



## Shivakumara Swamigalu

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### Why in News

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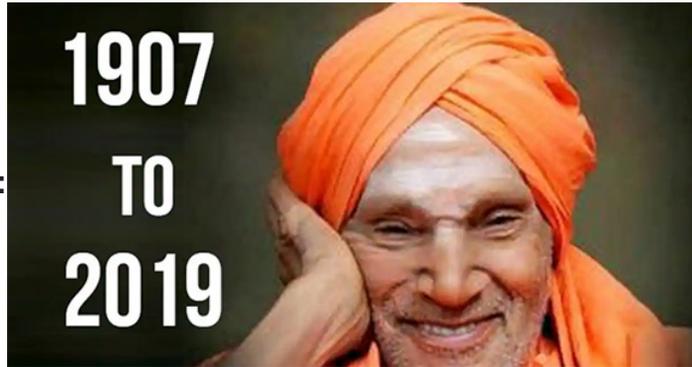
Recently, the Prime Minister paid tribute to **Shivakumara Swamigalu (Swami ji)** on his Jayanti.

Shivakumara Swamiji was a **prominent Lingayat scholar, educator and a spiritual leader.**

### Key Points

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- **Birth:**  
He was born in the village of Veerapura, Ramanagara District, Karnataka on **1<sup>st</sup> April, 1907.**



- **Early Life:**

- He was his **parent's thirteenth child** and was named **Shivanna** at birth. His interest in religion began in his childhood when he accompanied his parents to religious centers.
- After completing his **elementary education in the village he was born in**, he **moved to Nagavalli** to complete his middle school.
  - Simultaneously, he also became a **resident student at Siddaganga Math** for a brief period.
  - Sree Siddaganga Math is an **ancient ashram** fostering a continuous line of illustrious "Shiva Yogi Siddapurushas". The Math was **established by Sree Gosala Siddeshwara Swamiji in 15<sup>th</sup> century A.D.**  
The Math is situated at a distance of **63 Km from Bangalore (Karnataka).**
- In 1930, he earned a **bachelor's degree in arts from the Central College in Bangalore**. He was **proficient in English, Kannada, and Sanskrit**.
- **In 1965**, he was awarded an **honorary Doctor of Literature degree** by Karnataka University.

- **About:**

- He was a **Lingayat religious figure** and **head of the Siddaganga Matha** in Karnataka. He was described as the most esteemed **adherent of Lingayatism**. He entered the monk's order or viraktashram at Siddaganga Math on **3<sup>rd</sup> March, 1930**.
- He was known as "**Nadedaaduva Devaru**" or the "**Walking God**" among his followers.
- He was **considered as the incarnation of Basaveshwara**, the 12<sup>th</sup> century social reformer, as he accepted all irrespective of their religion or caste.

- **Social Work:**

- He had founded **132 institutions for education and training**.
  - Here, the children are provided free shelter, food, and education.
  - Visitors and pilgrims coming to the Math also receive free food.
- He founded **Sri Siddaganga Education Society**.
- Under the swami's guidance, an **agricultural fair was also held annually** to help the local people.

- **Awards:**
  - **In 2007**, he was awarded the **Karnataka Ratna** (highest civilian award in Karnataka).
  - **In 2015**, he was awarded the **Padma Bhushan** (the third highest civilian award in India).
- **Death:**

He was almost 112 years old when he passed away on **21<sup>st</sup> January 2019** as a result of multiple infections.

## **Lingayats**

- The term Lingayat denotes a **person who wears a personal linga**, the aniconic form of god Shiva, on the body, which is received during the initiation ceremony.
- Lingayats are the **followers of the 12<sup>th</sup>-century social reformer-philosopher poet, Basaveshwara**.

Basaveshwara was **against the caste system and Vedic rituals**.
- The Lingayats are **strict monotheists**. They enjoin the **worship of only one God, namely, Linga (Shiva)**.
- The word 'Linga' does not mean Linga established in temples, but **universal consciousness qualified by the universal energy (Shakti)**.
- The **Veerashaivas sect of the community** also worships Shiva idols and practises other Hindu customs.

**Source: PIB**