



# International Bharati Festival 2020

## Why in News

Recently, the Prime Minister has addressed the **International Bharati Festival 2020**, virtually organised by the **Vanavil Cultural Centre** (Tamil Nadu).

- The event celebrates the **138<sup>th</sup> birth anniversary** (11<sup>th</sup> December 2020) of Tamil poet and writer **Mahakavi Subramanya Bharati**.
- Scholar Shri **Seeni Viswanathan** received the **Bharathi Award for this year**.

## Key Points //



### ▪ Subramanya Bharati:

- **Birth:** 11<sup>th</sup> December 1882, in Ettayapuram, Madras Presidency.
- **Brief Profile:** An outstanding **Indian writer of the nationalist period** (1885-1920) who is regarded as the **father of the modern Tamil style**.
  - He is **also known as 'Mahakavi Bharathiyar'**.
  - His **strong sense of social justice** drove him to fight for self-determination.
- **Involvement during Nationalist Period:**
  - After 1904, he **joined the Tamil daily newspaper Swadesamitran**.

- This exposure to political affairs led to his **involvement in the extremist wing of the [Indian National Congress \(INC\)](#) party.**
- In order to proclaim its revolutionary ardour, Bharathi had the **weekly newspaper named 'India'** printed in red paper.
  - It was the **first paper in Tamil Nadu to publish political cartoons.**
  - He also **published and edited a few other journals like "Vijaya".**
- He **attended the annual sessions of INC** and discussed national issues with extremist leaders like Bipin Chandra Pal, [B.G. Tilak](#) and V.V.S. Iyer.
  - His participation and activities in **Benaras Session (1905)** and **Surat Session (1907)** of the INC impressed many national leaders for his patriotic fervour.
  - He published the sensational **"Sudesa Geethangal"** in 1908.
  - Bharati's reaction to the **Russian Revolutions of 1917**, in a **poem entitled "Pudiya Russia" ("The New Russia")**, offers a fascinating example of the poet's political philosophy.
  - He was **forced to flee to Pondicherry** (now Puducherry), a French colony, where he **lived in exile from 1910 to 1919.**
  - During this time, **Bharati's nationalistic poems and essays were popular successes.**
- **Important Works:** Bharati's best-known works include Kaṇṇan pāṭṭu (1917; Songs to Krishna), Panchali sapatham (1912; Panchali's Vow), Kuyil pāṭṭu (1912; Kuyil's Song), Pudiya Russia and Gnanaratham (Chariot of Wisdom).
  - Many of his English works were collected in Agni and Other Poems and Translations and Essays and Other Prose Fragments (1937).
- **Death:** 11<sup>th</sup> September 1921.
- **Significance in Present Times:**
  - The poet's definition of progress **had a central role for women.** He wrote women should walk with their head held high, looking people in the eye.
    - The government is inspired by this vision and is working to ensure women-led empowerment.
  - He believed in a **healthy mix between the ancient and the modern**, indicating a need **to develop a scientific temper**, a spirit of inquiry and march towards progress.
- **Bharathi Award:**
  - The Bharati Award was **instituted in 1994 by Vanavil Cultural Centre.**
  - **Every year**, it is being conferred on eminent persons who have **done laudable service in any field of social relevance** and thus worked towards the fulfilment of Bharati's dreams.

[Source: PIB](#)