

# Visva-Bharati University will soon get the 'heritage' tag from UNESCO

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**In news**– Visva-Bharati University will soon get the 'heritage' tag from UNESCO to take the distinction of world's first living heritage university.

## **History of Visva-Bharati University-**

- Visva-Bharati is a public central university and an Institution of National Importance located in Shantiniketan, West Bengal, India.
- It was founded by Rabindranath Tagore who called it Visva-Bharati, which means the communion of the world with India.
- When founded in 1921 on 1,130 acres of land, **it was named after Nobel Laureate Rabindranath Tagore until Visva-Bharati Society was registered as an organisation in May 1922.**
- Rabindranath donated some of his property, including land and a bungalow, to the society.
- **Until Independence, it was a college** and the institution was **given the status of Central University in 1951** through a central Act.
- **Its first vice-chancellor was Rathindranath Tagore**, the son of Rabindranath Tagore, and the second vice-chancellor was grandfather of another Nobel Laureate economist Amartya Sen.
- Rabindranath believed in open-air education and introduced that system at the university, which prevails to date.
- **In 1922, Visva-Bharati was inaugurated as a Centre for Culture with exploration into the arts, language,**

humanities, music and these are reflected in diverse institutes that continue in their educational programmes, which are based on the founding principles of excellence in culture and culture studies.

- As originally intended, these serve as institutes for Hindi studies (Hindi Bhavan), Sino-Asian studies (Cheena Bhavan), centre for humanities (Vidya Bhavan), institute of fine arts (Kala Bhavan), and music (Sangit Bhavan).
- **The structures in these institutes constitute a myriad of architectural expressions which are as diverse as the Kalo Bari, a mud structure with coal tar finish and sculpture panels;** Mastermohai studio, a single storied structure built for the first principal of Kala Bhavan, Nandalal Bose; murals and paintings on Cheena and Hindi Bhavan, created by the illustrious artists like Benodebehari Mukhopadhyay, Nandalal Bose, Surendranath Kar, Somnath Hore with active involvement of students.

**Note:**

- The development comes 11 years after the Union Culture Ministry appealed for the second time to secure the status of UNESCO heritage site for Santiniketan [Visva Bharati] to get recognition for Tagore's cultural ark in the run-up to his 150th birth anniversary in 2010.
- The UNESCO seeks to encourage the identification, protection and preservation of cultural and natural heritage around the world considered to be of outstanding value to humanity.
- This is embodied in an international treaty called the Convention concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage, adopted by UNESCO in 1972.