

PM inaugurates Kashi Tamil Sangamam 2023

Launches multi language and braille translations of Thirukkural, Manimekalai and other classic Tamil literature

Flags off the Kanyakumari – Varanasi Tamil Sangamam train

“Kashi Tamil Sangamam furthers the spirit of 'Ek Bharat, Shrestha Bharat’”

“The relations between Kashi and Tamil Nadu are both emotional and creative”

“India's identity as a nation is rooted in spiritual beliefs”

“Our shared heritage makes us feel the depth of our relations”

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The Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi inaugurated the Kashi Tamil Sangamam 2023 in Varanasi, Uttar Pradesh today. Shri Modi flagged off the Kanyakumari – Varanasi Tamil Sangamam train and launched multi language and braille translations of Thirukkural, Manimekalai and other classic Tamil literature on the occasion. He also took a walkthrough of the exhibition and witnessed a cultural program. Kashi Tamil Sangamam aims to celebrate, reaffirm and rediscover the age-old links between Tamil Nadu and Kashi – two of the country's most important and ancient seats of learning.

Addressing the gathering, the Prime Minister welcomed everyone not as guests but as his family members. He underlined that arriving in Kashi from Tamil Nadu simply means traveling from one abode of Lord Mahadev to the other namely Madurai Meenakshi to Kashi Vishalakshi. Highlighting the unique love and connection between the people of Tamil Nadu and Kashi, the Prime Minister expressed confidence in the hospitality of the citizens of Kashi. Along with the blessings of Lord Mahadev, the Prime Minister emphasized that the participants will return to Tamil Nadu with Kashi's culture, delicacies and memories. Prime Minister Modi also highlighted the use of Artificial Intelligence in real-time translation of his speech in Tamil for the first time and reiterated its usage in future events.

The Prime Minister flagged off the Kanyakumari – Varanasi Tamil Sangamam train and launched multi language and braille translations of Thirukkural, Manimekalai and other classic Tamil literature on the occasion. Quoting Subramania Bharathi, the Prime Minister said that vibrations of Kashi-Tamil Sangamam are spreading throughout the country and the world.

Shri Modi noted that lakhs of people including heads of mutts, students, artists, authors, craftsmen and professionals have become part of Kashi Tamil Sangamam since its inception last year and it has become an effective platform for dialogue and exchange of ideas. He expressed satisfaction on the joint initiative by Banaras Hindu University and IIT, Chennai where IIT, Chennai is providing online support to thousands of students from Varanasi in Science and Mathematics under the Vidya Shakti Initiative. These recent developments, the Prime Minister said, are proof of the emotional and creative bond between the people of Kashi and Tamil Nadu.

The Prime Minister said that “Kashi Tamil Sangamam furthers the spirit of 'Ek Bharat, Shrestha Bharat.’” This spirit was behind the organization of Kashi Telugu Sangamam and Saurashtra Kashi Sangamam, he said. The spirit of 'Ek Bharat, Shrestha Bharat' got further strength from the new tradition of celebration of other statehood days in all the Raj Bhavans of the country. PM Modi also recalled the establishment of the sacred Sengol in the new Parliament under the supervision of the Aadinam saints reflecting the same spirit of 'Ek Bharat, Shrestha Bharat. “This flow of spirit of 'Ek Bharat, Shrestha Bharat' is infusing the soul of our nation today”, he said.

The Prime Minister acknowledged that India's diversity has been moulded in the spiritual consciousness as signified by Great Pandian King Parakram Pandian who had said that every water in India is Gangajal, and every geographical location of the country is Kashi. Reflecting on the time when the centers of faith in Northern India were constantly under attack by foreign powers, the Prime Minister highlighted King Parakram Pandian's efforts to keep the heritage of Kashi alive with the construction of Tenkasi and Sivakasi temples. Shri Modi also recalled the fascination of the dignitaries taking part in the G20 Summit towards India's diversity.

