

# A TO Z INDIA

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Sai Baba of Shirdi  
Saint



Indian Culture

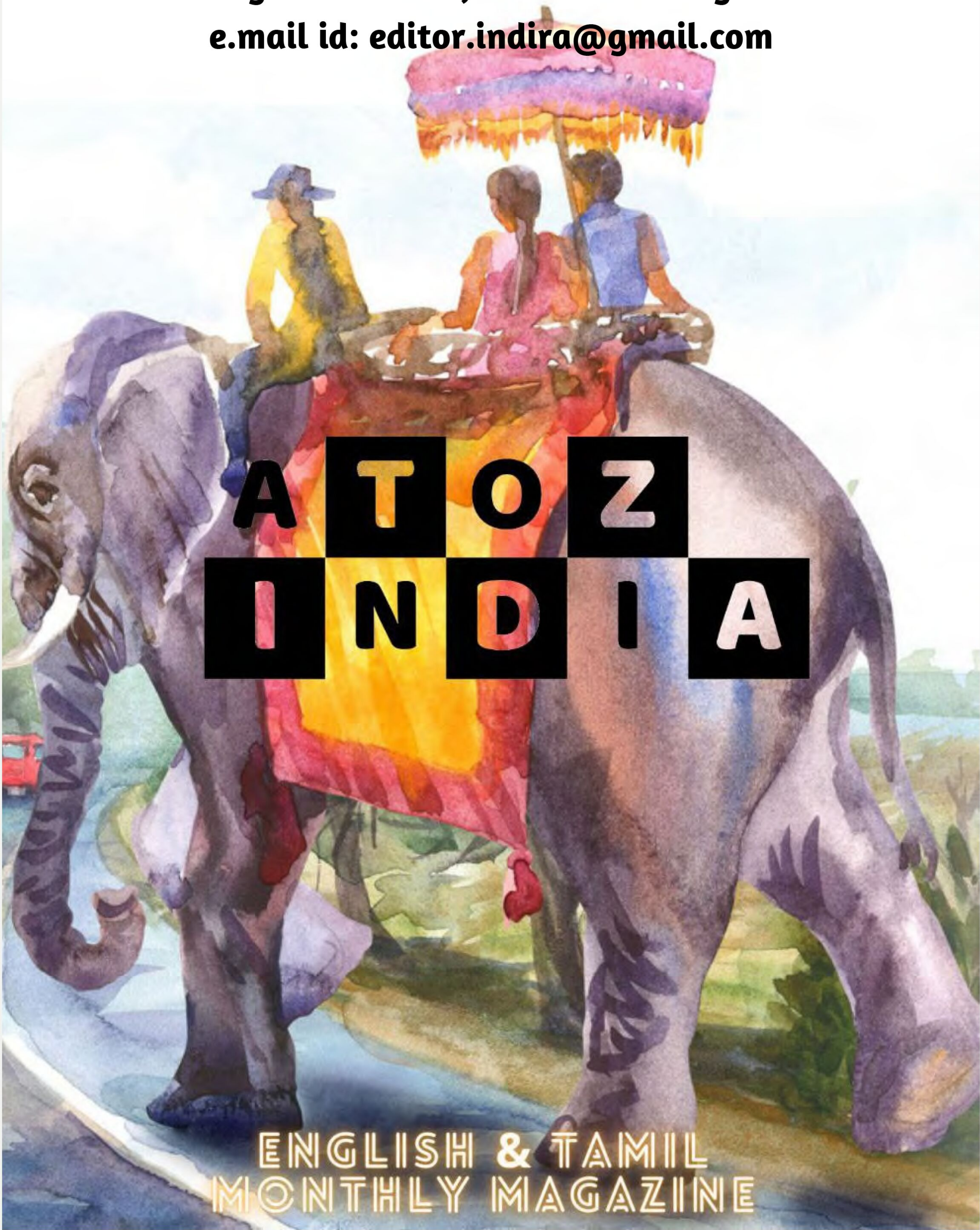
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# A T O Z I N D I A

ENGLISH & TAMIL  
MONTHLY MAGAZINE





04

#### FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK: 115TH FATHER'S DAY CELEBRATION

When we see Father's day in Hindu context, Nanda Baba is the most vivid figure which comes to the mind. Nanda Baba who was the foster father of Lord Krishna is known to provide love, care and affection to Lord Krishna and Balarama along with his wife Yashoda.

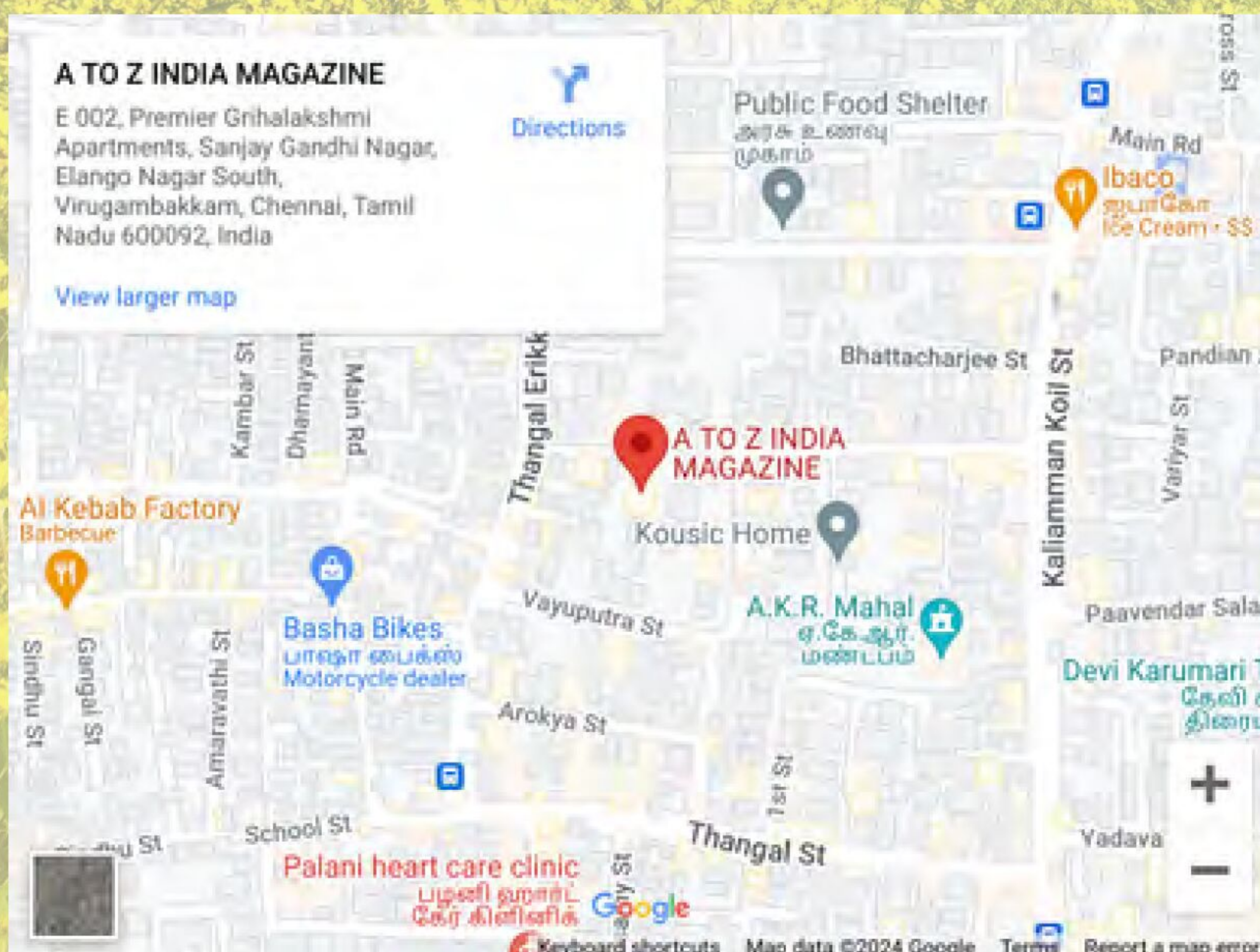
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#### LETTER'S TO THE EDITOR: MOTHER'S DAY

Mother is a precious life for their children. Mother is life breath for her children. Mother's lap is the world happiness whose debt can never be paid.

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**FROM THE EDITOR**  
A TO Z INDIA magazine covers the Indian through his art, culture, lifestyle, religion, etc. This magazine gives an insight into the life of Indians from an angle uncovered by others. Turn to find out what it is about and to immerse yourself into an entirely different culture.

