



KAMARAJ IAS ACADEMY
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Don tilts at windmills in Kerala, propped up by Kalari and Theyyam

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Kalaripayattu

- Kalaripayattu is a **martial art based on the ancient knowledge of the human body**.
- It **originated in Kerala during 3rd century BC to the 2nd century AD**. It is now practised in Kerala and in some parts of Tamil Nadu.
- The place where this martial art is practised is called a 'Kalari'. It is a Malayalam word that signifies a kind of gymnasium. Kalari literally means '**threshing floor**' or '**battlefield**'. The word Kalari first appears in the **Tamil Sangam literature** to describe both a battlefield and combat arena.
- It is considered to be **one of the oldest fighting systems in existence**.
- It is also considered as the **father of modern Kung - Fu**.



Theyyam

- Theyyam, also referred to as **Kaliyattom**, is a traditional **folk-dance** ritual that is practiced in **northern Kerala and certain parts of Karnataka**.
- A similar practice known as **Bhuta Kola** is followed in the **Tulunadu region of neighbouring Karnataka**.

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- Over time, it has evolved into a socio-religious ceremony with its roots in the worship of divinities and heroes.
- Villages were obligated to organize Theyyam as an act of **appeasement towards gods, goddesses, and the spirits** of departed heroes. As a result, it was also known as **Thirayattom**, signifying the **dance of the village**.
- Notably, a significant number of Theyyam deities originated from individuals belonging to the **lower castes of Kerala's caste system**.
- Theyyam is performed by individuals from castes and tribes such as Pulayar, Vannan, Malayan, Velan, and Kalanaadi.



