



# Theyyam

## Why in News?

Recently, **Kerala Tourism department** have started live streaming of an annual **temple festival called Theyyam performances**, to promote cultural tourism.



## What is Theyyam?

- Theyyam is a **popular ritual form of dance worship in Kerala and Karnataka, India.**
- It consisted of **thousand-year-old traditions, rituals and customs.**
- The people consider Theyyam itself as a **channel to a god and they thus seek blessings from Theyyam.**
- Each Theyyam is a **man or a woman** who attained divine status by performing heroic deeds or by leading a virtuous life
- Most Theyyams are believed to be the **incarnations of Shiva or Shakti** (the consort of Shiva). Or they have strong associations with these principal deities of Hinduism.
- There are **over 400 theyyams**. Some of these are very important.

## What are the major types of Theyyam?

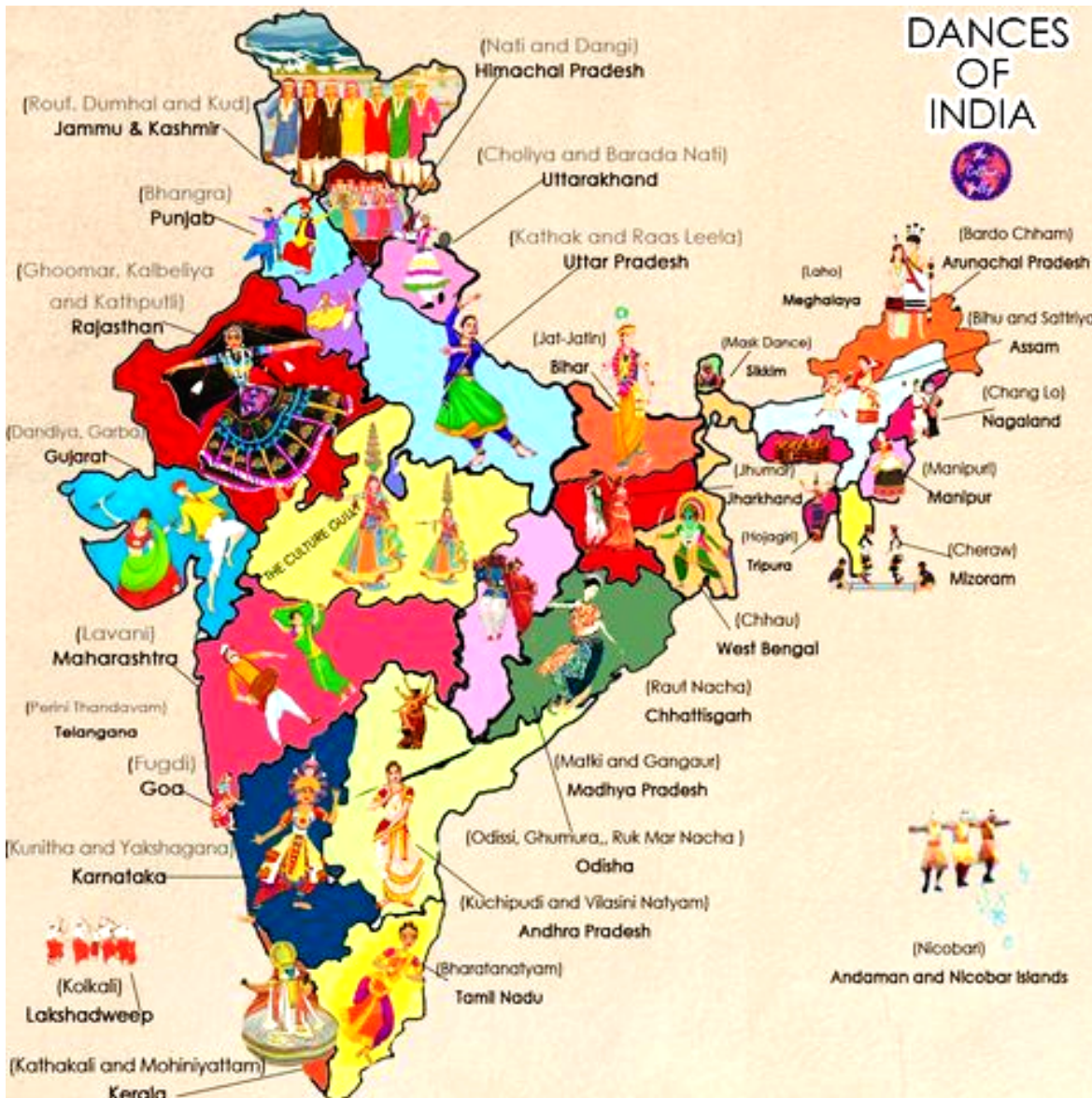
- **Vishnumoorthi:**
  - There are only two Vaishnava Theyyams - **Daivatar and Vishnumoorthi.**
  - These Theyyams are **believed to be the incarnations of Lord Vishnu.**
  - This Theyyam narrates the story of **Palanthai Kannan** who was a great devotee of Lord Vishnu.
- **Gulikan**

- Gulikan is believed to be an **incarnation of Yama**, the Hindu god of death and justice.
- According to Indian mythology, **Gulikan was one of the most important warriors of Lord Shiva.**

▪ **Kuttichathan:**

- It is the theyyam of Bhrahmin caste.
- Kuttichathan theyyam is considered to have **originated for Lord Shiva in Vishnu Maaya.**

**Major Dances in India**



PYQ

Q. Consider the following pairs: (2014)

1. Garba : Gujarat
2. Mohiniattam : Odisha
3. Yakshagana : Karnataka

Which of the pairs given above is/are correctly matched?

- (a) 1 only
- (b) 2 and 3 only
- (c) 1 and 3 only
- (d) 1, 2 and 3

Ans: (c)

**Source: TH**

PDF Refernece URL: <https://www.drishtias.com/printpdf/theyyam>