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# 115TH FATHER'S DAY CELEBRATION - 16TH JUNE 2024 SUNDAY / रविवार



## **From the Editor's Desk: 115th Father's day Celebration**

When we see Father's day in Hindu context, Nanda Baba is the most vivid figure which comes to the mind. Nanda Baba who was the foster father of Lord Krishna is known to provide love, care and affection to Lord Krishna and Balarama along with his wife Yashoda.

## **2024 Happy Father's Day:**

Father's Day celebration is observed to honour fathers, father-like figures and paternal bonds around the world. The day is in accordance with Mother's Day and is observed in the similar fashion. Children and individuals showcase their love and affection to their fathers and present them with gifts and cards.

## **Ways to celebrate Father's Day:**

The whole idea behind dedicating a particular day for celebrating and honouring Fathers and paternal bond is to showcase love and value and acknowledge contribution one's father in life. Small kids to adults, everyone buys or make something for their fathers to make the day memorable. The most common ways of celebrating Father's Day is giving cards and men-oriented gift items like sports gear or fitness kit, video games, electronic gadgets, mobile phones, smart watches, grooming kits. Giving coffee mugs or t-shirt with the personalized message, necktie, wallet, sunglasses, and books are also common gifts given on the occasions like Father's Day. Children also call and message their father on the day and take them to dinner or some trip to share some quality time together.


## **Father's Day in the present era:**

The world is living in a digital age, thus mobile phones, computers, the internet and social media have a profound effect on the way we celebrate our festivals and special days. Social media platforms and messaging apps are widely used to exchange and send messages on the Father's Day also. Children update beautiful status messages, childhood pictures reminiscing about the beautiful time they spent with their father, and so on. Likewise, online shopping has also seen a rise in recent times, thus online retailers offer big discounts, conduct sales, and launch new products for the occasion of Father's Day. Historically, day(s) dedicated to fathers and father-like figures either in honour or in commemoration could be traced back to ancient times and has been prevalent in many cultures and religions around the world. In parts of Europe, especially in countries like Italy, Spain, Portugal and others, Saint Joseph's Day is celebrated as Father's Day. In India, Hindus observe ten days rituals in commemoration of deceased forefathers during 'Pitra-Paksha'. However, the modern version of Father's Day was first observed with the efforts of an American woman Sonora Smart Dodd on June 19, 1910. Her father was an American Civil War veteran and widower who raised six children as a single parent. Dodd, taking her inspiration from Mother's Day, began campaigning to establish a holiday in honour of Fathers and their role in the life of children. The first celebration was held at a church in Spokane, Washington and gradually became a calendar event in America and has since been celebrated on third Sunday of June every year. With globalization and the increasing influence of western culture, other countries including India also began celebrating the day as well. In India, Father's Day is celebrated on third Sunday of June and is mainly observed in metros and other big cities with a substantial population of urban youth. In India, the day is not declared as an official holiday but is enthusiastically celebrated by the young population.



Poem:

## Amaranthine

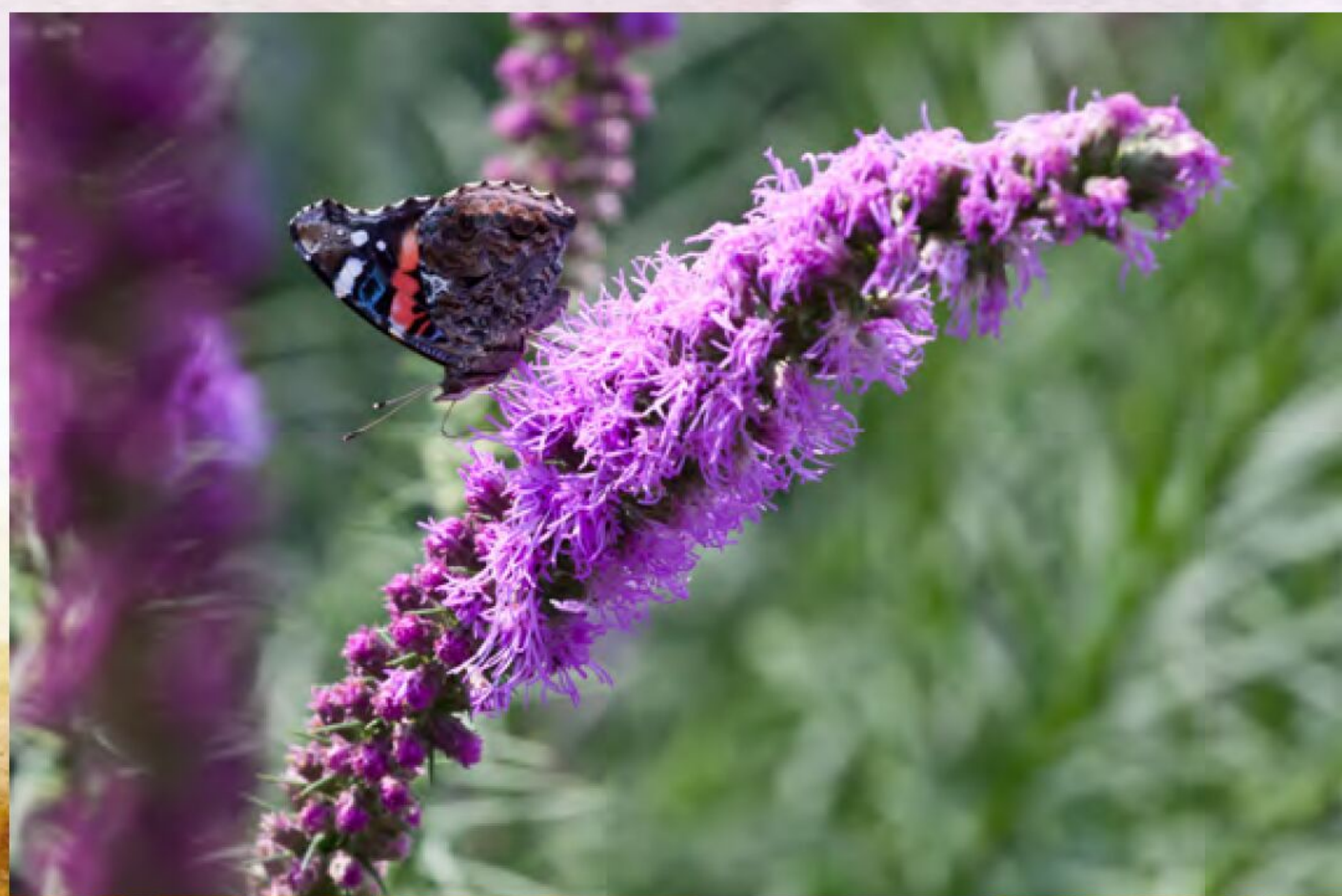
 Vijaykumar H K

### Amaranthine:

Respire in the splendour of nature  
Can words portray the fragrance of the  
Very wheeze of spring?  
Like a flower in a forest may verve blossom  
Align intellects to shore up of the same kind  
Not including the haughtiness of being an negotiator of joy to the  
folks and  
Not being conceded away by the praises of the globe  
As a daffodil the forest that blooms in stillness deriving factual  
Fragrance yet disguised by a folio displays humbleness and  
Attains contentment without any embellishment  
Refrain from the conception of being patron of the globe  
Whilst allowing to flourish off true Shine like a tree contribution  
Lavishness of gloom overflowing with fragrance and outturn  
The solitary amaranthine flower on globe is Virtue;  
The merely lasting fortune fact, where flowers bloom  
And tree of knowledge grow unremittingly.



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## Letter's to the Editor:

### Mother's Day

 Jyoti B. Sangtani

Mother is a precious life for their children. Mother is life breath for her children. Mother's lap is the world happiness whose debt can never be paid. The mother is the heaven and swing of happiness where you can get all benefits which are uncountable for children. The sweet memories of mother are the blessings forever which help you climb the ladders of success and prosperity in your life.

The children should never forget you such is the feet of mother which is heaven for every child in this competitive world of stress. Mother is the calmness of mind which ultimately is the grace of lord varuna. Mother is the garden of flowers from where you receive the fragrance of lord venus. Even today, on auspicious occasions devotees offer Pulluvan Paattu in Sacred groves.

Thanking you,

Jyoti B. Sangtani

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09662409583.





10 kms from Puducherry and 2 kms away from Morattandi:

## Irumbai Temple

 Indira Srivatsa

Irumbai is about 10 kms from Puducherry and 2 kms away from Morattandi on Puducherry to Tindivanam route. After Morattandi, there is a small road on the right side leading to Irumbai village where the temple is located. Also, the temple is in the vicinity of Auroville International Township.

Two more Padal Petra Sthalam, Kiliyanur and Arisili are located very near to this place. It is believed that this temple was built in the 7th century by Chola King Kulothungan III.

