



Glory of Bharath » Bharath Darshan

Dear Sai brothers and sisters,

A very important aspect of celebrating Diwali is the worship of Goddess Lakshmi. Let us pay our obeisance to Goddess Mahalakshmi or Ambabai at Kolhapur.

Goddess Mahalakshmi



Goddess Mahalakshmi

The puranas, have listed 108 sites where Shakti (the goddess of power) is manifested. Amongst these, the Karveer area (the area where the present town of Kolhapur is located), is of special significance. This is one of the six abodes of Shakti, where one can achieve both fulfillment of desires as well as salvation from them. Shri Mahalakshmi is the consort of Shri Vishnu and it is said that they both reside in the Karveer area.

The Karavira Mahatmya states that Vishnu resides in the form of Mahalakshmi at Kolhapur. Legend has it that Kolhasura, a demon that tormented the Gods and other beings, was destroyed by Mahalakshmi here at Karavira, and that the spot of his death became a thirtha and that she took abode here in a shrine which constitutes the temple today.

History says that the king Karnadev from Chalukya lineage established this temple during 664 B.C. Development of this temple continued during many kingdoms for next two centuries. The maximum construction of this temple is been built by Shilahar King during 12th century.

The image of Mahalakshmi carved in black stone is 3 feet in height. The Shri yantra is carved on one of the walls in the temple. A stone lion, the vahana of the goddess, stands behind the statue. The crown contains an image of the Sheshnag - the serpent of Vishnu. In Her four hands, the deity of Mahalakshmi holds objects of symbolic value. The lower right hand holds a mhalunga (a citrus fruit), in the upper right, a large mace (kaumodaki) with its head touching the ground, in the upper left a shield (khetaka), and in the lower left, a bowl (panpatra). Unlike most Hindu sacred images, which face north or east, the image of this deity looks west (Pashchim).

It is not surprising that even the rays of a setting sun pay homage to Goddess Mahalakshmi as the life of human being revolves around illumination and prosperity. But it is the wonder of wise architects who built the temple of Mahalakshmi at kolhapur that the rays of the setting Sun, bow at the feet of the Goddess through a window, for a while before vanishing. This special event is celebrated by thousands of people as '**KiranUtsav**'.



Goddess Ambabai

We shall resume our sacred and wonderful sojourn next month...Sairam

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