



Ujjayini Meridian | Madhya Pradesh | 23 Jul 2024

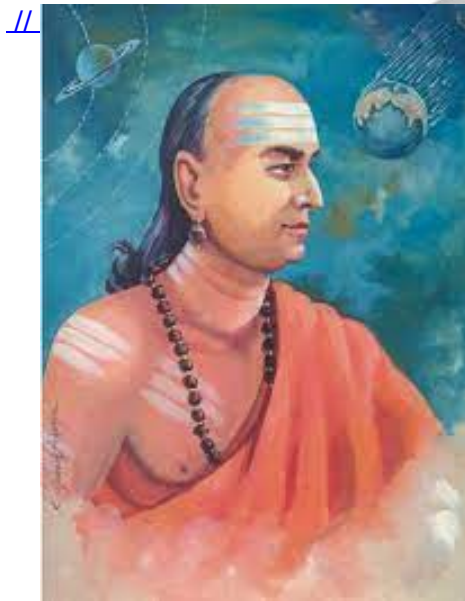
Why in News?

According to a new Class-6 NCERT textbook for social science, **India had a prime meridian of its own** much **ahead of the Greenwich meridian** and it was called "**madhya rekha**", which **passed through** the city of **Ujjain** in Madhya Pradesh.

Key Points

- Madhya rekhā (or 'middle line') passed through the city of Ujjayinī (today Ujjain), which was a **reputed centre for astronomy** over many centuries.
 - **Varāhamihira**, a **famous astronomer**, lived and worked there some 1,500 years ago.
- **Indian astronomers were aware of the concepts of latitude and longitude**, including the need for a **zero or prime meridian**.
- The **Ujjayinī meridian became a reference for calculations** in all Indian astronomical texts.

Varahamihira (505-587 CE)



- He was a renowned **astronomer, mathematician, and astrologer**.
- **Notable works:**
 - **Brihat Samhita** (comprehensive work on astronomy, astrology, architecture, gemology, agriculture, mathematics, and gemology).
 - He wrote about **chief aspects of Jyotisha (astrology)** like horoscopy.
 - He was the first to state **Panchasiddhantika** (book on mathematical astronomy) that the **ayanamsa** (precession of the equinoxes) lasted for 50.32 seconds.
 - He first described **gravity** as an attractive "Force", which binds various things together.