As per the inscriptions on the stone walls of the temple, the village's name is mentioned as "Iruncheri". Another reasoning behind the name Irumbai is that this place was once densely populated by Iluppai trees and so the village got the name Iluppai. Over a period of time this name got changed to Irumbai. This temple is associated with the legend of Kaduveli Siddhar, a famous yogi who lived in the area about five hundred years ago.



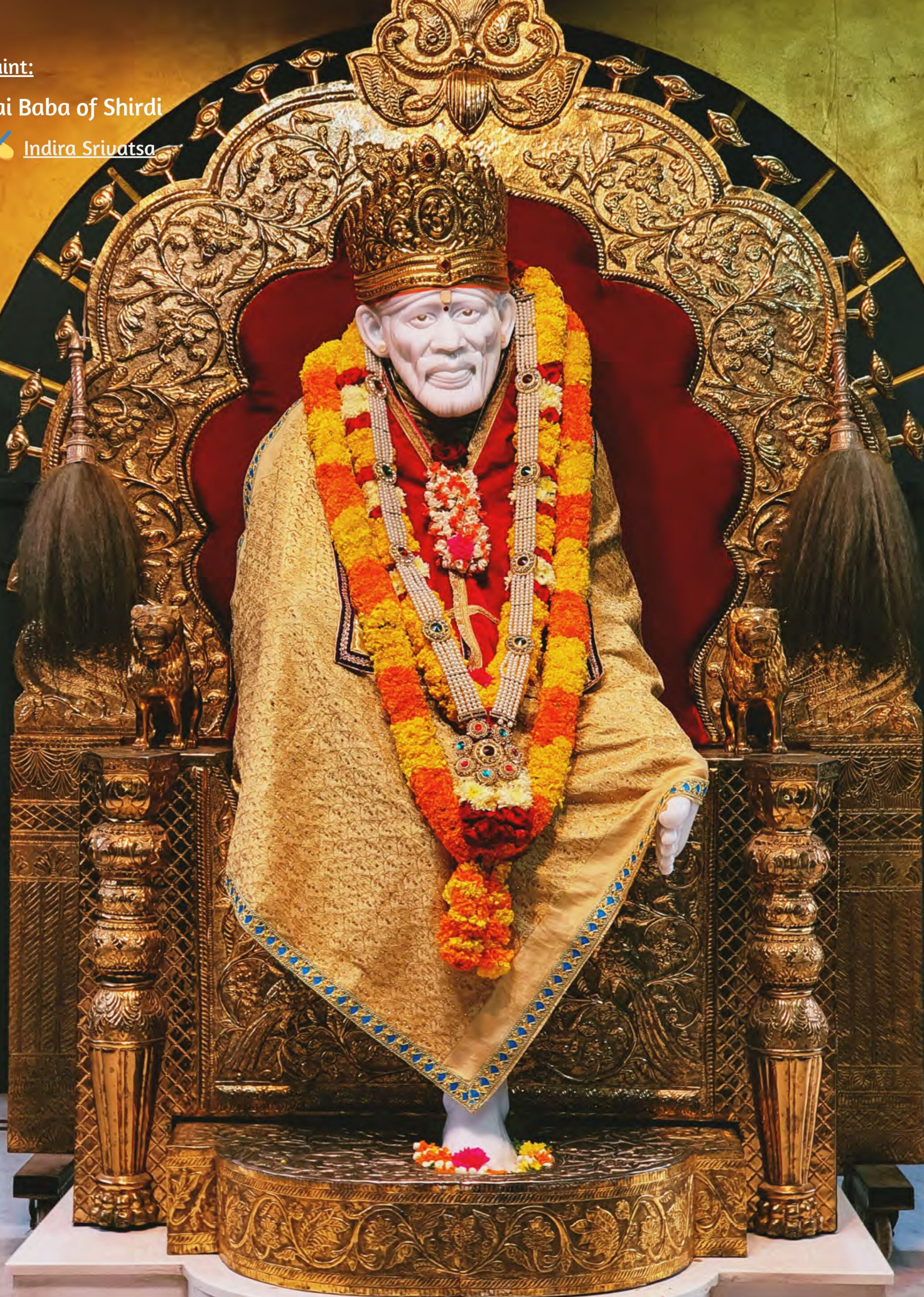


Saint:

Sai Baba of Shirdi



Indira Sriuatsa





Saint:

## Sai Baba of Shirdi



Indira Srivatsa



Sai Baba of Shirdi is the widely-followed spiritual saint who was born around the mid-19th century. Both Hindus and Muslims religiously follow him and practice his teachings as he abandoned the methodology of discrimination based on caste and religion. Sai spent a significant part of his life in Shirdi, serving and helping the villagers. The famous Shirdi Sai Baba temple in Maharashtra is dedicated to Sainath, who believed that (There is only one GOD who governs all) '(Sabka Maalik Ek)'.

### Early years of Sai Life:

There is no precise information about the preceding years of Sai Baba's life regarding his real identity and religion. Nonetheless, it is contended that he was born into a Brahmin family and was passed under the care of a fakir who worked for his upbringing. Sai himself didn't follow any religion in his later years of existence. Sai first came off as a 16-year-old in Shirdi, Maharashtra. He was entirely seen engrossed, meditating under a Neem tree. This brought in curiosity among the people of the town as his sudden appearance was quite unusual. Later on, his ethical orations on different matters enticed many of the villagers as his spirituality and virtues highly influenced them. Sai Baba soon left the Shirdi after three years without any acknowledgment but shortly returned. As no one was aware of his real name, people started referring to him as 'Sai Baba.' He used to dress in an extended knee-length cloak and a piece of cloth tied around his head like a cap due to which the villagers usually addressed him as a fakir.

He wasn't much interactive with the natives and spent most of his time meditating under a tree. As he had no shelter to reside in, he kept wandering around the town and kept up on the alms that were usually offered by his disciples. However, he ultimately took up a ragged mosque as his dwelling. He later transferred this place into Dwarakamai. Sai Baba was a great spiritual master, and his teachings played a crucial role in shaping and transforming the lives of his devotees. Sai Baba Story assured that God is everywhere, and there is nothing to be afraid of. Sai always believed that every human must practice love, peace, and forgiveness, as these will finally lead one to salvation. The two central tenets of Sai Baba were Shraddha and Saburi. Shraddha is the belief in the almighty God, while Saburi refers to patience and determination. To reach your intended goal, both of these elements will favor your direction. Sainath made his proponents learn that God is the supreme authority, and one must have an unaltered faith on him.

### Last years of Baba Life:

Sai Baba lived a simple yet meaningful life, along with serving the poor ones. He took his last breath at Dwarkamai and died on 15th October 1918 in his 80s. He never believed in worldly things, and rather than any belongings, he merely used to carry a cloth bag while begging. Sai Baba's samadhi at Shree Samadhi mandir is among the famous holy pilgrimages of India along with the Shirdi temple in Shirdi, Maharashtra. Every year, thousands of adherents pay a visit to Shirdi as this place still holds up a divine aura as well as lets you have a glimpse of Sai Baba's past life. Besides this, for a complete overview of several phases of Sai's existence along with his teachings and principles that he always emphasized, do visit the captivating Saiteerth theme park. This first-ever amusement park is devoted to Sainath and portrays each facet of his journey through an eye-catching medley of creativity and technology. You can learn more about this theme park by visiting [saiteerth.in](http://saiteerth.in).



Life cannot be imagined without water:

**Life and Agriculture in danger due to water crisis**



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Due to adverse human behaviour, earth's temperature is on rise and the resulting climate change has now become a threat to every aspect of human life, as well as to water bodies and rivers. The dangerous impacts of climate change are being felt at alarming levels on total water storage in major reservoirs and river basins, including the Ganga, Indus and Brahmaputra, which could lead to serious water consequences for people. The latest figures of the Central Water Commission show the seriousness of this increasing water crisis in India. The latest figures show an alarming decline in the levels of reservoirs across the country. According to the report dated April 25, 2024, the water available in major reservoirs in the country has declined by thirty to thirty-five percent in proportion to their earlier storage capacity, which is a big decline compared to recent years. This points towards a drought-like situation; the root of which is said to be the effect of the El Nino phenomenon and lack of rainfall. Life cannot be imagined without water. Apart from human- beings and animals, water is also essential for all forms of agriculture, vegetation and most industrial production processes. But today India is standing under the shadow of a serious water crisis. Unplanned industrialization, increasing pollution, shrinking deserts and glaciers, falling water level of rivers, lack of rainfall, environmental destruction, insensitivity towards rampant exploitation and misuse of natural resources are leading India to an impending major water crisis.

