



Saint Narahari Tirtha

[Source: DC](#)

Why in News?

A three-foot statue of **13th century saint Narahari Tirtha** depicting him with script on palm leaves and flanked by devotees was discovered at [Simhachalam Temple](#) in **Visakhapatnam, Andhra Pradesh**.



What are the Key Facts Related to Saint Narhari Tirtha?

- **About: Saint Narahari Tirtha (1243-1333 AD)** was a [Dvaita philosopher](#), intellectual, scholar, statesman and saint in the [Madhva tradition](#).
 - He hailed from **Chikakolu (modern-day Srikakulam)** in **Andhra Pradesh**, born into an aristocratic family in the **Gajapati empire of Odisha**.
- **Role in the Eastern Ganga Dynasty:** For over 30 years, Narahari Tirtha assisted the kings of the **Eastern Ganga dynasty**.
 - He helped the rulers follow **Sanātana Dharma** and established a **structured executive system** for managing **temple affairs**.
 - His efforts are documented in inscriptions found at **Simhachalam** and **Srikurmam temples**.
- **Religious Contributions:** He was a follower of [Madhvacharya](#), the originator of **Dvaita philosophy** and propagated the **Madhvacharya's Vaiṣṇavism** in the region, ensuring its firm establishment in a **non-interfering, secular manner**.
 - His influence helped maintain the **religious and cultural traditions** in the region.
 - Titles of honor like "**Loka Surakṣaṇa Ati Nipuṇaḥ**" and "**Yo Avati Kalinga Bhu Sambhavān**" have been bestowed to recognize his contributions.
- **Intellectual Legacy:** He was a prolific writer, composing several texts, though only 2 works—**Gita Bhasya** and **Bhavaprakasika** have survived.
 - He is also credited with composing the first **Devaranamas** in Kannada.

- **Cultural Contributions:** He also contributed to the development of **regional art forms** and played a vital role in propagating **Yakṣagana Bayalaṭa** (a dance-drama form from coastal Karnataka) and the classical dance style that evolved into **Kuchipudi** in Andhra Pradesh.
- **Legacy:** After his death, Narahari Tirtha was consecrated near **Chakratirtha at Hampi**, on the banks of the **Tungabhadra River**.
 - His contributions continue to influence the temple traditions of **Puri Jagannath**, reinforcing the **Madhva tradition in Odisha**.

Eastern Ganga Dynasty

- They ruled over **Kalinga** (modern-day eastern coastal India) from the **5th-15th century AD** controlling regions including Orissa, West Bengal, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, and Andhra Pradesh.
- The early capital was **Kalinganagara**, and the secondary capital was **Dantapura (Palur)**.
- Notable rulers include **Anantavarman Chodaganga** (1078-1147 CE), who was a patron of arts and literature and is renowned for constructing the **Jagannath Temple in Puri**. His successor, **Narasimha Dev I**, continued his legacy and built the **Konark Sun Temple**.
- The dynasty's wealth funded **temple constructions** and fostered political alliances, including **marriages** with the **Chola** and **Chalukya** dynasties.

Simhachalam Temple



- It is located in Visakhapatnam, Andhra Pradesh, is **dedicated to Lord Narasimha**, an **incarnation of Vishnu**.
- It was constructed in the **11th century by the Gajapati rulers of Odisha**, it was later **renovated by the Vengi Chalukyas** and **Narasimha I** of the **Eastern Ganga dynasty**.
- The temple exhibits a **blend of Kalinga and Dravidian** architectural styles, with intricate carvings and sculptures, including a stone chariot and 16 carved pillars in the Kalyana Mandapa.
- The temple's history is marked by visits from prominent rulers like **Krishna Deva Raya** in 1516 CE.

About Madhvacharya

- Madhvacharya (1238 CE) was a **Hindu philosopher** and the primary **proponent of the Dvaita (dualism) school of Vedanta**.
- His philosophy posits a **fundamental distinction** between **Atman (individual soul)** and **Brahman (ultimate reality, Vishnu)**, asserting that **they are separate, unchanging realities**.
- His major works include **Gita Bhashya** and **Vishnu Tattva Nirnaya**.

UPSC Civil Services Examination Previous Year Question (PYQ)

Prelims

Q. The Nagara, the Dravida and the Vesara are the (2012)

- (a) three main racial groups of the Indian subcontinent
- (b) three main linguistic divisions into which the languages of India can be classified
- (c) three main styles of Indian temple architecture
- (d) three main musical Gharanas prevalent in India

Ans: c

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