

# Dakshinapatha Varthavani (Monthly Bulletin)

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DakshinApatha (also known as Dakshināvarta) refers to the southern part of India, traditionally understood as the region lying south of the Vindhya ranges. DakshinApatha Varthavani Bulletin documents and presents the rich political history, culture, traditions, people and inspirational personalities of this region, while reflecting the changing times and society. In terms of present-day political boundaries, DakshinApatha covers Andhra Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Goa, Karnataka, Kerala, Maharashtra, Puducherry, Tamil Nadu and Telangana, along with parts of Madhya Pradesh and Odisha. Through this bulletin, we bring together historical, cultural, political and social narratives from these regions, preserving and sharing the diverse heritage of the southern part of India.

## The Grandeur of Devi Sharannavaratrulu (From October 11)

As nature rejoices in the moonlight of the autumn season, and temples, homes and streets shine with the fragrance of devotion, the festival season of Devi Sharannavaratrulu arrives. This great festival, which takes place for nine nights and ten days, is not merely a festival; it is a symbol of the worship of Shakti, purification of the self, victory of righteousness, cultural grandeur, and family unity. By worshipping the various forms of the Mother Goddess, removing the ignorance within us and lighting the lamp of knowledge, we understand the inner significance of these Navaratri celebrations.

### First Day – Shailaputri:

Shailaputri, who is the daughter of the King of Mountains, is worshipped by devotees. This form is a symbol of fearlessness, courage and determination. Spiritually, this day reminds us to awaken courage within our lives.

### Second Day – Brahmacharini:

Brahmacharini, who is the embodiment of austerity, discipline and concentration, is worshipped. This day teaches us to restrain ourselves rather than run after desires and to proceed on the path of discipline.

### Third Day – Chandraghanta:

In the form of Chandraghanta, the Mother Goddess appears abundantly as the embodiment of peace and prosperity. By performing devotional singing and worship, the feeling of devotion grows, and faith is bestowed upon the devotees. In the temples, the ringing of bells and auspicious musical instruments make the devotional atmosphere even more pleasant.



### Fourth Day – Kushmanda:

Kushmanda Devi is worshipped as a symbol of creation. The special significance of this day is the feeling that the lamp of light that illuminates the entire universe is also present within us. With the lighting of lamps, offerings and worship rituals, the spiritual atmosphere in the homes becomes filled with light.

### Fifth Day – Skandamata:

Skandamata, who is the embodiment of motherhood, compassion and protection, is worshipped. This is a day on which the love of the Mother is remembered. Performing worship for the prosperity of the family and sharing the offerings further strengthens family bonds.

### Sixth Day – Katyayani:

Goddess Katyayani is worshipped for the victory of righteousness over unrighteousness. This day reminds us to awaken the inner strength within ourselves to face our weaknesses.



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## Dakshinapatha Studies Bulletin

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### Seventh Day – Kalaratri:

Although she appears in a terrifying form, Goddess Kalaratri bestows auspiciousness upon devotees and remove ignorance, fear and evil. Removing darkness and lighting the lamp of knowledge is the important message of this day.

### Eighth Day – Mahagauri:

Goddess Mahagauri is worshipped as a symbol of purity, peace and gentleness. This day tells us to cleanse the mind of impure thoughts and cultivate virtues such as love, compassion and forgiveness.

### Ninth Day – Siddhidatri:

Siddhidatri Devi, who bestows perfection and knowledge, is worshipped. The ninth day is the day that brings completeness to spiritual practice. The idea reflected here is that life becomes meaningful through the integration of the four paths—devotion, knowledge, action, and meditation.

### Tenth Day – Vijayadashami:

Vijayadashami is the culmination of the Navaratri celebrations. It is a symbol of the victory of dharma over adharma, truth over falsehood, and light over darkness. Ayudha Puja, commencement of education, Shami Puja, display of dolls (bommala koluvu), and cultural programmes make this day especially significant.

Sharannavaratri reminds us of a great truth—the Goddess is not merely a power to be worshipped externally; she is also the divinity present within every human being. If, during the nine days of worship, we worship the nine forms of the Goddess, we must awaken within ourselves the nine inner powers—courage, discipline, peace, wisdom, motherhood, valour, fearlessness, purity, and knowledge.