Water levels in 150 major reservoirs across India are currently at 31 per cent, with South India being the most affected region, with 42 reservoirs currently at only 17 per cent of the total capacity. This marks the lowest water potential observed in various regions of India. The situation is worrying in other areas too, with reservoir capacity at 34 per cent in the west and 32.5 per cent in the north. However, the situation in eastern and central India is better; they have 40.6 percent and 40 per cent of the active capacity of their reservoirs respectively. Rainfall last year was deficient, especially in South India. The 2023 monsoon was uneventful as it was an El Nino year, which was also – a climate pattern that typically causes hot and dry conditions in the region. This has created a lot of anxiety. Currently, irrigation is also being affected, and there are growing concerns about the impact on drinking water availability and hydropower generation across the country. Looking ahead, more heat is expected in the coming months, indicating that a major water crisis is going to emerge in the coming days.

This reduction in water storage has occurred due to lack of adequate rainfall for a long period. Due to which, drought-like and unsafe conditions have arisen in many areas. Due to which various crops are being adversely affected. One reason for this is that even today half of the cultivable land in the country is dependent on monsoon rains. In such a situation, the future of agriculture completely depends on the vagaries of monsoon. In fact, due to continuously increasing heat the water level is shrinking rapidly. Due to its serious consequences, water shortage has become serious in states like Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka and Tamil Nadu. The country's IT hub Bengaluru is facing a severe water crisis, which is not only affecting agricultural activities, but everyday life is also being badly affected. In such a situation, to deal with any impending crisis, there is a need to intensify water conservation efforts from homes to all agricultural practices and industrial works. There is also an urgent need for major investment in water infrastructure and management systems to improve water storage and distribution efficiency.



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## Life and Agriculture in danger due to water crisis



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Along with this, there is a need to promote traditional techniques of water conservation. Also, there is a need to run public awareness campaigns to motivate the common people to promote judicious use of this valuable resource of nature.

By conserving water and ensuring adequate availability, we can improve the environment and also solve the problem of climate change. You may wonder how much water a human being uses in his lifetime, but does he try to save that much water? Climate change has led to 134 percent increase in flood events since 2000, and 29 percent increase in drought duration. Water is a basic requirement for the existence of life on earth. Water consumption has increased exponentially with the increase in population, but the amount of clean water on Earth is decreasing. Climate change and rising earth's temperature have made this problem a serious crisis. Like in many parts of the world, India is also threatened by an impending water crisis. About 18 percent of the global population lives in India, but only four percent of the water resources are available to us. The efforts that have been made since ancient times to deal with the problem of water crisis in India are expected to be adopted on a large scale and to bring about a water conservation revolution.

Rivers, which have been the source of pure water for centuries, are getting polluted, now climate change is having a detrimental effect on them. The water harvesting system is deteriorating, and the groundwater level is continuously depleting. Considering the very low percentage of safe and potable water on earth, water conservation or water save campaigns have become very important for all of us. To bring more efficiency in saving water, a proper water management system should be promoted by builders in all industrial buildings, apartments, schools, hospitals etc. Atal Bhujal Yojana is running for groundwater management in 8220 gram panchayats of seven states of the country. This is the world's largest program led by local communities. Also, efforts like tap water, cleaning of rivers, and removal of encroachments are being done under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi. The main means of saving water here are rivers, ponds and wells. Adopt them, protect them, give them protection, do not abandon them to the desert. People should start collecting rain water at the village level. Rain water can be saved by creating or renovating small or big ponds with proper maintenance. About 70 percent of the earth's surface is filled with water. But, potable water is only three percent. Out of this, we are actually able to use only one percent of freshwater.

While using water, we do not think at all about saving water, as a result of which a situation of water crisis has arisen in most of the places. Water crises and critical situations have existed from ancient times. For this reason, there has been an ancient tradition of making Nadi, Pond, Johad, Bandha, Sagar, Samand and Sarovar etc. for water conservation in the provinces like Rajasthan, Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh etc., where nature and culture have been in harmony with one another. The forts of Rajasthan are famous anyway, but their water management is especially worth seeing and is also exemplary. The tradition of water harvesting is linked to the social structure there and due to the religious attitude towards water, natural water sources are worshipped.



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Many great personalities have been born on the land of India, Acharya Mahashraman is among one of them and increase the glory of India on spiritual front. Carrying forward this tradition of Mahavira, Buddha, Gandhi, Acharya Tulsi and Acharya Mahapragya, he raised himself, did great and rigorous sadhana, gained experience and on the basis of his experience, gave the message of peace, non-violence, love, harmony, and promotes the concept of Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam to the world. Acharya Mahashraman has given a new vision to the fading spiritual tradition of the past. This new vision can be called the beginning of a new man, a new world, a new era. His humility and dedication are giving height to his spirituality. Just like Hanuman's devotion and dedication towards Lord Ram, Acharya Mahashraman has the same dedication towards his guru Acharya Tulsi and Acharya Mahapragya. The Golden Jubilee of the initiation of Acharya Shri Mahashramanji is being celebrated on a nationwide level on 22 May 2024, i.e. Vaishakh Shukla Chaudas.

Acharya Mahashramanji became the epitome of a flawless personality and the secret of this specialty is his strong effort, his dedication, unwavering resolve, unbroken faith and devotion to the goal. Emerson has rightly said that when nature has to accomplish a great task, it creates a genius to do it. Certainly, Acharya Mahashramanji was also born for the accomplishment of some great task. Many such great works are associated with his life; one of the special undertakings among them was the Ahimsa Yatra. In this historical, unforgettable and unique journey of his eight years, Acharya Mahashramanji spread the message of non-violence and peace by walking about seventy thousand kilometers in nineteen states and three neighboring countries including India.

He made about one crore people take a pledge to give up addiction. The reaching of this Yatra to Naxalite and Maoist areas in the adverse circumstances of earthquake and corona in Nepal was a symbol of Acharya Mahashraman's strong determination, strong morale and self-confidence. Acharya Mahashraman's Ahimsa Yatra in remote areas of the country - Assam, Bengal, Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, Odisha, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, Maharashtra, Rajasthan, Chhattisgarh etc. including neighbouring countries like Nepal and Bhutan and the special emphasis on non-violence in it has proved fruitful for the establishment of non-violence.

India has a unique history of padayatras; whether it is the historic yatra to Lanka undertaken by Maryada Purushottam Shri Ram for the victory of truth over untruth or the Dandi March of 1930 that shook the entire British Empire with a handful of salt, Baba Amte's Bharat Jodo Yatra or the Ekta Yatra dedicated to national integrity, communal harmony and international brotherhood, the importance of yatra cannot be denied. In Indian life, padayatra has been accepted as a powerful medium of public relations. These padayatras directly confront the social, cultural and political reality. They enlighten the public consciousness and give it a turn suitable to the times. Lord Mahavira had sowed the seeds of spirituality in the minds of the people there by roaming in many regions during his lifetime. But in the series of these yatras, Acharya Shri Mahashramanji has carved new paths. Acharya Shri Mahashraman has come to be known as the "sun who walks on foot" as a result of having undertaken the longest padayatra (foot journey) among all the previous acharyas in a particular period.



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My first meeting with Acharya Mahashraman as a twelve year old monk in Ladnun was a unique and memorable event of my childhood. But my introduction to his profound thoughts four and a half decades later is an even more unique event because his thoughts touched the strings of my mind. When he sheds the light of his transparent vision on the small issues of life, it seems as if the rays of the sun have spread on the fog-filled path. The clouds of the mind are removed and the clear sky has risen. Acharya Mahashraman believes that the nation which has forgotten its culture cannot be a truly living and awakened nation. In his view, Indian culture means high culture, culture of sacrifice, culture of restraint and culture of spirituality. He is overwhelmed by the dignity of Indian culture, hence he keeps on telling the countrymen about the great cultural values of India many times. The biggest expectation is that India should learn to evaluate itself and regain its lost prestige. On the basis of this wide and deep thinking, he believes that if anyone can truly represent the world, then only India can do so, because even today non-violence is deeply ingrained in the soul of India. I believe that if India forgets spirituality, it will die a natural death.

Acharya Shri Mahashraman thinks that Indian culture is not only the oldest, but also rich and vibrant, hence we should solve any national problem through our cultural elements, and otherwise mental slavery will not allow us to be as proud of our culture. Explaining the reason for cultural unity in India, the national poet Dinkar said - "Indian culture absorbed other cultures coming from outside on the strength of its coordination power, hence its flow continued." In the context of the same Indian culture, the current experiences of Acharya Shri Mahashraman have become inspiring, accurate and poignant. India is a land of action, not a land of enjoyment. The civilization that developed here will not be defeated by anyone in the world. If we try to imitate the western civilization, we will be ruined. This does not mean that we should not adopt what is good in it and what we can digest.

