



## Kharchi Puja

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Recently, **Kharchi Puja**, which is observed annually on the **Shukla Ashtami day** of the lunar month of **Ashadha**, was celebrated.

- During the Puja day, the 14 gods are ceremonially taken by the royal priests known as "**Chantai**" to the river "**Saidra**" for bathing in its holy waters, after which they are reverently returned to the temple.
  - Throughout the festival, the Tripuri people not only venerate their **14 deities** but also pay homage to the earth.
  - A significant ritual of the celebration involves the construction of the **Chaturdasha Mandapa**, a structure symbolising the royal palace of the Tripuri kings.
  - **Kharchi Puja**, also known as the '**Festival of 14 Gods**,' this traditional event centers around the worship of **Chaturdasa Devata**, housed in the ancient **Ujjayanta Palace**, the ancestral deity of the Tripuri people.
- **History:**
  - Although the festival has its roots in tribal customs, it is now celebrated by both **tribal and nontribal** communities in Tripura.
  - According to belief, **Tripura Sundari**, the Mother Goddess and **guardian deity of Tripura**, menstruates during June also called as **Ambubachi**. There is a widespread belief that the Earth becomes impure during her menstruation.
  - Therefore, **Kharchi Puja** is performed to ceremonially cleanse the Earth once her menstruation ends, purifying the land and absolving its people of sin.

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