Therefore, Sharannavaratri is not merely a festival of lighting lamps; it is a great festival that removes the darkness of ignorance within our hearts and lights the lamp of knowledge. With gratitude to the Goddess, we pray that every home may be filled with happiness and peace, that courage may shine in every heart, that dharma may flourish in every life— “Hail, hail, O destroyer of Mahishasura! Hail, hail, O Mother of the universe!”

## A Memorable Freedom Fighter

### Shyamji Krishna Varma (Janma Tithi, October 4)

In the Indian freedom struggle, many great personalities sacrificed their lives. Among such prominent personalities was Shyamji Krishna Varma. He was born on October 4, 1857. He died on March 30, 1930. In 2003, the then Chief Minister of Gujarat, Narendra Modi, respectfully brought his ashes back to our country from Geneva, Switzerland. Shyamji Krishna Varma was born into a wealthy family in

Gujarat's Kutch district. He pursued his education in his homeland. He acquired immense scholarship in the Sanskrit language. He also studied philosophy, sociology and



law.

His wife Bhanumathi — she followed his ideals and thoughts and supported him in every way. For some time, she served as the president of the Arya Samaj organization established by Swami Dayananda Saraswati. The influence of Dayananda Saraswati on Shyamji Krishna Varma was very great. Subsequently, he worked as a Diwan in several princely states. He helped poor people. Later, with the intention of practising as a barrister in London, he went to England.

In London, he established a hostel called “India House” for Indian students. Shyamji Krishna Varma provided all kinds of assistance to students coming abroad, freedom fighters, and poor people. Veer Savarkar was the most prominent among those who came in this way. He arranged for him to study in London free of cost. In fact, impressed by Savarkar's talent, Bal Gangadhar Tilak wrote a letter to Shyamji requesting him to provide shelter to Savarkar in London.

In this way, he used his life to serve scientists, researchers, and the Indian atomic energy establishment. He played a key role in establishing the Indian Institute of Science in Bengaluru and the Tata Institute of Fundamental Research. He encouraged scientists and laid the foundation for the development of nuclear science in the country. It was under his leadership that India's nuclear programme took shape and progressed rapidly.

He died on January 30, 1930. He had dedicated his entire life to science. In 1947, after India gained independence, he played a key role in laying the foundation for the country's nuclear programme. His contribution to India's scientific development remains unforgettable.

Finally, in 2003, during the tenure of the then Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee, the then Gujarat Chief Minister Narendra Modi brought the ashes of Shyamji Krishna Varma and his wife Bhanumati back to the homeland, carrying them on his head. In Mandvi, a memorial stupa resembling the India House in London was constructed.

Their ashes were placed there.

Similarly, the Inner Temple Law Association in Britain also respectfully restored Shyamji Krishna Varma's membership in 2015, during Narendra Modi's tenure as Prime Minister. Remembering the sacrifices of the great personalities who paved the way for Swaraj, the country's independence is the responsibility of all of us.

--Courtesy of Jagruthi Weekly Magazine

## **Homi Jehangir Bhabha (Janma Tithi, October 30)**

Homi Jehangir Bhabha — the dream architect of Indian nuclear science. His life was not merely the life story of a scientist; it was a reflection of the great resolve that "India too should stand at the forefront of the world of science." He was the visionary who transformed science into a powerful means for nation-building.

Born in Mumbai on October 30, 1909, Homi Jehangir Bhabha displayed extraordinary intellectual ability from his childhood. He had immense interest in mathematics and physics. For higher education, he went to Cambridge University in England and displayed exceptional talent in physics. He got the opportunity to work with prominent scientists of the world and earned a special place for himself in the field of physics.



However, the true test of Bhabha's exceptional talent came after his return to India. Because of the Second World War, he temporarily suspended the scientific experiments he had been continuing abroad and returned to India. There, he realized how severely the country lacked the infrastructure required for scientific research. At that point, a thought took shape in his mind — "A great scientific institution must take shape in the country; India must build its own scientific strength without depending on other countries."

The result of this resolve was the Tata Institute of Fundamental Research (TIFR). Established in 1945, this insti-

tution became a major centre for fundamental scientific research in India. It provided scientists with advanced facilities and played a key role in rapidly taking India forward in world-class research.

Bhabha's contribution to the development of India's atomic energy sector was immense. He worked tirelessly to establish a strong foundation for India's nuclear programme. In 1948, the Atomic Energy Commission was established, with him playing a key role. Later, the Atomic Energy Research Centre was established at Trombay. This centre was subsequently renamed the Bhabha Atomic Research Centre (BARC).