In his short tenure as Acharya, Acharya Mahashraman highlighted every aspect of the development of human consciousness. He did a unique job of incorporating the tragedy and challenges of the era by selecting such life values from the tradition of Krishna, Mahavira, Buddha, Jesus as well as many saints of the Indian spiritual sky – Adi Shankaracharya, Kabir, Nanak, Raidas, Meera etc. There is no such aspect of life which has remained untouched by his sermons and thoughts. He has elaborately shed light on the deep mysteries of yoga, tantra, mantra, yantra, sadhana, meditation etc. He has also given his revolutionary life-view on many subjects like politics, art, science, psychology, philosophy, education, family, society, poverty, population explosion, environment, violence, casteism, corruption, political criminalization, foeticide and the global crisis of inflation. When his discourse series based on Uttaradhyayan and Shrimad Bhagwad Gita came out, it initiated a new revolution in the spiritual world.

Like Uttaradhyayan, a Jain Acharya has given an accurate and authoritative interpretation of the revered book of Sanatan tradition, Gita, is not only surprising but also inspiring. That is why Acharya Mahashraman is popular and respected among the people as the messiah of humanity. He is such a saint for whom the difference of sect and book does not become an obstacle. Your programs, thoughts and discourses are for the welfare of all. People of every caste, class, region and sect have been benefiting from your life-philosophy and personality.



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## Symbolism and Importance of the Banyan Tree

 Vasini Shyama Charan Jha

The Vat Savitri Puja is a vibrant festival celebrated in the Mithila region of Bihar, honoring the sacred bond of marriage and the reverence for nature. At the heart of this festival lies the majestic **Mithila's Vat Savitri Puja** Banyan tree, a symbol deeply rooted in the cultural and spiritual ethos of Mithila. The Banyan tree, known as the "Vat Vriksha" in Sanskrit, holds a significant place in ancient Vedic texts and Hindu mythology. It is revered as a manifestation of the cosmic tree, representing the universe itself. The tree's sprawling aerial roots, reaching down from its branches to become trunks, symbolize the cycle of life, death, and rebirth. One of the most celebrated stories associated with the Banyan tree is the tale of Savitri and Satyavan from the Mahabharata. The virtuous Savitri, through her unwavering love and devotion, rescues her husband Satyavan from the clutches of Yama, the lord of death, by outsmarting him with her intelligence and spiritual prowess. This tale resonates deeply with the spirit of Vat Savitri Puja, as it celebrates the unbreakable bond of marriage and the triumph of love over death.

The festival finds its origins in the Vedic hymn "Vat Savitri Sukta" from the Rig Veda (1.5.2), which extols the virtues of the Banyan tree and the divine couple, Savitri and Brahma. The sukta, or hymn, is chanted during the puja, invoking the blessings of the sacred tree and the cosmic couple:

**Vaṭam̐ vaṭamupāsīda vaṭasyarasmi vaṭasya nāma gr̥hṇāmi I**

**Vaṭena vaṭamupāse vaṭam̐ vaṭamupāsīda vaṭasyarasmi vaṭasya nāma gr̥hṇāmi II**

**Translation:** "I worship the Banyan tree, I am the sap of the Banyan tree, I take the name of the Banyan tree. With the Banyan tree, I worship the Banyan tree, I worship the Banyan tree, I am the sap of the Banyan tree, I take the name of the Banyan tree."

Vat Savitri Puja, an integral festival in the Mithila region, is celebrated by married Hindu women who pray for the longevity and well-being of their husbands. Central to this observance is the Banyan tree (Vat Vriksha), which holds profound spiritual and cultural significance. This article explores the symbolism, importance, and rituals associated with the Banyan tree during Vat Savitri Puja, along with the historical and mythological origins of the festival.

### **Mythological Origins and Historical Significance:**

The origins of Vat Savitri Puja are rooted in the ancient tale of Savitri and Satyavan, narrated in the Mahabharata. According to the legend, Savitri, a devoted wife, used her wit and devotion to reclaim her husband Satyavan's life from Yama, the god of death. This story highlights the power of a devoted wife's love and the sanctity of marriage. The festival is named after Savitri, symbolizing unwavering devotion and the triumph of love over death. The tradition of observing this puja began in ancient times and has been passed down through generations, especially in the Mithila region, known for its deep-rooted cultural practices.

### **Symbolism of the Banyan Tree:**

The Banyan tree, or Vat Vriksha, is revered in Hinduism for its longevity and expansive growth, symbolizing immortality and eternal life. It is considered a representation of the Trimurti - Brahma, Vishnu, and Shiva - who are believed to reside in its roots, trunk, and branches, respectively.



## Symbolism and Importance of the Banyan Tree

 [Vasini Shyama Charan Jha](#)

The tree is also associated with Savitri and Satyavan's story. It is believed that Savitri performed her penance under a Banyan tree, and this is where she encountered Yama and negotiated her husband's life. Thus, the tree is seen as a symbol of steadfastness, resilience, and life-giving power.

### Vedic and Puranic References:

The Banyan tree holds a significant place in Vedic and Puranic literature. In the Atharva Veda, the Banyan tree is referred to as the "Tree of Immortality" (Amrita) due to its long life and regenerative properties:

**Aśvatthaḥ pippalaṃ hanti pippalaṃ tena codayati |**

**Āyurme dhārayantu te sa yonisaṃstha ā cara || (Atharva Veda 5.4.3)**

**Translation:** "The Ashvattha (Banyan) tree destroys diseases and grants longevity. May this tree bestow long life to us." In the Puranas, the Bhagavata Purana describes the Banyan tree as a representation of the eternal life and the divine:

**Tasminnaham yoganiṣaṇṇamānasaḥ śanairavāñcaṃ dhṛtamātracētasah |**

**Tat pādamūlaṃ hṛdayēna vindatē vihāya kṛtvāṅgamivāṅgamātmanaḥ || (Bhagavata Purana 10.35.9)**

**Translation:** "In the shade of the Banyan tree, I meditate with a calm mind, finding the divine roots in my heart, abandoning worldly concerns."

### Celebratory Rituals and Practices:

During Vat Savitri Puja, married women of Mithila fast and perform rituals to pray for the well-being and longevity of their husbands. The puja is marked by the following practices:

**1. Circumambulation of the Banyan Tree:** Women tie sacred threads (Raksha Sutra) around the tree's trunk and perform pradakshina (circumambulation) while chanting prayers and mantras.

**2. Offering Bhog and Prasad:** The offerings include fruits, soaked chana (gram), and sweets like peda and kheer. These are presented to the Banyan tree and later distributed as prasad among family members.

**Vaṭasya tuam mahāvṛkṣa mahāśākha mahāphale |**

**Vaṭamūlaṃ namastubhyam vaṭāyai namo namaḥ ||**

**Translation:** "O great Banyan tree, with large branches and abundant fruits, I bow to you, the root of the Banyan, and offer my salutations."

**3. Recitation of Savitri Katha:** The story of Savitri and Satyavan is narrated, highlighting Savitri's unwavering devotion and the miraculous restoration of Satyavan's life.



## Symbolism and Importance of the Banyan Tree



Vasini Shyama Charan Jha

### **Cultural Significance in Mithila:**

Vat Savitri Puja is not merely a celebration of the Banyan tree but also a celebration of the rich cultural heritage of Mithila. The intricate aripan designs, known as "Madhubani paintings," are a UNESCO-recognized art form, depicting tales from Hindu mythology, flora, and fauna. The festival showcases the region's vibrant textile traditions, with women adorning themselves in traditional Mithila sarees and jewellery.

Women adorn themselves in traditional attire, often in vibrant hues of red and yellow, signifying prosperity and joy. The rituals are performed in the early morning, accompanied by traditional folk songs (lok geet) and folk dances that enhance the festive spirit.

Beyond its spiritual and cultural significance, the Vat Savitri Puja also serves as a reminder of the importance of environmental conservation. The Banyan tree, with its vast canopy and intricate root system, provides shelter and sustenance to countless living beings, symbolizing the harmonious coexistence of all life forms.

### **Conclusion:**

As the sun sets on the festival day, the women gather around the Banyan tree, their hands adorned with vermilion and henna, and their hearts filled with devotion. The flickering lamps and the fragrance of incense create a mesmerizing ambiance, as the ancient hymns and mantras echo through the night, reminding all present of the eternal bond between humanity, nature, and the divine.

