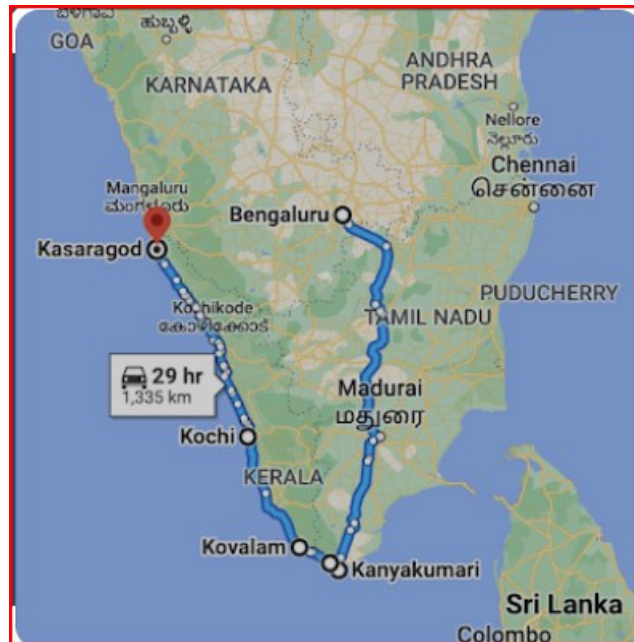


Ancient Beliefs; 3,000 Year-old Temple; History of 1892

June 2, 2024

June 2, 2024: As the voting for the final phase of the Festival of Democracy in India concluded at 7PM on June 1, 2024, at hundreds of TV channels in multiple languages, the spokespersons of **Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP)** and the **Indian National Congress (INC)**, the *two major national parties of India*, started presenting their expectations and started mounting attacks on the other for every shortcoming, that they perceived in the national well-being of the nation. They were joined by some **strong regional parties**, many of whom are ruling in some of the 29 States or Union Territories of India.



INDIA: from Kashmir to Kanyakumari

Waters from the Arabian Gulf, Indian Ocean and the Bay of Bengal mingle at Kanyakumari

Shri Pāda Pāra is a rock in the shape of Kumari's feet. This rock is the place, where Swami Vivekananda meditated on December 25-27, 1892 and got enlightenment to dedicate his life as an active Sanyasi rather than the usual practice of being passive.

Narendra Modi spent 45 hours of period of silence, after the campaigning was over for the last phase of campaign, in meditation at the Swami Vivekananda Rock Memorial from the evening of Thursday to the evening of June 1 at Dhyana Mandapam.



Narendra Modi at Kanya Kumari Temple



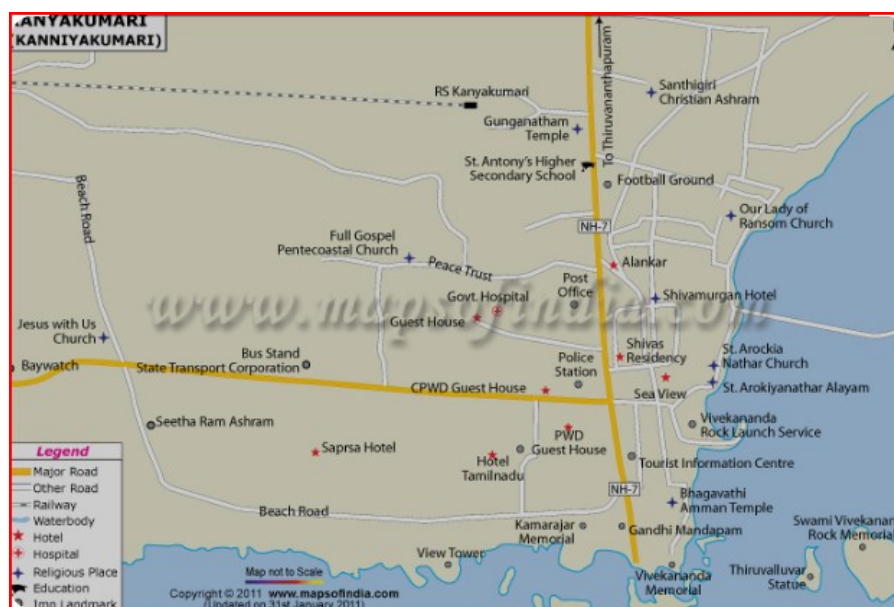
Narendra Modi at SWRM

December 25-27, 1892: Vivekanand, a Hindu monk, swam towards the larger of the two rocky islets, located about 500 m from the Kanyakumari's Vanathurai beach, the southern tip of mainland India. He was enthralled by looking at India from the rock, he prayed to **Bharat Mata** (embodiment of *Mother India* in his mind) all alone for three days and nights. In the prayer and meditation, the monk discovered the purpose of his life.

