



KAMARAJ IAS ACADEMY
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Losar Festival

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Why is in news? Ladakh celebrates Losar Festival to mark Ladakhi New Year

Ladakh is celebrating Losar Festival today, December 24, to mark the Ladakhi New Year. Ladakhi New Year is the major socio-religious festival of Ladakh celebrated in winter.

The lighting of prayer lamps, illumination of buildings, houses, religious places like monasteries, stupas, and other business establishments making appear that the entire Ladakh is lit in lights are part of celebrations of the Losar Festival.

The new year is welcomed with dough Models of Ibex Sun and Moon and flour-painted lucky signs on the walls of the kitchen. The third day of the new year is celebrated with the sighting of first moon of the year with a prayer for bumper crops in the coming year.

It marking the **beginning of the Tibetan new year**, Losar is an important festival of Ladakh.

The celebrations of Losar in Ladakh continue for 15 long days and this Buddhist festival falls about the time of the winter solstice **any time between 8th and 30th December**.

On this one of the top festivals in Ladakh, the scale of the celebration is large with a number of folk dance and music performances and gathering of hundreds of people at sacred places. Special ceremonies are also held in different monasteries of Ladakh on Losar and the ambiance is quite delightful.

Offerings are made to Buddhist gods and goddesses both at home and at the monasteries in Losar. A procession called **Metho** on the eve of Losar is carried out through the streets, markets, and lanes where people chant sacred slogans and carry flaming torches believing that the chant and the fire will ward off all the evil spirits.

Highlights of Losar in Ladakh:

Folk dance & music performances

Metho or evening procession

Special prayers in the monasteries

Gifts exchange

A variety of special dishes

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