



KAMARAJ IAS ACADEMY
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Ker Puja

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Why is in news? PM greets citizens of Tripura on occasion of Ker Puja

Ker Puja is a festival in the **state of Tripura**.

Ker, meaning austerity, is an **annual festival** of Tripura **held after 2 weeks of Kharchi Puja**.

In the **Kokborok, a local tribal language**, Ker means boundary or specific area.

It is held in the **honour of the guardian deity of Vastu, Ker Devata**.

The puja was initiated by the Tripura raja at royal Ujjayanta palace of Tripura.

During Ker a particular area is demarcated and bounded by a large piece of green bamboo, which is a symbolic representation of Ker.

The puja generally takes place in morning preferably from 8 A.M to 10 A.M.

For 2.5 days during the puja, all entry points to the capital city are closed to disallow entry and exit.

All the elderly, weak or expectant mothers are shifted to nearby villages.

The puja temporarily restricts wearing shoes, lighting a fire in particular for participants; and also restricts all kinds of amusement, recreation and ceremonies in general.

During Ker Puja offerings, **sacrifices are made to please gods** for the welfare of the villages so that they can save them from calamities, epidemics and external aggression.

Kharchi Puja:

The word Kharchi is derived from two Tripuri words 'Khar' or Kharta meaning Sin, 'chi' or si meaning cleaning. Final meaning is **cleaning of the sins of the people or the kingdom**.

Kharchi puja is the **worship of the dynasty deity of Tripuri people**, the fourteen gods. It is performed in the month of July-August on the eight day of the new moon.

The **fourteen gods are worshipped** by the royal priest **Chantai**.

They are all Tripuri by birth, and the post is a hereditary one i.e only members of chantai family descendants are allowed to take the post of Chantai.

This is the only puja exclusively performed by the pujari or the priests belonging to Tripuri people.

The Khachi puja is performed after 15 days of Ama pechi or Ambu bachi.

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According to Tripuri legends **Ama Pechi is menstruation of mother goddess or earth mother**. So the soil is not ploughed or dug anywhere on this day.

Among Tripuri the menstruation of a woman is considered as unholy, which is why in this period all the auspicious functions performed by women are prohibited.

After the menstruation of mother earth during Ama pechi, the earth is considered to become unholy.

The kharchi puja is performed to wash out the sins, to clean up the post menstrual unclean mother earth.

On the day of puja, the fourteen deities are carried by members of chantai, taken to river Saidra, it is bathed in the holy water and brought back to temple.