For a few years, the monk had wandered about the whole of the country and seen the debilitating poverty, in which most of the people lived. During the meditation, he realized that spiritual sermons could be given only after the people were able to have a life with reasonable facilities for life. A starving family could not be served with a discussion on higher philosophy of life by a monk.

During the 15th to the 17th centuries, India was known as **Sone ki Chidia** (*Golden Sparrow*) i. e. *the richest country of the world*. Colonization since 1757 had impoverished India and made a large number of its people illiterate by destroying its universities during the 12th and 13th centuries and its traditional schools and Colleges during the early part of the 19th century. He decided to work for rejuvenation of Indian economy, by using new technologies from all over the world.

In 1962, **Eknath Ranade**, a **Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh** (RSS) volunteer took up the job of building the Swami Vivekanand Rock Memorial on the larger rock. Later the State Government of Tamil Nadu built a Thiruvalluvar Statue on the other rock. Both the statutes look towards the mainland of India.



Swami Vivekanand Rock Memorial (VKRM) is a private Trust, with no control of the Government whatsoever.

The Thiruvalluvar Statute is a Government of Tamil Nadu project.

Thirukkural is an ancient book of wisdom, the **greatest classic of the Tamil language**, the **distillation of the essential genius of the Tamil Nadu**. Its author was **Valluvar**.

FEATURES of the THIRUVALLUVAR MANDAPAM: The combined **height of the statue and pedestal is 133 feet (41 m)**, denoting the **133 chapters of the Thirukkural**. This includes 95 feet (29 m) sculpture of Valluvar standing upon a **38 feet (12 m) pedestal that represents the 38 chapters of Virtue**, the **first of the three books of the Kural text**. The statue itself represents the **second and third books of the Kural text, namely, Wealth and Love**. The whole design signifies that **wealth and love be earned and enjoyed on the foundation of solid virtue**. The right hand of the statue with **three fingers pointing skywards signifies the three cantos of the Kural text**, namely, **Aram, Porul, and Inbam (Virtue, Wealth, and Love, respectively)**, combined. The head of the statue stands at a height of 61 m (200 ft) above the sea level.

The statue, with its slight bend around the waist is reminiscent of a dancing pose of the Hindu deities like Nataraja. The statue weighs 7,000 tonnes.

PERIOD of THIRUKKURAL and its AUTHOR: The Thirukkural has been dated variously between 300 BCE and the 5th century CE. The Tamil Nadu government has ratified **31 BCE as the year of Valluvar's birth**.

On 1 January 2000, the statue was unveiled by the then **Chief Minister M. Karunanidhi** to mark the millennium.

Indian sculptor **V. Ganapati Sthapati** sculpted this magnificent tribute to Valluvar. The foundation stone for the **Thiruvalluvar Statue** was laid by the then Prime Minister **Morarji Desai** on 15 April 1979. This momentous event took place in the presence of the then Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu, **M. G. Ramachandran**.

---- The BHAGAVATI KUMARI AMMAN TEMPLE in KANYAKUMARI ---
(Reference: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Devi_Kanya_Kumari)

For thousands of years, India has been described as the country between Kashmir and Kanya Kumari. **Kanya Kumari is a goddess**, whom every Indian knows, worships and adores, as **defining the idea of India**.

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION of INDIA: The Northernmost point of India's mainland is **Indira Col** (a village in the Ladakh region).

The Northernmost point of India's mainland is the village of **Minsar**.

