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## The Tripuri Festivals: A Special Study on Buisu Ter and Mamita Ter

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### ABSTRACT

The festivals of the Tripuri community, particularly Buisu Ter and Mamita Ter, reflect a deep connection to nature and spirituality. Buisu, meaning "year," marks the transition between the old and new year, linked to agricultural practices, especially jhum cultivation. Celebrated over two days, it begins with Hari Buisu (for animals) and ends with Maha Buisu (Grand Buisu), followed by the Gorja festivals. Mamita Ter, held in October-November, celebrates the end of the harvest season, focusing on thanksgiving and community joy. The Mamita Dance, honoring deities of good harvests, is central to the festivities. Historically coinciding with Durga Puja, it involves sacrifices and ancestral honors, emphasizing cultural preservation. This study employs ethnographic and historical methods, including fieldwork, interviews, and archival research, to explore the cultural, historical, and social significance of these festivals. Findings highlight how Buisu and Mamita Ter preserve Tripuri identity, promote community cohesion, and maintain intergenerational continuity. The research also addresses the challenges posed by modernization and globalization, which threaten these traditions, and aims to contribute to the preservation of

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## **Introduction**

Tripura was one of the princely states in ancient India. It is the smallest of the seven sisters of Northeast India, with an area of only 10,477 square kilometres. It is a beautiful land inhabited by fascinating people like the Tripurians and a diverse array of ethnic communities that have coexisted peacefully for centuries. Nineteen distinct tribal clans make up Tripura's unique cultural legacy. Reang, Jamatia, Noatia, Uchai, Chakma, Mog, Lushai, Kuki, Halam, Munda, Kaur, Orang, Santal, Bhil, Bhutia, Chaimal, Garo, Khasia, and Lepcha are some of these communities. Every village has a distinct culture, including dancing styles that are well-known throughout the nation. The Tripuri community, one of the indigenous ethnic groups of Tripura, celebrates various traditional festivals that reflect their rich cultural heritage, agricultural lifestyle, and spiritual beliefs. Among these, Buisu Ter and Mamita Ter hold significant importance. These festivals mark seasonal transitions and are deeply connected to the socio-cultural and religious practices of the Tripuri people. Buisu Ter is celebrated as the Tripuri New Year, similar to Bihu in Assam or Pohela Boishakh in Bengal. It is a Harvest festival that signifies the beginning of a new agricultural cycle, where prayers and offerings are made for Prosperity and well-being. On the other hand, Mamita Ter is a festival dedicated to the worship of ancestors and Deities, reflecting the Tripuri people's deep reverence for their lineage and spiritual guardians. This study aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of these festivals, focusing on their historical background, religious significance, rituals, and contemporary relevance. By examining these celebrations, the research sheds light on how such cultural practices contribute to the identity and unity of the Tripuri community while also adapting to changing times. Through qualitative research, including interviews, literature reviews, and field observations, this paper seeks to document and analyze the essence of Buisu Ter and Mamita Ter. The findings will contribute to the broader discourse on indigenous cultural preservation and the role of festivals in maintaining social harmony.

## **Objective :**

1. To assess on the historical background and traditional customs associated with Buisu Ter and Mamita Ter.



2. To analyze and focus on the cultural and religious significance of these festivals in Tripuri society.
3. To examine the impact of modernization on the celebration of these festivals.
4. To explore the role of these festivals in strengthening community identity and social cohesion.
5. To suggest measures for the preservation and promotion of these festivals among future generations.

This research aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of Buisu Ter and Mamita Ter, contributing to the Broader discourse on indigenous festivals and cultural preservations.

### **Research methodology :**

This study adopts a qualitative ethnographic approach to explore the cultural significance, rituals, and community involvement in Buisu Ter and Mamita Ter among the Tripuri people. In Primary Data Collection including Field Study , Participant Observation, interviews Attending the festivals in Tripura to document rituals, music, dance, and other traditions Group Discussion etc. In Secondary Data Collection including reviewing books, academic papers, and government records on Tripuri traditions. Analyzing online sources, documentaries, and newspaper reports on Buisu Ter and Mamita Ter.