Bhabha's contribution to the Atomic Energy Commission was not limited to establishing an institution. He made efforts to develop the country's scientific infrastructure, research facilities, and human resources. He laid a strong foundation for India's self-reliance in nuclear science. His vision was instrumental in transforming India's atomic energy programme into a strong national endeavour.

Bhabha's greatness was not confined to his scientific achievements; he was also a great visionary. He believed that India could become a developed nation only by strengthening scientific research, technological capabilities, and human resources. He therefore worked to ensure that India would stand independently in the global scientific community. He also encouraged young scientists to pursue research.

On January 24, 1966, Bhabha died in an air crash while travelling to Geneva. He was only 56 years old. Although his physical journey came to an end, his scientific vision, the institutions he established, and his efforts to build India's nuclear capability continue to inspire the country.

Homi J. Bhabha's life teaches us one great lesson — that the development of the nation is not possible through the efforts of a single individual; science, research, technology, and education must work together. By dedicating his entire life to the progress of science, Bhabha demonstrated that scientific development can transform the future of a nation. He was not merely a pioneer in India's scientific progress, but also an inspiration for future generations.

## **Avanakshamma Temple, Narayanavanam, Tirupati**

The Mother Goddess (Jaganmatha), who has manifested herself in various places for the welfare of the world, is worshipped under many names and in various forms. Each temple where the Goddess has manifested herself as a form of Shakti has its own distinctive significance. Devotees who visit the temples of the Goddess are blessed with progeny and prosperity.

Located about 40 km from Tirupati district, on the Tirupati-Chennai highway, in the area known as 'Narayana-

vanam', is the Avanakshamma Temple, where the Goddess is manifested herself. Devotees who come here with great devotion regard this Goddess as their mother. It is believed that, through the grace of the Goddess, their wishes will be fulfilled.

In the Avanakshamma Temple, the temple's Sthala Purna (local temple legend) states that the Goddess Parvathi manifested herself as a Swayambhu (self-manifested deity). This temple, which is approximately 3,000 years old,



has a very illustrious history. Brahma installed the idol of the Goddess here and worshipped her.

The place where Avanakshamma manifested herself as a Swayambhu is near the Aruni River. Once, the sage Agastya had the darshan of this Mother Goddess and gave her the name "Amnayakshi," meaning that she is the Goddess with Vedas as her eyes. This Mother Goddess is also called "Avanasini Devi." Later, she came to be known as "Avanakshamma." Since Parvati Devi protected Vedas from Asuras (demons) in this place, she is called as Amnakshamma.

Padmavathi Devi, the daughter of Akasharaju, used to worship Avanakshamma Amma, the family deity of her mother's household, from her childhood. At one point, Padmavathi Devi saw Srinivasa and wished to have him as her husband. For this purpose, she worshipped Avanakshamma Amma with devotion and reverence and obtained Srinivasa as her husband, as we learn through the temple Sthala Purana. It is said that before her marriage, Padmavathi Devi performed the Gouri Puja here itself.

Since Goddess Padmavathi herself prayed to this Mother Goddess and obtained Srinivasa as her husband, worshipping this Goddess clears the obstacles for marriage. As evidence of this, newly married couples who have married with the blessings of Avanakshamma frequently come to this temple to fulfill their vows and make offerings to the Goddess. This temple is in just one kilometer distance

from Narayanavanam and TTD runs buses from Tirumala and Tirupathi to this place.

## Puducherry Liberation Struggle – A Symbol of National Consciousness (October 18)

The history of Bharat is not merely the history of kings, wars, and empires. It is a great saga woven from the culture, dharma, self-respect, and spirit of freedom that have flowed through this land for thousands of years. The struggle waged by Bharateeyas against foreign rule was also not confined to one region or conducted in only one manner. In every region of the country, a flame was lit for freedom. The Puducherry liberation struggle is one of such flame.

Although Puducherry, which was under French rule, was geographically a small region of Bharat, the national aspiration behind its liberation was immense. Even after Bharat attained independence in 1947, the French-ruled territories, including Puducherry, continued to remain under foreign rule. This caused dissatisfaction among Bharateeyas who sought complete independence. The idea that "Bharat is one; its entire territory should also be indivisible" became firmly established in the people's minds. In Bharateeya culture, the country is not merely land; it is like a mother, have a tradition of looking upon this land, which extends from the Himalayas to Kanyakumari and from the Ganga to the sea, as Bharat Mata. Therefore, any region that remained under foreign rule was felt deeply as



an injustice in the hearts of Bharateeyas. The Puducherry liberation struggle also emerged as an integral part of this national sentiment.

