



KAMARAJ IAS ACADEMY
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National Youth Festival

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Why is in news? Prime Minister Narendra Modi to inaugurate National Youth Festival in Karnataka's Hubballi tomorrow

The 26th Edition of the National Youth Festival will be inaugurated by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on January 12, the day we celebrate the birthday of Swami Vivekananda.

The five days event to be held for five days till January 16th in Dharwad-Hubballi twin cities in Karnataka will bring 7500 youngsters from different parts of the country to spend time and exchange thoughts and give expression to their talents.

Theme of the festival this year is '**Viksit Yuva Viksit Bharat**'.

The Youth Summit will include two way discussions on following themes: i) Future of Work, Industry, Innovation and 21st Century Skills, ii) Climate change and disaster risk reduction, iii) Peace building and Reconciliation, iv) Shared future-youth in democracy and governance, v) Health and Well Being

This year the festival is being celebrated as **Green Youth Festival** where only re-usable cutlery, napkins etc are being used. All the mementos, medals, stationery are of reusable material. Water refilling stations are set up to reduce use of disposables.

Swami Vivekananda:

Swami Vivekananda (12 January 1863 – 4 July 1902), born **Narendranath Datta**, was an Indian Hindmonk, philosopher, author, religious teacher, and the chief disciple of the Indian mystic Ramakrishna.

He was a key figure in the **introduction of Vedanta and Yoga to the Western world**; and is credited with raising interfaith awareness, and bringing Hinduism to the status of a major world religion.

Vivekananda became a popular figure after the **1893 Parliament of Religions in Chicago**, where he began his famous speech with the words, "Sisters and brothers of America...", before introducing Hinduism to Americans.

He was so impactful at the Parliament that **an American newspaper described him as, "an orator by divine right and undoubtedly the greatest figure at the Parliament"**.

After great success at the Parliament, in the subsequent years, Vivekananda delivered hundreds of lectures across the United States, England and Europe, disseminating the core tenets of Hindphilosophy, and **founded the Vedanta Society of New York and the Vedanta Society of San Francisco** (now Vedanta Society of Northern California), both of which became the foundations for Vedanta Societies in the West.

Born into an aristocratic Bengali Kayastha family in Calcutta, Vivekananda was inclined from a young age towards religion and spirituality. He later found his **guru, Ramakrishna**, and became a monk.

After the death of Ramakrishna, Vivekananda extensively toured the Indian subcontinent, acquiring first-hand knowledge of the living conditions of Indian people in British India.

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In India, Vivekananda founded the **Ramakrishna Math**, which provides spiritual training for monastics and householder devotees, and the **Ramakrishna Mission**, to provide charity, social work and education.

Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose had called him the “**Maker of Modern India**”.

He spoke to people in India and urged them to **eliminate the caste system and promote science and industrialisation**.

He also inspired many people to **join the freedom struggle**, thereby contributing to the rise of the national independence movement.

He urged the youth of the country to fight colonial oppression, do social service and work for the people in unity.

His teachings opened up **interfaith debates and interfaith awareness**.

He also worked **against superstitions** and **advocated the upliftment of women’s position** in society.

He wanted the people to embrace the **spirit of equality and free-thinking**.

His **interpretation of Vedanta is called neo-Vedanta**.

According to him, the best form of worship was the **service of the people**.

Vivekananda was also a major force in contemporary Hindureform movements, and contributed to the concept of nationalism in colonial India.

He is regarded as a patriotic saint, and his **birthday in India** is celebrated as **National Youth Day**.