

# Basavanna and his contributions

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## In news

In honor of Basavanna, the Karnataka government to lay foundation stone lay the foundation stone for the Anubhava Mantapa in Basavakalyan town in Bidar district

## About Basavanna

- He was born in 1130 in Basavana Bagewadi, Karnataka
- Basavanna was an Indian 12th-century statesman, philosopher, poet, Lingayat saint in the Shiva-focussed Bhakti movement, and Hindu Shaivite Social reformer during the reign of the Kalyani Chalukya/Kalachuri dynasty
- He was active during the rule of both dynasties but reached his peak of influence during the rule of King Bijjala II in Karnataka, India
- He had married Sharane Neelganaga, the daughter of his maternal uncle, and taken the position of an accountant in the palace of King Bijjala.
- He became the Finance Minister and then Prime Minister in the King's court.
- The Basavaraj Devara Ragale by the Kannada poet Harihara (c.1180) is the earliest available account on the life of the social reformer and is considered important because the author was a near contemporary of his protagonist
- A full account of Basava's life and ideas are narrated in a 13th-century sacred Telugu text, the Basava Purana by Palkuriki Somanatha

## Contributions of Basavanna

- Basavanna spread social awareness through his poetry, popularly known as Vachanaas.
- He rejected gender or social discrimination, superstitions and rituals but introduced Ishtalinga with an image of the Shiva Linga, to every person regardless of his or her birth, to be a constant reminder of one's bhakti (devotion) to Shiva.
- **He established the Anubhava Mantapa (the "hall of spiritual experience")**, a place that Allamaprabhu and Akka Mahadevi became a part of.
- Anubhava Mantapa was established as a spiritual and socio-religious academy. It welcomed men and women from all socio-economic backgrounds to discuss spiritual and mundane questions of life, in open
- Basava was later conferred the title of Basavanna (Basava, the elder brother).

### His philosophy

- Basavanna grew up in a family with a tradition of Shaivism. As a leader, he developed and inspired a new devotional movement named Virashaivas, or "ardent, heroic worshippers of Shiva".
- This movement shared its roots in the ongoing Tamil Bhakti movement, particularly the Shaiva Nayanars traditions, over the 7th- to 11th-century.
- However, Basava championed devotional worship that rejected temple worship and rituals led by Brahmins and replaced it with personalized direct worship of Shiva through practices such as individually worn icons and symbols like a small linga.
- This approach brought Shiva's presence to everyone and at all times, without gender, class or caste discrimination
- His poems, such as Basavanna 703, speak of strong sense of gender equality and community bond, willing to wage war for the right cause, yet being a fellow "devotees"

bride" at the time of his or her need.

### Literary works

- Several works are attributed to Basavanna, which are revered in the Lingayat community.
- These include various Vachana such as the Shat-sthala-vachana (discourses of the six stages of salvation), Kala-jnana-vachana (forecasts of the future), Mantra-gopya, Ghatna Chakra-vachana and Raja-yoga-vachan.