Vat Savitri Puja, with its deep-rooted significance and elaborate rituals centered around the Banyan tree, reflects the rich tapestry of Mithila's cultural and spiritual life. This festival not only honors the ancient legend of Savitri but also underscores the values of devotion, resilience, and the sanctity of marital bonds. The Banyan tree, in its majestic presence, continues to be a symbol of life's enduring journey, interwoven with the timeless traditions of Mithila.

In essence, the Vat Savitri Puja is a celebration of love, devotion, and the reverence for nature, embodied in the majestic Banyan tree. It is a festival that transcends time, weaving together the threads of mythology, spirituality, and cultural heritage, creating a tapestry of enduring beauty and significance.



**Incredible India:  
Images of  
India  
through  
Paintwork**





# Incredible India: Images of India through Paintwork



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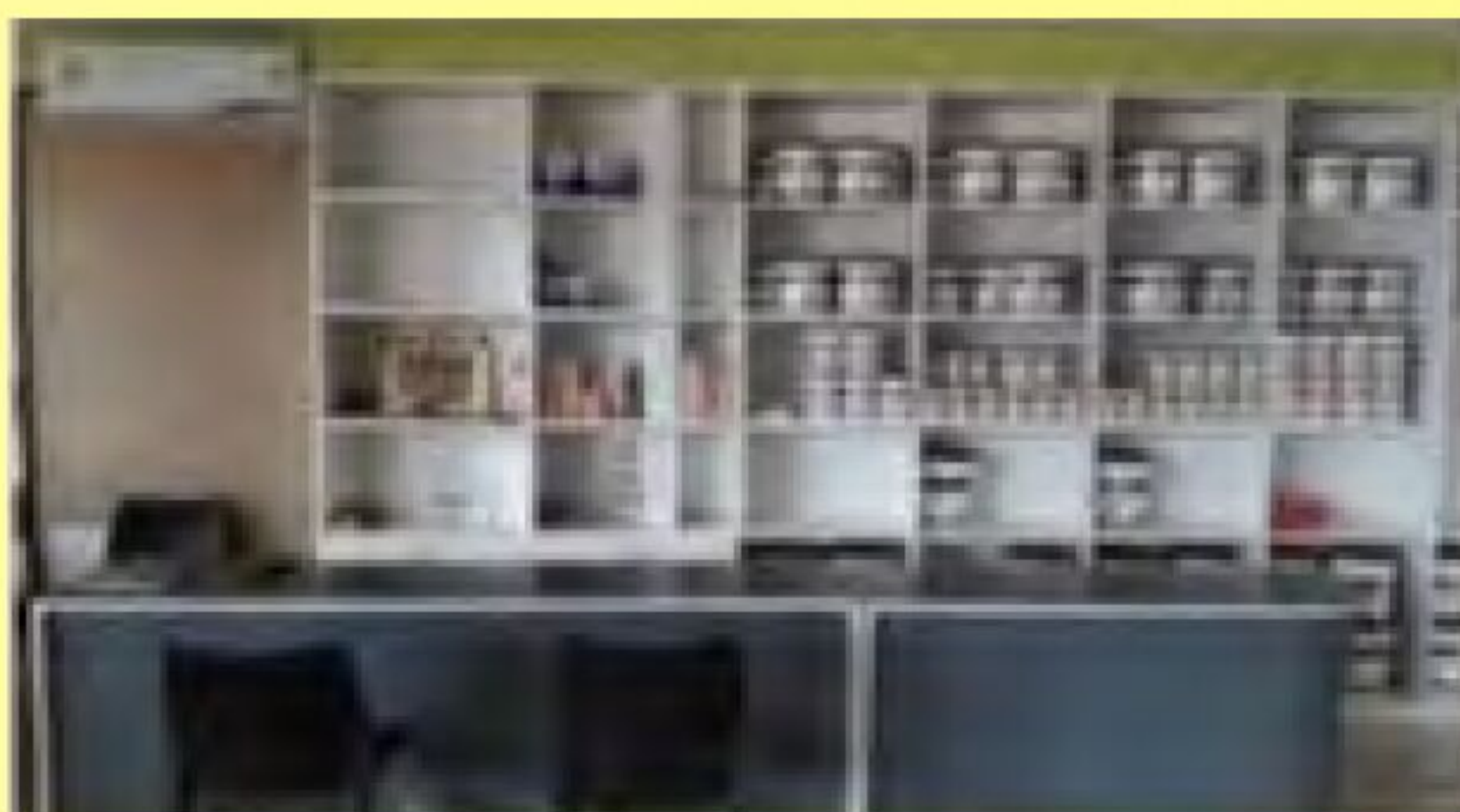
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Lord Buddha:

## The Architect of Religious and Individual Evolution

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Gautam Buddha is a beacon of spiritual awakening. His public welfare thinking, and deeds are timeless that have been guiding the society for ages. His birth anniversary is celebrated on Buddha Purnima, and his Nirvana Day also occurred on the day of Buddha Purnima. On this day, Gautam Buddha blossomed in his fullness; he remained engaged in the search for his own perfection, as well as the perfection of human society that became a timeless inspiration and possibility of perfection. On this Day, Buddha was born, left this world for Heavenly Abode, attained divine knowledge and salvation. Buddha Purnima is an important day not only for the followers of Buddhism, but for the entire human race. Buddha Purnima is the biggest festival day for the followers of Buddhism. A series of celebrations are organized on this day in different fashions. In different countries, celebrations are organized according to their peculiar customs and culture. For example, Sri Lankans celebrate Buddha Purnima as 'Vesak' festival, which is a corrupt form of the word 'Vaisakha'. On this day, lamps are lit in Buddhist houses, which are decorated with flowers. Buddhist followers from all over the world make pilgrimage to Bodh Gaya, a city in Bihar, and offer prayers. The Bodhi Tree is worshipped there in this city. Garlands and colourful flags are decorated on its branches. Milk and perfumed water are poured on this Holy Tree's roots. Lamps are lit around the tree. Food and clothes are donated as alms to the poor.

Mahatma Gautam Buddha was the founder of Buddhism. During his life, he always taught people the values of non-violence, love and compassion. Gautam Buddha was born in a royal family in Lumbini, Nepal in 563 BC. Mahatma Buddha is considered to be one of the most important and greatest Indian spiritual thinkers, an accomplished monk, social reformer, and a religious leader. He touched the hearts not only of influential people, but also the common people, and brought positive changes in their lives. Hence, he can be called the architect of a religious revolution as well as a personal and ideological revolution. His revolutionary speech is not only indicative of his revolutionary personality, but also a sharp sarcasm on religious, social distortions and superstitions that serves as an inspiration for change, which changed the direction of life of countless people around the globe. Before becoming a monk, Buddha was Prince Siddhartha of Kapilvastu. In search of peace, he left home, family, kingdom etc. at the age of 27. While travelling, Siddhartha reached Sarnath near Kashi, where his heart changed. Here he did severe penance under the Bodhi tree in Bodh Gaya. After severe penance, Siddhartha attained enlightenment and became famous as the great monk Gautam Buddha and illuminated the whole world with his knowledge. When Buddha saw the people of his era surrounded by ignorance regarding religious-social, spiritual and other rituals, and found the common people bogged deep in ignorance in the name of religion, saw women being insulted, saw atrocities against Shudras - then his heart was stirred in sympathy for the people. The Himalayan efforts he made to elevate the life of the people are amazing and astonishing. According to Buddha, it is better to win over oneself than to win thousands of battles in life. If you win over yourself, then victory will always be yours. No one can snatch it away from you. Gautam Buddha says that a person can never end evil with evil. To end it, a person has to take the help of love. All the big things in the world can be won with love. According to Buddha, happiness always increases by sharing. It never decreases. One should be afraid of a deceitful and evil friend, rather than a wild animal. A wild animal can harm your body, but a bad friend can harm your intellect. According to Gautam Buddha, three things can never be kept hidden in life. They are- Sun, Moon and Truth.



