fig.1). They are equipped with bows and arrows, spears and other weapons. In one of the shelters a fierce fight between two tigers is beautifully depicted. The ancient people seem to have amused themselves with songs and dances. At one place painting depicted a dancing scene with hand-in-hand in a row. At places the heads of the people were depicted as sharp spikes and elongated

Accessibility and Approach: The rockshelters in Abchand Reserve Forest can be approached via Sagar – Garhakota road along MPSH14. At milestone of 36km along MPSH14 one has to walk about 1.5km in Abchand Reserve Forest towards Gadheri river to reach the location.

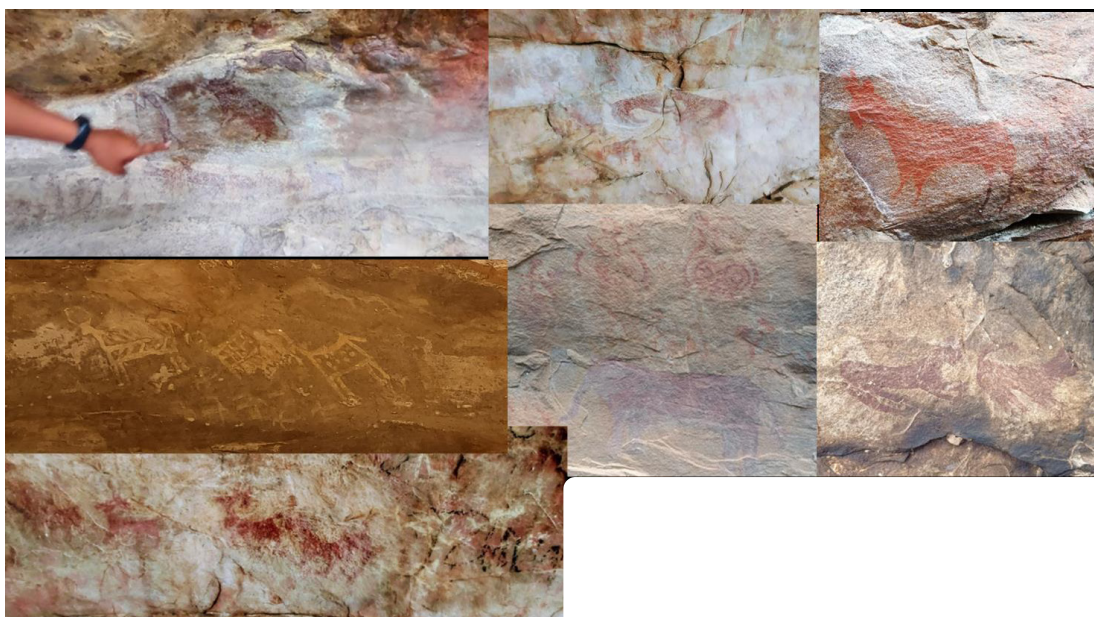


Fig.1: Rock paintings depicting animal life during ancient time in Abchand Reserve Forest, Sagar district, Madhya Pradesh.