

# Kheer Bhawani mela

June 8, 2022

**In news**— Kashmiri Hindus, locally known as Pandits, recently celebrated the Zyestha Ashtami at the Mata Kheerbhawani temple at Tulmulla in central Kashmir's Ganderbal.

## **About Kheer Bhawani mela-**

- Every year, a mela or festival known as Mela Kheerbhawani is held in Kashmir.
- It is the largest gathering of Hindus in Kashmir after the annual Amarnath Yatra.
- Kheer Bhawani is considered to be the Presiding Deity of most of the Kashmiri Brahmins.
- **Kheer Bhawani melas are organised at five shrines across Kashmir** – Ragnya Bhagwati in Ganderbal, Manzgam in Kulgam, Devsar in Kulgam, Logripora in Anantnag and Tikkar in Kupwara.
- Among these temples, the **Tulmulla temple, nestled in the shade of mammoth Chinar trees**, witnesses massive gatherings of Pandits from Kashmir and different parts of the country.
- **The annual mela at the revered temple, also known as the Ragnya Devi temple**, is among the **most significant** religious programmes for the Kashmiri Pandit community.
- **Mata Kheerbhawani temple gets its name from kheer, or milk and rice pudding**, that pilgrims pour into the spring inside the temple complex as an offering to the goddess.
- **Legend has it that the water of the temple's spring changes colour from white to red and black.**
- **The colour of the water is said to predict the impending future.**
- If it changes to black, it is seen as inauspicious or an impending disaster.
- Kashmiri Pandits say that the water had turned black before they were forced to flee Kashmir during the

militancy of 1990.