

# Shumang Leela theatre form

July 7, 2021

**In news-** The Manipur government has planned to use the popular 'Shumang Leela' form of theatre to reach out to people and spread awareness against Covid-19. Plans are underway to stage a **play titled 'Keidoubagi Kidoino' (There is no need to fear)** directed by Sougrakpam Hemanta.

## **About Shumang Leela form-**

- It is also called Shumang Kumhei.
- It is a traditional form of theatre in **Manipur**.
- 'Shumang' means courtyard and 'Leela' means play.
- The theatre is arranged in the **form of open air from four sides**.
- All the characters, including women, are **played by male actors**.
- It was officially **recorded for the first time** in the state with the Harischandra leela **in 1918**.
- However, the form is much older and is believed to have existed during the reign of **King Chandrakriti (1851-1886)**.
- In 2017, **Sougrakpam Hemanta** was conferred the **Sangeet Natak Akademi Award** in recognition of his contribution in Shumang Leela, thus became the first person to receive the award for this art form.
- The theatre form remains a **popular medium to spread awareness on social issues**.