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International Bharati Festival 2020

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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 **138th birth anniversary** (11th 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:** 11th 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 “Pudiyā 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), Pudiyā 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:** 11th 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