Local people, nationalists, and freedom fighters participated in the struggle to make Puducherry a part of Bharat. Through meetings, demonstrations, and public movements, they expressed their aspirations. During this struggle, political satyagraha also played an important role. Their fight for their motherland and their determination to establish their right over their land inspired the public to participate in the freedom movement.

The sacrifices of the people, political leaders, and Indian patriots eventually led to the integration of Puducherry with Bharat. On November 1, 1954, the French handed

## Kitturu Rani Chennamma – The First Freedom Queen (October 21)

In the history of Bharat's freedom struggle, although the names of some brave heroes have been lost in the passage of time, the echoes of their sacrifices continue to resound in the hearts of Bharateeyas from generation to generation. One such immortal brave woman was Kitturu Rani Chennamma. She was an important chapter in Bharat's history who stood up against the British East India Company and fought for the protection of her kingdom and its rights.



Rani Chennamma, who was the queen of the Kitturu State in Karnataka, was a symbol of courage and bravery. After the death of her husband, Raja Mallasarja, a succession problem arose. Chennamma declared her adopted son as her successor. However, the British refused to recognize the right of the adopted heir. They tried to interfere in the affairs of Kitturu and bring it under their control.

It was not merely a matter of protecting a kingdom; it was a struggle for self-respect. The spirit of Bharat's self-rule was reflected in the rebellion led by Chennamma. The British authorities sent a special force and tried to suppress the Kitturu rebellion, but they could not succeed.

In 1824, the British attacked Kitturu. Rani Chennamma fought against them with great courage and bravery. The British suffered heavy losses in the battle. Despite the superior military strength of the British, she fought them with extraordinary courage. This struggle provided great energy to the people's dissatisfaction towards foreign rule in Bharat.

In the struggle of Rani Chennamma, the greatest strength was her self-respect. Her objective was not merely to protect her authority but was to protect the rights of her people over their own land. No matter how great the enemy's strength might be, she proved through her life that the determination to stand against injustice is greater than that strength.

Eventually, Kitturu was defeated. Rani Chennamma was imprisoned in the Bailhongal Fort. In 1829, she passed

away there. But although the British were able to imprison the brave queen, they could not imprison her spirit and self-respect.

To remember her means not merely to remember the history of Kitturu — but to remember the courage to resist injustice, to preserve self-respect, and to stand firm in the face of adversity.

## ‘Padma Shri’ Tiruttani Swaminathan: The Generations-Old ‘Oduvar’ Tradition

Tiruttani Swaminathan, an ‘Oduvar’ from Tamil Nadu, received the ‘Padma Shri’ award in the field of arts in 2026 in recognition of his six decades of dedicated service to the preservation of Thevaram, Tamil Shaivite musical traditions, Pann Isai, and ancient Thirumurai hymns. For more than 60 years, he has sung and preserved the sacred hymns of ‘Thevaram’ and ‘Thiruvachagam’.

(‘Thevaram’ is a collection of sacred devotional hymns composed in Tamil between the 7th and 8th centuries by three prominent Nayanars who were devotees of Lord Shiva—Sambandar, Appar, and Sundarar—in praise of Lord Shiva. It refers to the first seven sections of the Tamil Shaivite scripture ‘Thirumurai’.

Manikkavachakar, also known as Manikkavasagar, was a Tamil devotional poet of the 9th century who composed the work ‘Thiruvachagam’ in praise of Lord Shiva. The works of Manikkavachakar form a part of the ‘Thirumurai’, a text of great importance to Tamil Shaiva Siddhanta.)

Swaminathan served as a full-time Oduvar at the Tiruttani Murugan Temple. He also taught at traditional Thevaram schools. He trained generations of students who have served, and continue to serve, as temple singers throughout the world.

Swaminathan was born and raised in the village of Alathur, near Thirukkarugavur, in a modest Vaishnavite agricultural family. His original name was Sarangapani. At the Papanasam Temple, his father, Nagarathnam, noticed his seven-year-old son's deep devotion to Perumal.