The Prime Minister said that in other countries, nation has been defined in political terms whereas India, as a nation, is constructed out of spiritual beliefs. India, PM Modi said, has been unified by saints like Adi Shankaracharya and Ramanujam. The Prime Minister also recalled the role of yatras of Aadina saints to Shiv Sthans. “Due to these Yatras, India has remained eternal and unwavering as a nation”, Shri Modi added.

Prime Minister Modi expressed satisfaction with the peaking interests of the country's youth towards ancient traditions as he observed that a large number of people, students and youth from Tamil Nadu are traveling to Kashi, Prayag, Ayodhya and other pilgrimage sites. “Darshan of Lord Ram in Ayodhya, who established Rameshwaram along with Lord Mahadev, is divine”, the Prime Minister said, noting that special arrangements are also being made for Ayodhya visit of those attending the Kashi Tamil Sangamam.

The Prime Minister emphasized the need for knowing each other's culture as this increases trust and develops rapport. Giving an example of the two great temple cities, Kashi and Madurai, Shri Modi said that Tamil literature talks about both Vagai and Gangai (Ganga). “When we come to know of this heritage we feel the depth of our relations”, he said.

Prime Minister Modi expressed confidence that the confluence of Kashi - Tamil Sangamam will continue empowering India's heritage, and strengthening the spirit of Ek Bharat Shreshtha

Bharat. Concluding the address, the Prime Minister hoped for a pleasant stay for those visiting Kashi and also thanked renowned singer Shriram for captivating the entire audience with his performance.

Chief Minister of Uttar Pradesh, Shri Yogi Adityanath, Union Minister for Education, Shri Dharmendra Pradhan, and Union Ministers of State, Dr L Murugan among others were present on the occasion.

Union Minister for Education and Skill Development & Entrepreneurship Shri Dharmendra Pradhan expressed his gratitude to Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi for enlivening the cultural heritage and restoration of religious places and rekindling the spirit and aspiration of the people. He also highlighted the significance of Kashi and Tamil Nadu and several other knowledge centres of these two regions. Quest for the relationship between these two centres and the ancient knowledge that was practised here needs to be connected to modern insight, technology, academics and entrepreneurship, he added.

In his address, Dr. L. Murugan said that India is embodied in one culture one heritage. He expressed his gratitude to Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi for taking the Thirukural, one of the greatest classics of Tamil to the entire world. He also thanked the Prime Minister for envisioning the Kashi Tamil Sangamam which strengthens the bond, culture and heritage between Tamil Nadu and Kashi. The Prime Minister has taken the message of "Yaadhum Oore Yaavarum kelir" to the UN, which means "we harbour a feeling of kinship for all places and all people are our own."

Shri Yogi Adityanath in his address said that through the initiative of Kashi Tamil Sangamam, a wonderful confluence of South India and North India is taking place, and the millennium-old relationship is getting new life. The confluence of two civilizations of ancient education and culture taking place in the Tamil Kartik month is the result of the vision of Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi, he added.

The second phase of the Kashi Tamil Sangamam will continue till 30th December 2023. Last year, the first phase of Kashi Tamil Sangamam was organized from 16th November to 16th December 2022. Nearly 1400 (7 Groups of 200 persons each) people are expected to be travelling from different parts of Tamil Nadu, representing varied walks of life. During their stay in Kashi, as per their tour itinerary, they will also visit Prayagraj and Ayodhya.

The 7 groups of Students (Ganga), Teachers (Yamuna), Professionals (Godavari), Spiritual (Saraswati), Farmers and Artisans (Narmada), Writers (Sindhu) and Traders and Businessmen (Kaveri) have been named after seven sacred rivers of India.

The Ministry of Education, Government of India, will be the nodal agency for this event with participation from the Ministries of Culture, Tourism, Railways, Textiles, Food Processing (ODOP), MSME, Information & Broadcasting, Skill Development & Entrepreneurship, IRCTC and related departments of Government of Uttar Pradesh.

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