



## Basava Jayanti

**For Prelims:** Basavanna, Anubhava Mantapa

**For Mains:** Socio-cultural Reform Movements of South India

### Why in News?

The Prime Minister paid **tributes to Jagadguru Basaveshwara (Basavanna)** on the sacred occasion of **Basava Jayanti**.

- As per the Hindu calendar, the birth of Basavanna falls on the 3<sup>rd</sup> day of Vaisahaka month in the Shukla paksha. This usually falls either in April or May of the English calendar.



# Basavanna

- » Basavanna, a 12<sup>th</sup> century poet and philosopher, was the **founder of Lingayatism**.
- » He was **minister to Bijjala, a Kalachurya king** who succeeded the Chalukyas and ruled from Kalyana.
- » He **founded the Anubhava Mantapa**, which is often claimed to be **the first Parliament of the world established in Basavakalyana** (then called Kalyana) where Sharanas (poets and socio-spiritual reformers) deliberated for fundamental social change.
- » The **Sharana movement** he presided over attracted people from all castes, and like most strands of the **Bhakti movement**, produced a corpus of **literature, the vachanas**.

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### Who is Basavanna?

- **About:** Basaveshwara was **born in Bagevadi (of undivided Bijapur district in Karnataka)** in 1131 AD.
  - A 12<sup>th</sup>-century poet and philosopher, who is celebrated and held in high regard, especially by the **Lingayat community**, as he was the **founder of Lingayatism**.
    - The term Lingayat denotes a **person who wears a personal linga**, an iconic

**form of God Shiva**, on the body which is received during the initiation ceremony.

- In Kalyana, the **Kalachurya king Bijjala (1157-1167, AD)** appointed Basaveshwara as a **karanika (Accountant)** in the initial stage, in his court and **later as the Prime minister**.
- **Main Teachings:** His spiritual discipline was based on the principles of **Arivu (true knowledge), Achara (right conduct), and Anubhava (divine experience)** and it brought a social, religious and economic revolution in the **12<sup>th</sup> century**.
  - This path advocates a **holistic approach to Lingangayoga** (union with the divine).
  - This comprehensive discipline encompasses **bhakti (devotion), jnana (knowledge), and kriya (action)** in a well-balanced manner.
- **Social Reforms:** Basaveshwara is known to have brought about several social reforms.
  - He believed in a society free of the caste system, with **equal opportunity for all and preached about manual hard work**.
  - He also founded the **Anubhava Mantapa**, loosely translated as the forum of experiences, an academy which included Lingayat mystics, saints, and philosophers.
- **Other Socio-Economic Principles:** Basaveshwara gave two more very important socio-economic principles.
  - **Kayaka (Divine work):**
    - According to this, every individual in society should take up the job of his choice and perform it with all sincerity.
  - **Dasoha (Equal distribution):**
    - There must be an equal income for equal work.
    - The worker (Kayakajeevi) may lead his day-to-day life by his hard-earned income. But he should not preserve the money or property for tomorrow. He must utilize the surplus money for society and the poor.

## Anubhava Mantapa

- Basaveshwara established the **Anubhava Mantapa**, which was a common forum for all to discuss the prevailing problems of **socio, economic and political strata** including religious and spiritual principles along with personal problems.
- Thus, it was the first and foremost **Parliament of India**, where Sharanas (citizens of welfare society) sat together and discussed the **socialistic principles of a Democratic set up**.
- All those discussions of Sharanas **were written in the form of Vachanas**.
  - Vachanas were an innovative literary form written in simple Kannada language.
  - His practical approach and act of establishment of 'Kalyana Rajya' (Welfare state) brought a new status and position for all the citizens of the society, irrespective of class, caste, creed and sex.
- Recently, the Chief Minister of Karnataka has laid the **foundation stone for the 'New Anubhava Mantapa'** in Basavakalyan.

## UPSC Civil Services Examination, Previous Year Questions

**Q. With reference to the cultural history of medieval India, consider the following statements: (2016)**

1. Siddhas (Sittars) of Tamil region were monotheistic and condemned idolatry.
2. Lingayats of Kannada region questioned the theory of rebirth and rejected the caste hierarchy.

**Which of the statements given above is/are correct?**

- (a) 1 only
- (b) 2 only
- (c) Both 1 and 2
- (d) Neither 1 nor 2

**Ans: (c)**

**Exp:**

- Siddha means a person who has attained Siddhi, perfection, or supernatural abilities. In southern India, the tradition of Siddhas emerged as Sittar tradition, which dates back to the 7<sup>th</sup> century, with a literature of their own. Siddhas worship Shiva and Shakti in their benign, ascetic and fierce forms. They were monotheistic and condemned idolatry. Hence, statement 1 is correct.
- Lingayats, questioned the theory of rebirth and rejected the caste hierarchy.
- Hence, statement 2 is correct.

**Source: PIB**

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