



## Ambubachi Mela Cancelled

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### Why in News

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In the wake of the **Covid-19** pandemic, the **annual Ambubachi Mela** in **Assam** will not be organised this year.

The fair is organised from **21<sup>st</sup> to 25<sup>th</sup> June, every year.**

### Key Points

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- The festival marks the **annual menstruation of the presiding Goddess** in the **Kamakhya Temple, Guwahati, Assam.**  
The temple's sanctum sanctorum houses the **yonis (female genital)** symbolised 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.



## Importance

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- **Cultural:** The ritualistic fair celebrates the Goddess' period due to which **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***.
- **Social:** The fair is also an occasion to **promote menstrual hygiene** among the visitors **through the use of sanitary pads**.
- **Financial:** 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.

**Source: TH**