

Ramman Festival

Prelims: Current events of national and international importance | History

Why in News?

President Droupadi Murmu attended a special session of the Uttarakhand Assembly recently, where she presented with a Ramman mask and a book on the centuries-old festival celebrated in the state's Garhwal region.

- **Location** - Ramman is a festival celebrated ***annually*** in April during Baisakhi at the twin villages of Saloor-Dungra in Uttarakhand's Chamoli.
- It is a unique blend of ritual, theatre, music, and dance, deeply rooted in the local traditions of the **Garhwal Himalayas**.
- **Community** - It is dedicated to the custodial god, ***Bhumiya Devta***, a local divinity whose temple houses most of the festivities.
- **Core elements** - The festival involves theatrical performances of the Ramayana and local legends, in which people sing songs and wear masks while dancing.
- There are 18 different types of ***masks made of Bhojpatra***, Himalayan birch, that performers wear during the event, represent different deities and mythological figures.
- **Rituals and Performances** - Ramman begins with an invocation to the Hindu god Ganesha, followed by the dance of the Sun God, an enactment of the myth of the birth of Brahma and Ganesha.
- The other dances include the dance of the Bur Deva along with Krishna and Radhika.
- After these initial performances, the focus now shifts to the enactment of the local Ramkatha (tale of Lord Ram). Episodes from Ram's life are sung to a total of 324 beats and steps.
- **Associated Traditional instruments** - *dhol*, *damau*, and *bheri* accompany the performances.
- **UNESCO Recognition** - In **2009**, Ramman was inscribed in the list of UNESCO's Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity.
- According to UNESCO, the festival is a multiform cultural event that

reflects the environmental, spiritual, and cultural concepts of the community.

Reference

[The Indian Express | Ramman Festival](#)

