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Title: Need to celebrate the birthday of Sri Basaveshwara, a great saint of Karnataka.

SHRI SHIVARAMA GOUDA (KOPPAL): I would like to draw the attention of the Union government towards a long pending demand of the people of Karnataka to celebrate the birth day of Sri Basaveshwara on the lines of Great Personalities of the country like Lord Buddha, Swami Vivekananda etc.,

In the history of Karnataka, Basavanna's is a very great name. Basavanna (or Basaveshwara) was born in 1134. He was a Philosopher, Statesman and a social reformer. He was the founder of Lingayatism that is Lingayat Dharma. A true visionary with ideas ahead of his time. He was the Prime Minister of the Southern Kalachuri empire in South India. He was a man of letters by taste, a humanist by sympathy, and a social reformer by conviction. Basavanna spread social awareness through his poetry known as Vachanaas. His teachings and preachings are universal and go beyond all boundaries of belief systems. He was a great humanitarian and preached a new way of life wherein the divine experience being the center of life regardless of gender, belief, tradition, religion, caste or social status.

Basavanna, like Gautama Buddha, taught people how to live happily in a rational social order later came to be known as Sharana movement. Basava fought against the inhuman practice of caste system, which discriminated people based on their birth.

The Anubhava Mantapa established by Basava laid down the foundation of social democracy. Basava believed that man becomes great not by his birth but by his conduct in the society. He taught the dignity of manual labour by insisting on work as worship.

Father of our nation Mahatma Gandhi had said during Belgaum session of the Indian National Congress in 1924 - "It has not been possible for me to practise all the precepts of Basaveshwara which he taught 800 years ago and which he also practiced... Eradication of untouchability and dignity of labour were among his core precepts. One does not find even shades of casteism in him. Had he lived during our times, he would have been a saint worthy of worship."

Hence, I urge upon the Union Government to take all necessary steps to celebrate the birth day of Sri Basaveshwara on the lines of great personalities (saints) of the country like Gautama Buddha, Swami Vivekananda etc.,