Lord Buddha

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In reality, the main objective of both governance and religious governance is to lead the people on the right path. But the dictators of governance are themselves creatures suffering from illusion, so they are not able to be completely successful in the work of social reform. Well, if someone cannot erase something from his own heart, how can he erase it from thousands of other hearts? The foundation of a government is not laid on the ground of love, affection and goodwill; it is usually laid on the foundation of fear, terror and oppression. This is the main reason that a government, even while protecting justice, morality and peace amongst the people, cannot establish a more permanent system. Whereas a religious government is based on mutual love and goodwill, as a result, it fundamentally changes the heart of the society by showing the path of truth and by removing sinfulness from all sides. It establishes permanent justice, morality and peace. Lord Buddha ultimately came to the conclusion that this incurable disease of India is not going to be cured by ordinary political movements. For this, the whole life will have to be sacrificed; leaving the attachment to a petty family, the ideal of a 'world family' will have to be adopted. One cannot mingle with the common people by dressing up in royal attire. To reach there, one will have to accept voluntary smallness, that is, one will have to accept monkhood. The greatest gift of Buddha to humanity is to end discrimination. It is an irony that on this land of Buddha, untouchability and discrimination still exist in some form or the other. At that time, the society was divided into different classes due to untouchability. When Lord Buddha talked about mutual unity by considering everyone as equal, a large number of people started becoming followers of Buddhism. A few decades ago, Dr. Bhimrao Ambedkar adopted Buddhism along with a large number of his followers so that they could get an equal position in Hindu society. It is very important even today to give practical form to the principle of equality of Buddhism. Basically, Buddhism remained in line with Hinduism, and Mahatma Buddha started a revolutionary and reformist movement by staying within Hinduism. It is a big expectation of the present era to highlight his contribution in the context of social revolution. Only by doing this, will we be able to build a healthy society. Buddha preached an egalitarian society. Where there is passion and hatred, inequality flourishes. From this point of view, the source of all problems is attachment and hatred. A person keeps wandering in the corridors of inequality to nourish his selfishness, to display ego, to humiliate others, to grab power and wealth. Before coming among the people, before sharing his life experiences, before doing severe penance, Buddha made himself alone, made himself empty. He underwent rigorous penance. He learned the truth of life. Then he said that do not let anything enter inside you which can pollute the inner world. Do not see badly, do not listen to bad, and do not say badly. This message of emptiness is the path to happiness, peace, and samadhi. He said to become your own lamp - be your own lamp. Because day and night being surrounded by resolutions and options, happiness-sadness, joy-sadness, being scorched by the worries of tomorrow, carrying the burden of stress, in such a situation, how and when can the mind be empty? How can it become balanced? How can one become meditative? To achieve these spiritual conditions, the practice of living in the present moment is necessary. Neither the memory of the past, nor the worry of the future- can help you. One who learns to live today should understand that he has attained the meaning of human life and only a society made up of such people can be balanced, healthy and egalitarian. There is a need to inculcate the teachings of Mahatma Buddha in life for building an advanced and balanced society, and to inculcate Buddha-like qualities in every person. Only by doing this, can we make the society healthy? Do not limit Buddha to mere teachings; rather make Buddha a part of your life, incorporate Buddha in your life.



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Gani Rajendra Vijay:

## The reformer of Tribal's



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Dr. Gani Rajendra Vijay, the pioneer of the Sukhi Pariwar Campaign, the messiah of tribal life and eminent Jain saint has been active on tribal issues for the last 49 years, he has launched many public welfare activities-schemes for the upliftment and development of tribal life, including education, service, medical and has taken initiatives for economic upliftment, which is a shining light in the lives of tribal people. Recently, while launching projects worth 4400 crores in Gujarat, Prime Minister Narendra Modi remembered Gani Rajendra Vijay with affection and intimacy while talking to the tribal women of online Kanwat, the whole country saw this scenario and felt their services. . Remembering this saintly man by Modi in this way, makes us feel his pride and existence. Definitely Gani Rajendra Vijayji is ready to give proper status to the tribal society and solve their problems. They themselves are capable and prosperous, so they themselves come forward for basic facilities like education. In a way, with the efforts of a saint, an entire backward and neglected tribal society is getting ready to build itself in an ideal form; this is an exemplary and commendable effort. But these tribal people also got political patrons, for this they made contact with the leaders of all political parties and made them aware of the pain of tribal life. The ideals that have been conceived in Indian society are accepted by Indians with the same reverence even today. The public's faith in price loyalty is not yet lost. Even if a person is alone but is in favour of morality and someone powerful is opposing him with crookedness and conspiracy, then the public will like the person alone. Establishment of these values is the aim of Gani Rajendra Vijay's mission and vision.

Gani Rajendra Vijay is such a personality who has blossomed further in the effort of spiritual development and moral upliftment. He has been striving for the upliftment of tribal life for a long time and is especially aware of the plans for education in tribal life; In 2007, the then Chief Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated this school and other schemes among about one and a half lakh tribal people, such a huge tribal presence was showing Ganiji's influence in this area.

Many public welfare schemes are being run under his leadership, in which Brahmi Sundari Girls Hostel is being run efficiently for girl's education. In this tribal area, where a Gaushala is operated with the view of life, then the mobile hospital is also providing its remarkable services for medical and service. For the economic progress and self-reliance of the tribal people, they are also running the happy family village industry. For the success of these broad undertakings, they do hard meditation and heat their body. In his programs, along with education among the tribals as well as common people, he awakens the light of drug addiction and eradication of stereotypes. The aim of his efforts is to awaken interest in education and reading as well as to inculcate faith in the minds of tribal people towards non-violence, morality and human values. Let every man look within himself and examine himself. Humanity is in danger today not because immorality is on the rise. Immorality has always been there - sometimes less and sometimes more. The most dangerous thing is that there is no faith in morality. Filled with sacrifice, meditation, simplicity, enlightenment and compassion, you are constantly striving to protect the identity of the tribal caste and to establish human values. As if he is the emerging 'Gandhi' of Gujarat holding Dandi. Gani Rajendra Vijayji, born in a tribal family on May 19, 1974 in this tribal soil, became a Jain monk at the age of just eleven. There is a flame within this saint who has written more than twenty books, which is sometimes seen agitating against obscenity, and sometimes becomes vocal against those who forcibly convert religion.



Gani Rajendra Vijay:

The reformer of Tribal's



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Sometimes it becomes vocal for the existence of water, land and forest. The kind of efforts that this saint has made for building a healthy and non-violent society, there is no show-off, no demonstration, no hunger for publicity, no longing for any respect, calling any politicians on his platforms. There is no desire for a show of power. In his passion, this saint is trying to establish the ideal and change the face of the tribal society and if we want to see the results of these efforts, it can be seen in tribal areas like Kanwat, Balad, Rangpur, Bodeli etc.

Gani Rajendra Vijayji is active in the Sukhi Pariwar Campaign run by the Sukhi Pariwar Foundation to make the family strong. It is my good fortune that from the year 2006 being the founder general secretary of this foundation, I am currently serving as its president. Ganiji's topmost priority is that first of all the family should become cultured, the parents should become cultured, only then the children will be able to increase the prestige of the family by becoming cultured. If the children go astray from the right path, then their life will go into that deep pit of darkness from where it will be very difficult to get out again. Gani Rajendra Vijay is making special efforts to make children cultured. India is waiting for a cultural revolution today. This task cannot be left to the government machinery. Family, society and nation can be made moral and character-rich in real sense only by building the right education and right values. In my view, the initiative and efforts of Gani Rajendra Vijayji is the incarnation of a light in the tribal area, it is such a light that is becoming the solution to problems like violence, terrorism, Naxalism, Maoism. Often we seek solutions to these problems through politics, while the crisis seems to be deepening instead of the solution. Because due to political interests these neglected and needy people have been seen being exploited. The tribal society under the leadership of Gani Rajendra Vijayji is determined to move forward with the light to improve the life of this tribal area and to motivate the entire humanity.

The result of Gani Rajendra Vijayji's spiritual aura and hard penance is the empowerment of the tribal society. It is a matter of great pleasure that Gani Rajendra Vijayji has prepared the basis for building a non-violent society with his spiritual brilliance. Many times he not only pacified the bloody struggle, but also brought different opposing groups on a single platform. While the groups were eager to kill each other with different types of weapons for widespread violence and loss of life.

To make this area non-violent surrounded by wide possibilities of violence would be called a revolution and a miracle. Tribal people really need love, compassion, affection and strength, which is possible only through a saint like Ganiji and a human welfare initiative like the Sukhi Pariwar Campaign, a light is indeed being born, which is exemplary for other violence-affected areas as well. The specialty of Gani Rajendra Vijayji is that he has made tribal upliftment the resolution and yearning of his life. There is a lot of light in the lives of tribal people too, but efforts have been made to snatch these lights, which are happening and will continue to happen.

Today there are more internal threats than external threats. There are many challenges of violence and alienation that beg solutions. But never get the right answer on the wrong question. When bread is needed, bread becomes the solution. Without bread, you cannot make any theory an injection of strength.



