



# Lord Nataraja

## Why in News?

Recently, the **Tamil Nadu police** successfully **stopped the scheduled auctioning of a bronze idol of [Nataraja](#) by France.**

- The rare variety bronze idol was suspected to have been **stolen from Kayathar in Thoothukudi district half a century ago.**

## What are the Key Facts about Lord Nataraja?

- **Nataraja (Lord of the Dance)**, the **Hindu god Shiva** in his form as the **cosmic dancer**, is represented in metal or stone in many Shaivite temples, particularly in South India.
  - It is an **important piece of [Chola](#) sculpture.**



- The **upper right hand** holds the damru (drum), which signifies the **sound of creation**. All creations spring from the great sound of the damru.
- The **upper left-hand** holds the eternal fire, which represents the destruction. Destruction is the precursor and inevitable counterpart of creation.
- The **lower right hand** is raised in the gesture of **Abhay mudra** signifying benediction and reassuring the **devotee to not be afraid.**
- The **lower left-hand** points towards the upraised foot and indicates the **path of salvation.**
- Shiva is dancing on the figure of a small dwarf. The dwarf symbolises **ignorance** and the ego of an individual.
- Shiva is shown as the **source of all movement within the cosmos** and as the god whose

**doomsday dance, represented by the arch of flames**, accompanies the dissolution of the universe at the end of an eon.

- The matted and flowing locks of Shiva represent the **flow of river Ganges**.
- In ornamentation, one ear of Shiva has a male earring while the other has a female. This represents the fusion of male and female and is often referred to as **Ardhanarishwar**.
- A snake is twisted around the arm of Shiva. The snake symbolises the **kundalini power**, which resides in the human spine in the dormant stage. If aroused, one can attain true consciousness.
- The Nataraja is surrounded by a nimbus of glowing lights which symbolises the **vast unending cycles of time**.

[Source: TH](#)

PDF Refernece URL: <https://www.drishtias.com/printpdf/lord-nataraja>