



KAMARAJ IAS ACADEMY
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After a gap of two years, Shirui Lily festival begins on thorny note in Manipur

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Context

- A five-day festival named after an **endemic seasonal flower** has begun on a thorny note in conflict-scarred Manipur.
- Shirui Lily Festival is an **annual five-day State festival** celebrated in Ukhrul district, Manipur.
- The festival seeks to **spread awareness about the endangered Shirui Lily and promote the district of Ukhrul as a tourist destination** in Manipur.
- It also demonstrates age-old traditions and culture of the inhabitants of district of Ukhrul.

Shirui Lily

- Shirui Lily or *Lilium mackliniae* is the **State Flower of Manipur**.
- It is **found only in the upper ranges of Shirui Hills (endemic)** in Ukhrul district of Manipur.
- The Shirui Lily has also been awarded at Royal Horticultural Society's Flower Show in London in 1948.
- First held in 2017, it is **one of two major tourism festivals** organised by the state government. While it is named after the Shirui Lily, or the *Lilium mackliniae*, recognised as the state flower of Manipur, the **other major festival is named after the Sangai, or the Manipur brow-antlered deer, recognised as its state animal**.
- The Shirui Lily festival coincides with the blooming season of this rare flower. Held in Manipur's Ukhrul district, which is home to the **Tangkhul Naga** community
- While locals had long been familiar with the plant — calling it the '**Kashsong Timrawon**' after Timrawon, the daughter of mythical goddess Philava who resides and protects the hills of Shirui — in 1946, botanist Frank Kingdon-Ward identified it and gave it its scientific name. The name, ***Lilium mackliniae*, draws from his wife Jean Macklin's name**.