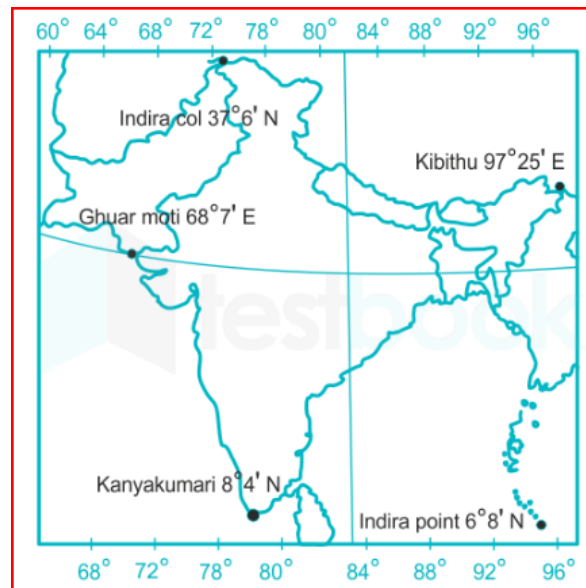
For centuries, the inhabitants of **Minsar**, although surrounded by Tibetan territories, paid their taxes to the kingdom of Ladakh. During in the 19th century, when Ladakh was incorporated into Maharaja Gulab Singh's State, Minsar de facto became a part of the Jammu & Kashmir State. In October 1947, when J&K acceded to India, Minsar became a part of India.

Minsar was on the way from Ladakh to Lake Mansarovar and Kailash. Pilgrims from India, used to get facilities for a night's stay. However, **Minsar is in China's illegal possession**, after China took over the autonomous region of Tibet).

The Southernmost Point of **India's mainland** is **Kanya Kumari**. It is *located in Tamil Nadu*. At **Kanya Kumari**, waters of the **Arabian Gulf**, the **Bay of Bengal** and the **Indian ocean** mingle.

The Easternmost Point of India is **Kibithu** (located in Arunachal Pradesh).

India measures 3,214 Km from north to south and 2,933 Km from east to west.



Southernmost part - **Indira point** (earlier called the "Pygmalion Point") in the **Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose** island (earlier called the "Ross Island in Nicobar Islands") The Andaman and Nicobar islands is a union territory of India.

The islands occupy a total land area of approximately 8,249 Km² with a population of 380,581 (2011 census).

The islands are sandwiched between the Bay of Bengal to the west and the Andaman Sea to the east with the northern-most point located 901 Km from the mouth of Hooghly river.

Indira Point is at the southern tip of Great Nicobar is the southernmost point of India.

The Union Territory consists of **836 islands** (of which **only 31 are inhabited**) grouped into two island groups: the *northern Andaman Islands* and the *southern Nicobar Islands*, separated by a 150 Km wide channel. **Port Blair is the capital and largest city of the territory**, located about 1,190 Km from Chennai and 1,255 Km from Kolkata in mainland India.

The territory is divided into three **districts**: 1. **North & Middle Andaman** (capital: **Mayabunder**), 2. **South Andaman** (capital: **Port Blair**), and 3. **Nicobar** (capital: **Car Nicobar**).

INTERNATIONAL BORDERS: The Union Territory of **Andaman** and **Nicobar** shares maritime borders with **Indonesia** located about 165 Km to the south, **Myanmar** located 280 Km to the North-east and **Thailand** located 650 Km to the south-east.

ABOUT BHAGAVATI KUMARI AMMAN: **Devi** (“Goddess”) **Kanya Kumari** is a manifestation of the Hindu goddess Mahadevi in the form of **Parvati** or **Lakshmi**. She is also worshipped as an incarnation of the goddess **Bhadrakali** by **Shaktas**, and is known by several names such as **Shrī Bāla Bhadra**, **Shrī Bāla**, **Kanya Devi** (*adolescent girl*) and **Devi Kumari**. **Devi Kanya Kumari** is the goddess of **virginity and penance**.

ABOUT Shaktas or Shakti-worshippers (“Worshippers of Goddess”): The Hindu monk **Swami Vivekananda**: "Do you know who is the real **Shakti-worshipper**? It is he who knows that God is the omnipresent force in the universe and sees in women the manifestation of that Force."

Shakta-universalist Sri Ramakrishna: All Hindu goddesses are manifestations of the same mother goddess. The 18th-century **Shakta bhakti** (“worship”) poems and songs were composed by two Bengal poets, **Bharatchandra Ray** and **Ramprasad**

Sen, and, the Tamil collection *Abhirami Anthadhi* was composed by **Abhirami Bhattar**.