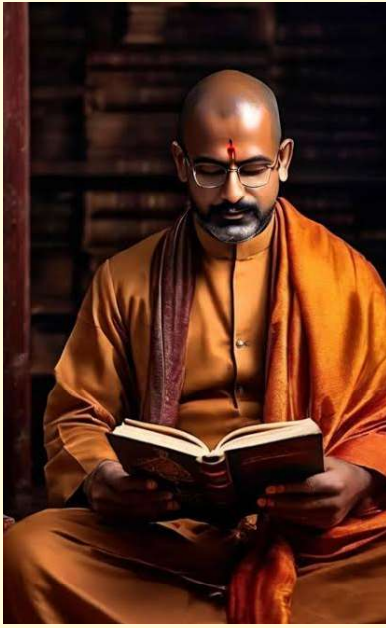
## The Role of Oduvars in Shiva Temples

Oduvars perform the portion of the ‘Thirumurai’ that is sung during Shaivite worship. During every scheduled ritual worship at the main Shiva temple, they sing Thevaram and Thiruvachagam along with the recitation of Vedic mantras. They offer the singing of hymns before or during the final showing of the sacred flame (aarti). This is performed as a form of devotional worship that complements the priests' recitation of the Vedas.

In large temples, several Oduvars share the programme of duties. Consequently, from early morning until night, a hymn singer is always assigned to the temple services.

### A Turning Point in Sarangapani's Life

One night in 1954 marked a turning point in Sarangapani's life. The highly renowned Madurai Somu came to the Papanasam Temple and sang there throughout the night. The programme continued until after 3 a.m. Nagarathnam took his son to him and explained the boy's deep devotion. When Somu asked him to sing, Sarangapani performed his favourite song, 'Sindhanai Sei Maname'.



Somu immediately recognised the quality of his voice and his devotion. He advised the father to put the boy into formal vocal training.

This simple suggestion changed the young man's life. He joined a school at Thirukadavur, where he immersed himself in learning Thevaram hymns for five years. From there, he moved to the Dharmapuram Adheenam for another two years of intensive training. He became a disciple of Dharmapuram P. Swaminathan, one of the most distinguished Oduvars of the 20th century. Sarangapani followed throughout his life the combination of devotion and scholarship that characterised his guru.

In 1975, he joined the renowned Tiruttani Temple as an Oduvar. Through 26 years of unwavering dedication to singing, he became known as 'Tiruttani Oduvar Swaminathan'. At the invitation of expatriate Indians, he frequently travelled with the heads of the Thiruppanandal and Dharmapuram Adheenams to Malaysia, South Africa, Singapore, Switzerland, and Sri Lanka, where he presented recitations of Thevaram during Navaratri and other festivals.

### As a Teacher, Promoter, and Representative of Tradition

While the earlier decades of his life were devoted to disciplined singing, the later period has increasingly focused on transmitting and promoting this tradition. After retiring from Tiruttani, Swaminathan joined the VS Trust in Chidambaram, where he trained students who today serve as Oduvars at Swamimalai, Thirunallar, and Thiruvotriyur.

For the past decade, Swaminathan has been teaching 30 students at the Dharmapuram Adheenam school. In addition to Thevaram and Thirumurai hymns, he teaches them the stories of the 63 Nayanars, the legends associated with the sacred sites praised in devotional hymns

(Paadal Petra Sthalams), and the reasoning behind the procedures in temple worship in which the Oduvar plays a central role.

Swaminathan has made the modern world understand that an Oduvar is not an 'additional' cultural decoration in Shiva temples, but an integral part of Shaivite ritual. In many Agamic traditions, worship without Thirumurai is considered incomplete. Nevertheless, numerous temples throughout Tamil Nadu have discontinued permanent Oduvar positions. Young aspirants struggle with low salaries, the absence of Oduvar posts, and the failure of the government and society to adequately recognise the level of rigorous training they have undergone.

### His Movement Continues

Swaminathan is in his late seventies. However, the same discipline continues to guide his life's work.

"As long as my voice remains intact, I will continue singing these sacred hymns. I will continue training young people in this service," he says.

Even today, he spends his time in teaching, attending Thevaram recitations wherever possible, and quietly standing among the audience when others sing Thevaram, listening as though he is a new student himself.