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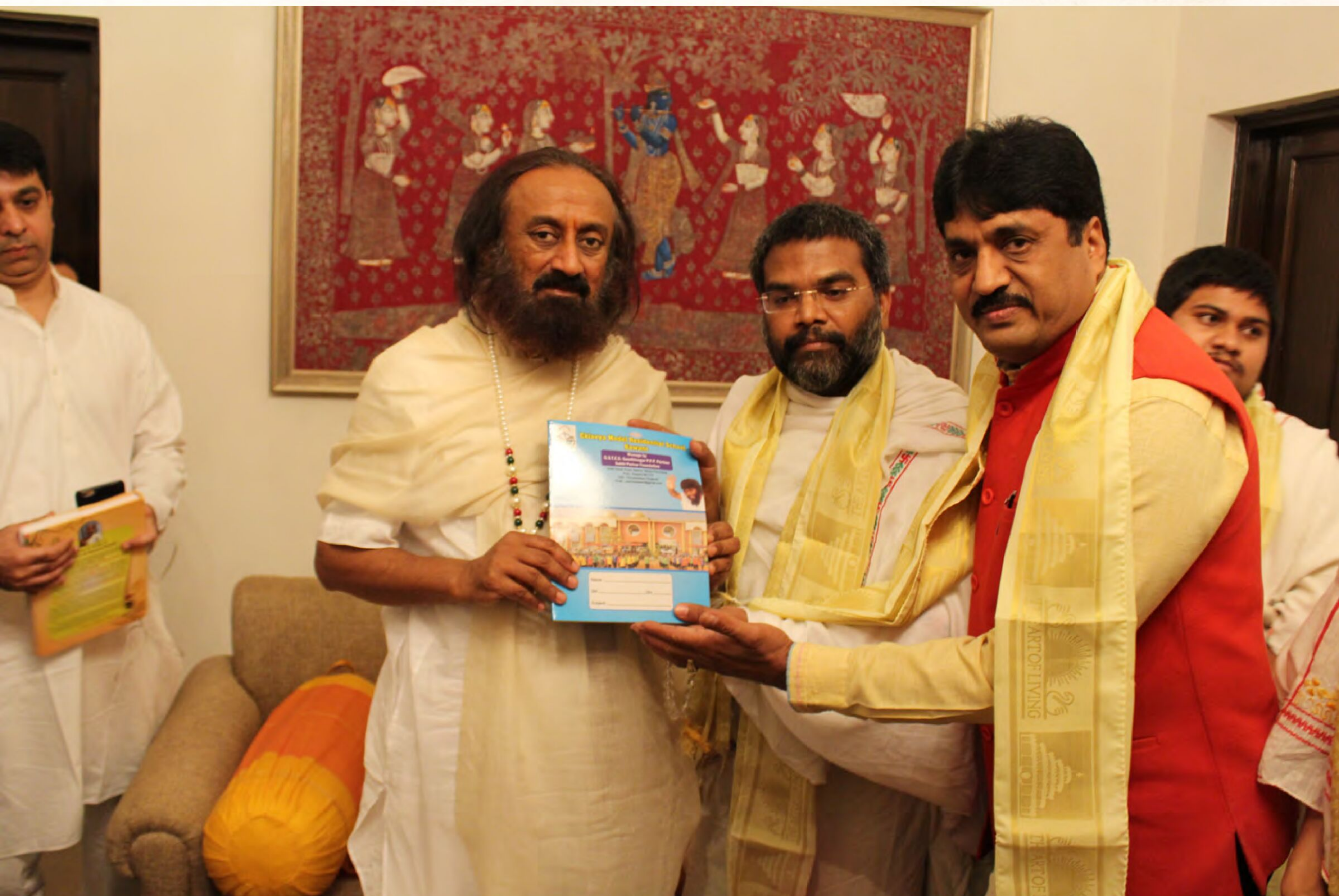
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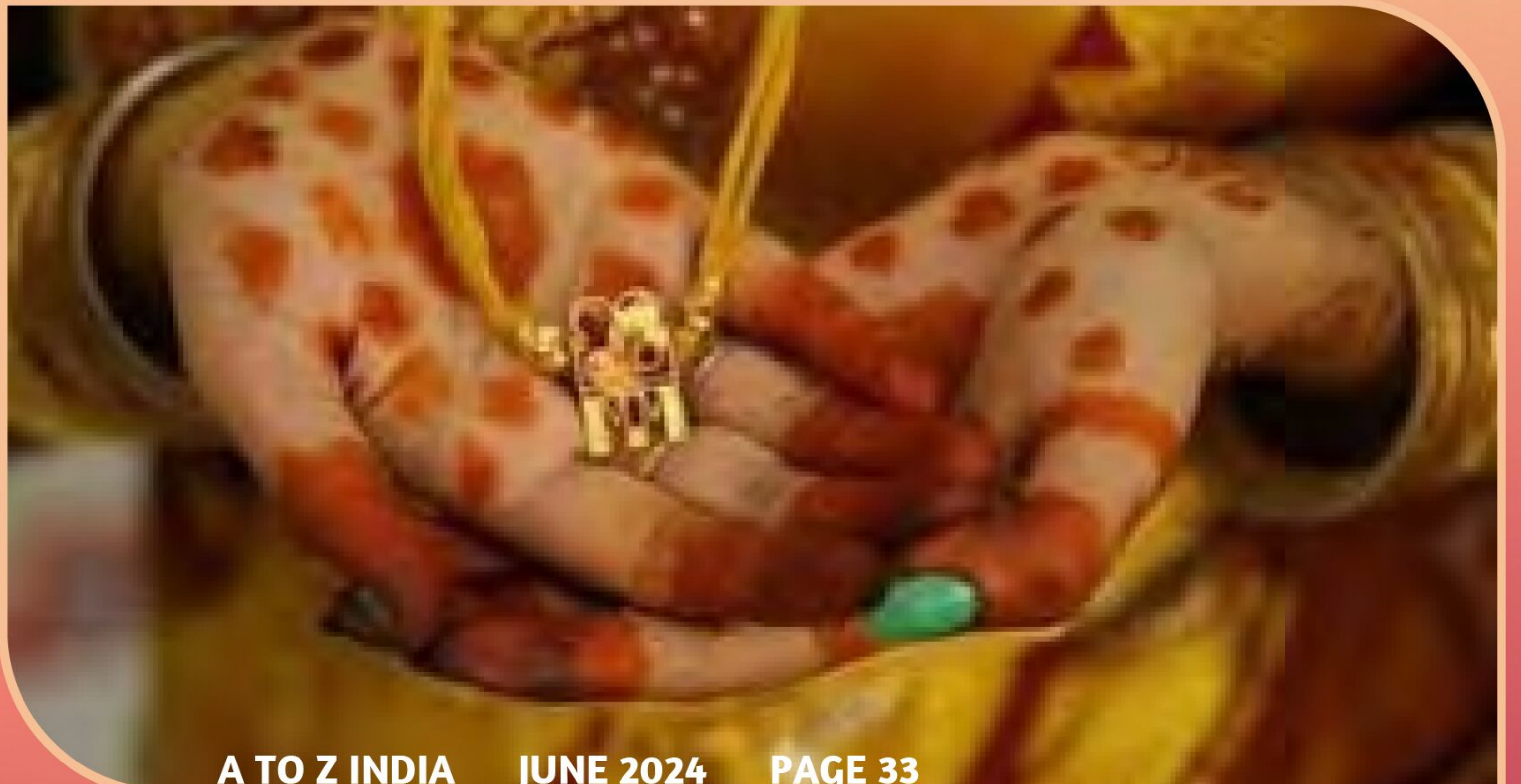


## ஆன்மீகம்: தாலிக்கயிறு

இந்திரா

பெண்கள் அணிந்துள்ள தாலிக்கயிறு அழுக்காகி விட்டாலோ, மாங்கல்யம் பழுதாகி புது மாங்கல்யம் அணிந்தாலோ, திங்கள், செவ்வாய், வியாழக்கிழமைகளில் மாற்றலாம். இதை காலை சாப்பிடும் முன்பே, ஏதேனும் கோயிலுக்குச் சென்று, நடைபாதையில் அமராமல், ஒரு ஓரமாக கிழக்கு நோக்கி அமர்ந்து மாற்றுவது மிகவும் நல்லது.

இவ்வாறு செய்வதால், கணவரும், தாலி மாற்றும் பெண்ணும் தீர்க்காயுளுடன் இருப்பர் என்பது ஜீதீகம். மாங்கல்ய கயிற்றில் ஊக்கு, சாவி தொங்க விடக்கூடாது. மாலைநேரத்திலும், ராகு, எமகண்ட காலத்திலும் மாற்றக்கூடாது. அழுக்கு கயிற்றில் தாலி அணிந்திருந்தால் வறுமை அதிகமாகும். எனவே, உங்கள் தாலிக்கயிறை அவ்வப்போது மாற்றிக் கொள்ளவும்.



















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# ஏனோ இஸ்ட் இந்தியா

-> உங்களுடைய  
படைப்புகளை  
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