### **Buisu festival :**

The term "Buisu" comes from the root word bisi, which means year in Tripuri. In literal terms, buisu means "New Year's Eve." It marks the intersection of the previous year's end and the start of the current one. It simply means celebrating the new year. In the past, the Tripuri people engaged in jhum or huk farming, which provided nearly everything needed for the home—that is, practically all of humanity's needs—from huk and the jungle. They would subsequently, of course, become dependent on huk, which was formerly their entire existence. Tripuri would therefore need to keep track of the start and end dates of the year because any modifications to the schedule for any aspect of Jhum activity would lead to negative outcomes and, in the end, a catastrophic effect on the family. One would obviously not discover a decent patch of forest if, for instance, he did not know when to search the jungle for jhum field in time, since others would take all the best and most suitable jungle. In the same way, if someone doesn't know when to cut the chosen jungle for jhum, he won't be able to finish in time, and the chopped jungle won't dry out for burning to create a meadow. For the same reason, a man cannot clean the cut jungle in time for seeding if he is unsure of when to fire it. and all other Jhum agricultural products,



and in the end, he will be left penniless and forced to beg. Because of this, they had to know precisely when the New Year had arrived, and they would all rejoice with fanfare and display the Buisu, which marks the start of the New Year. It occurs on the final day of Chaitra in the Indian holy calendar, which is April 13 in the Gregorian calendar and April 14 in leap years. Hari Buisu, or Buisu for animals, is the first day of the two-day Buisu festival, while Maha Buisu, or Grand Buisu, is the second day. The following day, which is on New Year's Day, the Goria festivals began. In recent year 22nd State Level Buisu Festival 2024 is celebrated on 11th – 12th April 2024 at Manu Bankul Higher Secondary School Ground, Sabroom, South District, Tripura.

### **Ritual and traditions :**

The festival begins with ritualistic prayers to the family deities and ancestors. Traditional games and sports, such as organized. The preparation of Mui Borok (traditional Tripuri cuisine), which includes bamboo shoot dishes, pork, and rice-based sweet. Cultural performances, including Garia dance and music, take center stage. People visit each other's homes, exchanging greetings and seeking blessings for the New Year.

### **Social and cultural impacts :**

Reinforces Tripuri identity by preserving folk traditions and indigenous customs. Encourages intergenerational learning, as elders pass down rituals and folk knowledge to the younger generation. Boosts community bonding as people come together to celebrate.

### **Mamita festival :**

Usually taking place in October and November, the Mamita Festival signifies the conclusion of the harvest season. The community gathers to celebrate the abundance of their harvest during this season of joy and gratitude. In order to thank the gods Mailuma and Khuluma as well as followers of Lord Sri Jamdu and Sri Jadu, who are said to bless the crops and guarantee a bountiful harvest, the Mamita Dance is performed. Harvesting took place in October and November in the past, when the Tripuri people were mostly engaged in huk agriculture. The outcome of the month-long labor, which included tons of paddy, cotton, vegetables, and other oil seeds, made everyone pleased. Their heart and face used to be full of smiles. brimming with ambitions, confidence, and hopes. After returning from their daily jobs, young men and women would get together this time in the evening, carry a kham, sarinda, and sumui, and then



proceed from home to home across the hamlet. They would dance in a rhythmic step until midnight while singing loudly. In exchange for a token present, they would make the family's head leave his house. This dance group used to perform for ten to fifteen minutes in a house during the Mamita festivities. It's called the Mamita dance for that reason. During Osa Mutai or Durga Puja, the Mamita event takes place. The monarch would honor Durga Puja, He would sacrifice buffalo, yaks, and other animals there. Common people used to participate in Mamita Festivals during Durga Puja, where they would sacrifice pigeons, ducks, and cocks. This event, which lasted for seven days, was formerly the most delightful time of year. However, because most people's careers have changed, the Tripuris are avoiding one of the most significant and fun celebrations.

### **Rituals and traditions :**

The festival involves special pujas (rituals) to honor the gods of agriculture. Farmers prepare traditional foods, including rice beer (Chuwak) and various rice-based delicacies. Folk music and dance, especially Hojagiri, Mamita are performed by young girls, symbolizing joy and prosperity. Community feasting strengthens social ties, where people share their harvested produce.

### **Social and cultural impacts :**

Strengthens agricultural traditions by reinforcing the importance of farming in Tripuri society.

Promotes unity among the Tripuri people, as the entire community participates in celebrations .Provides an opportunity for younger generations to learn about their cultural heritage.

### **Conclusion :**

The Mamita Festival and Buisu Festival are not merely celebrations but serve as vital instruments for preserving the Tripuri cultural identity. Mamita reflects the agrarian roots of the Tripuri people, emphasizing gratitude for nature's bounty, while Buisu marks a new beginning, strengthening social unity and tradition. These festivals reinforce the cultural resilience of the Tripuri people, ensuring that their customs and rituals continue to thrive despite modernization. As globalization and urbanization continue to influence indigenous communities, festivals like Mamita and Buisu play a crucial role in preserving ethnic heritage and communal harmony. Documenting and promoting these festivals will help sustain the rich cultural legacy of the Tripuri people for future generations.

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