—Dr. Valluri Vijaya Hanumantha Rao,  
Tadepalligudem

## Molangur Fort – The "Milk Well" of Pure Waters

The historically famous Molangur Fort is located in Molangur village, in Shankarapatnam (Keshavapatnam) Mandal, about 13 kilometers from Huzurabad in Karimnagar district. It is also known by the name Molangur. This fort is renowned as another impregnable stronghold dating back to the Kakatiya period. Historical evidence states that the fort was constructed by Voragiri Miggara-ju, who served as a Subedar during the reign of Kakatiya king Prataparudra.

The fort was built at a strategic location as part of strong defensive measures to prevent enemies from entering the Kakatiya Empire. It was constructed magnificently using the architectural skills of ancient times. Molangur is one of the prominent historical heritage structures in northern Telangana. The structures and tanks built by the Kakatiya kings continue to attract tourists. The ruins of buildings in which royal families lived, and a tank said to have been used by the queens for bathing, have acquired importance as historical evidence. Archaeological Department records also indicate the great heritage and architectural significance of Molangur Fort. As tall, dense trees surround the fort, visitors experience a pleasant atmosphere. The main entrance of the fort has withstood the passage of centuries and still stands intact.

Historians believe that if this area is developed with proper infrastructure and recognised as a protected historical site, it has the potential to become a prominent tourist destination.

In the vicinity of the fort are the Doodh Bowli (Milk Well), an ancient Shiva temple, and the tomb of a Sufi preacher named Malang Shah Wali. The Doodh Bowli deserves special mention. The historic 'Doodh Bowli' (Milk Well), located within the Molangur Fort complex and dating back to the Kakatiya period, once quenched the thirst of the Nizam rulers as well as people from the surrounding villages. Historians believe that water was transported on horseback from this well, situated at the foot of the hill, to the Nizam in Hyderabad. A stone pathway was also constructed to enable horses to travel from the fort below to the top of the hill.



Local people say that the milk-like water in this well possesses great medicinal value and has cured many diseases. The surrounding hills contain hundreds of varieties of Ayurvedic plants and trees in abundance. It is said that the medicinal properties of the water result from the essence of these plants entering the well. Giving water from this well to people suffering from illness is a local practice observed in various nearby villages. The distinctive feature of this well is that its water is slightly white, like milk, rather than having the natural colour of ordinary water.

Historical accounts state that this well was excavated during the Kakatiya period itself. Another special feature of the water is that it contains no fluoride at all. It always appears pure. Moreover, local residents say that this water tastes sweeter than mineral water. As part of some recent investigations, water samples were collected from Doodh Bowli and tested, lending support to claims about the purity of the water.

Even today, several political dignitaries and senior officials visiting the Karimnagar region show an interest in drinking water from this well instead of branded mineral

water. Villagers say that until a few years ago, the well never dried up. However, for approximately the past fifteen years, it has been running dry during the summer. They say that the water begins to flow again during the rainy season. As soon as fresh water appears, villagers gather at the well and compete to collect it. When water begins to enter the well, Doodh Bowli becomes a lively and bustling place.

In the past, the government directed the relevant officials to conduct tests on the quality of Doodh Bowli water. The results of these tests were reportedly surprising, confirming that the water was extremely pure. Furthermore, the tests reportedly showed that the quality of the well water was equal to or better than that of leading mineral water brands. Local residents say that some corporate mineral water companies also collected samples of this water and conducted tests, and that the results surprised them as well.

However, it is a matter of concern that Doodh Bowli, which is famous for its historical significance and distinctive water characteristics, is currently being neglected. Granite mining in the surrounding areas is damaging the fort structures and also posing a threat to this natural water source. Local residents, history enthusiasts, and nature lovers are requesting that Doodh Bowli be protected as a historical heritage asset and that Molangur Fort be developed into a tourist destination.

Villagers fought against the granting of permission for granite mining near Molangur Fort and succeeded in getting those orders cancelled. They are also requesting that the fort be recognised as a tourist destination, that Doodh Bowli is declared a protected site, and that funds be allocated for their development. In response to the villagers' appeals, the Central Government sent officials from the Archaeology and Tourism departments to the area. They inspected the fort and recognised it as a national heritage asset.

— Sri Bharat, Rajamahendravaram

#### Other Important Days of This Month:

- Birth anniversaries of Mahatma Gandhi and Lal Bahadur Shastri – October 2
- Mahalaya Amavasya – October 10
- Vijayadashami (Dussehra) – October 20
- Maharishi Valmiki Jayanti – October 25
- Birth anniversary of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel; National Unity Day – October 31