Bharatchandra Ray Gunakor (b.1712–d.1760) was a **Sakta** poet and song composer in Bengali and Sanskrit languages. His most famous poetic work is **Annadamangal** or **Annapurnamangal**. **Maharaja Krishnachandra of Nadia** conferred him with the title *Gunakor*.

Rāmprasād Sen (b. 1723 or b. 1718 – d. 1775) was a **Shakta** poet and saint. His **bhakti** poems, known as **Ramprasadi**, are usually addressed to the Goddess **Kali** and written in **Bengali** language.

Abhirami Pattar, born as **Subramaniya Iyer**, was a Hindu saint from the State of Tamil Nadu of the early part of the 18th century. (**Abhirami Pattar** in Tamil means the “*Priest of Goddess Abhirami*”.) He is famed as the author of a collection of hymns called *Abhirami Anthadhi* which is widely regarded as **one of the foremost works of modern Tamil literature**.

LEGEND of DEVI KANYA KUMARI: **Banasura**, a demon by birth, was the ruler of the land of Kanya Kumari. He practiced **tapasya** (“*tough practice of worship*”) and obtained a boon from **God Brahma** that his death could only be caused by an adolescent girl. With this powerful boon, he became fearless and wreaked havoc on the entire world.

Goddess Parvati manifested herself in the southern tip of India as Kanya Kumari. As an adolescent girl, she had immense devotion towards **God Shiva**. Legends also say that it was on this rock that Goddess Kanyakumari prayed to Shiva, where Swami Vivekanand meditated on December 25-27, 1892.

Shiva decided to marry her. All arrangements were made for the wedding. Shiva started the journey from Shuchindram. The wedding muhurtam, or auspicious time, was during the Brahma muhurtam, which was pre-morning. The sage Narada, observing that only a virgin goddess would be able to slay Banasura, caused a rooster to crow, indicating that the auspicious time for the wedding had passed. Thus, he was able to interrupt Shiva's marriage to Kanya Kumari. Kumari waited for Shiva, and finally, she assumed that she had been snubbed. With unbearable insult, pain, grief, and anger, she destroyed everything she saw. She threw away all the food and broke her bangles. The food particles she scattered around are said to be the source of the colourful sands of Kanyakumari.

When she finally gained her composure, she undertook continuous penance. **Banasura** tried to lure and approach Kumari, without realising who she was. The

infuriated Kumari slaughtered **Banasura** at once. Moments before his death, **Banasura** realized that the one before him was **Adi Parashakti**, the **Goddess** herself. He prayed her to absolve him of his sins.

After killing **Banasura**, Kanya Kumari assumed her original form of **Parvati**, and reunited with her husband, **Shiva**.

However, **Kanya Kumari** maintained her divine presence in the **Bhagavati Kumari Amman Temple**.

108 **Abhimana Kshethram** TEMPLES and 108 **Divya Desam** TEMPLES: **Abhimana Kshethram** or **Abhimana Sthalam** are a list of 108 sacred **Vishnu** temples. These are mentioned in **Puranas** and 'Ithihasas such as **Ramayana** and **Mahabharata**'. These temples have **Sthala Puranas** ("books for each such temple") based on the Ithihasas and Puranas. Out of these 108 temples, **Rajagopalaswamy Temple at Mannargudi** is considered as the 1st out of the 108 **Abhimana Kshethras**, as **Thirumangai Alvar** is believed to have visited the temple and is believed to have built the tall **flag post** outside the temple.



Sri Vidhya Rajagopalaswamy (Krishna) temple (Estd: 10th century), Mannargudi, Tamil Nadu.

*Both the **Rajagopalaswamy** temple and the **Guruvayoor** temple are called **Dakshina Dvaraka**(means "Southern Dvaraka").*

A **Divya Desam** is one of the 108 **Vishnu and Lakshmi temples** that is mentioned in the **Naalayira Divya Prabandham** (the "authentic Compilation of Poems" by the **Alvars** (the "poet-saints of the Sri Vaishnava tradition".)

Of the 108 temples, 105 are in India, one is in Nepal, and the last two are believed to be outside the earth, in **Tirupparkatal** or the **Kshira Sagara** and **Vaikuntham** or the **Heaven**.

The **Kshira Sagara** ("Ocean of Milk") is the place where **God Vishnu**, accompanied by his consort, **Lakshmi**, reclines over his serpent-mount **Shesha**.