

# Karakattam dance

February 28, 2022

**In news**— Recently, the Kerala Nattukala Kshema Sabha (KNKS), an outfit that works for the promotion of local artforms in the state, has demanded that Karakattam dance be recognised as the agricultural art form of Kerala.

## About the dance-

- **Karakattam, also known as Kumbakkali** in certain parts, is a **folk art performed in Tamil Nadu at festivals, conferences, roadshows and primarily at Mariamman (rain goddess) festivals.**
- This dance is **derived from Bharatham and a mixture of multiple Tamil dance forms** like *Bharatnatyam* postures and *mudras*.
- As per, KNKS, **Karakattam and agriculture have a link** because, **in Kerala after Makarakoythu (harvest season), the Mariamman pooja** is in the Medam month and Mariamman is considered as the goddess of rain.
- Although it has links with the rain goddess, the form is about more than just worship—it **is also about reversing the caste dominance.**
- Its performances are characterized by a lot of swaying movements and joyous banter.
- The dance accompanies songs like folk Carnatic (*Amrithavarshini*).
- The performers balance a pot on their head. Traditionally, this dance is categorized into two types:
  - **Aatta Karakam** symbolizes joy and happiness. It is mainly performed as entertainment.
  - **Sakthi Karakam** is performed only in temples as a spiritual offering.
- It involves three tiers of flower arrangements of different colours sitting on top of a container filled to the brim with either water, rice, or soil.

- Other highlights include blowing fire, inserting needles into eyes, and keeping balance while holding a bottle parallel to the ground on the performer's back.