

Ambubachi Mela 2022

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Context - The Ambubachi Mela in Assam was organized this year after a gap of two-years owing to the Covid-19 Pandemic.

The fair is organized from 21st to 25th June, every year.

About the Ambubachi Mela

- The festival marks the annual menstruation of the presiding Goddess in the Kamakhya Temple, Guwahati, Assam. The temple's sanctum sanctorum houses the yoni (female genital) symbolized by a rock.
- Kamakhya is one of 51 shakti peethas or holy sites for the followers of the Shakti cult, each representing a body part of the Sati, Lord Shiva's companion.
- The temple is situated on the Nilachal Hills, whose northern face slopes down to the Brahmaputra river.
- According to the legends, it was built by the demon king Narakasura but records are available only from 1565 when Koch king Naranarayana rebuilt the temple.

Significance

- The ritualistic fair celebrates the Goddess' period due to which the taboo associated

with menstruation is less in Assam compared to other parts of India.

- The attainment of womanhood of girls in Assam is celebrated with a ritual called Tuloni Biya, meaning small wedding.
- The fair is also an occasion to promote menstrual hygiene among the visitors through the use of sanitary pads.
- Assam records a footfall of at least 5 lakh devotees during the fair mainly from West Bengal, Bihar, Uttar Pradesh and Jharkhand. Foreigners also visit which boost the state tourism and the revenues associated.