

Jayant Vishnu Narlikar

Padma Vibhushan (2004), Padma Bhushan (1965)



(July 19, 1938 - May 20, 2025)

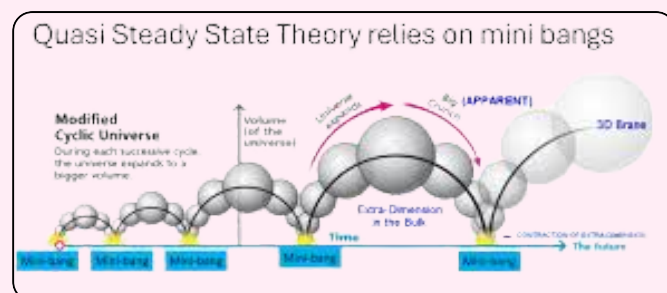
Jayant Vishnu Narlikar was an Indian astrophysicist who challenged conventional ideas about the universe. After beginning his research career in theoretical cosmology at the University of Cambridge under Fred Hoyle and completing his PhD in 1963, he continued as a postdoctoral fellow at King's College.

He helped found the Institute of Theoretical Astronomy. In 1972, he returned to India to lead the astrophysics group at the Tata Institute of Fundamental Research. In 1988, he became the founding director of the Inter - University Centre for Astronomy and Astrophysics (IUCAA) in Pune.

Scientific Contributions

Jayant Narlikar made important contributions to cosmology and astrophysics. He developed the Hoyle - Narlikar Theory of Gravitation, proposed the Quasi - Steady State Theory as an alternative to the Big Bang, and explored ideas such as the continuous creation of matter.

A gifted writer and teacher, he wrote textbooks, popular science books, and science fiction, and worked tirelessly to make complex ideas accessible.



Awards

He received the Padma Bhushan in 1965 for his early scientific achievements and the Padma Vibhushan in 2004 for his lifetime contributions to science. In recognition of his efforts to popularise science, he was honoured with the Kalinga Prize in 1996. He also won the Adams Prize in 1967 for excellence in mathematics and the Maharashtra Bhushan in 2010, the highest civilian award of Maharashtra.

Legacy

Jayant Narlikar is remembered as one of India's greatest astrophysicists, whose ideas in cosmology and gravity deepened our understanding of the universe. As the founder of IUCAA, he built a leading research centre that nurtured many young scientists.

Through his books and lectures, he made complex science easy to understand, inspired countless students, and consistently promoted rational, scientific thinking while firmly opposing pseudoscience.