

The Ramcharitmanas

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In news– Recently a state minister of Bihar has made a controversial statement against the Ramcharitmanas of Tulsidas.

About the Ramcharitmanas-

- The word Ramcharitmanas literally means “Lake of the deeds of Rama”.
- The poem was **written in the 16th century in the Awadhi dialect** that is mainly spoken in the areas that are today’s Lucknow, Prayagraj, and Ayodhya districts.
- It is **divided into seven chapters (Kand) that tell the story of Lord Ram** from birth to his becoming King of Ayodhya.
- The Ramcharitmanas is **based on the Ramayana, sage Valmiki’s great epic.**
- It is the holiest book of the Indo-Gangetic region, and among the world’s most read holy books – by one estimate.
- Across the Hindi heartland, a reference to “Ramayan” often actually means Ramcharitmanas.

Goswami Tulsidas-

- Tulsidas, a Brahmin whose original name was Ram Bola Dubey, is believed to have been born in Rajapur by the Yamuna in today’s Banda district.
- He composed the Ramcharitmanas on the bank of the Ganga in Varanasi – he is said to have begun writing on Ram Navami day in 1574, and completed the poem over the next few years.
- In the seventh shloka of the first chapter (Baal Kand), Tulsidas declares, “Swantah sukhay Tulsi Raghunathgatha...” – that is, he has written the “story of Raghunath (Lord Ram) for his own happiness”.
- **He lived in the time of Emperor Akbar**, and some believe

that he **was in touch with Abdurrahim Khan-e-Khanan, the son of Akbar's commander Bairam Khan**, and they possibly exchanged some poetic communication as well.

- He made the story of Lord Ram popular among the masses because he wrote in the regional dialect that most people understood. This earned him the ire of Sanskrit scholars of the time.
- Tulsidas was always admired as a reincarnation of the Valmiki (original composer of the Ramayana in Sanskrit and Hanuman Chalisa).

Other Major Works of Tulasidas-

Apart from the Ramcharitmanas, there are the five major works of the Tulsidas which are:

- **Dohavali:** It has a collection of miscellaneous Doha and Sortha in Braja and Awadhi. Out of all-around 85 Dohas of it are also included in the Ramcharitmanas.
- **Kavitavali:** It has a collection of Kavitas in Braja. Just like the epic, Ramcharitmanas, it also has seven books and many episodes.
- **Gitavali:** It has a collection of 328 Braja songs divided into seven books and all are of Hindustani classical music type.
- **Krishna Gitavali or Krishnavali:** It has a collection of Braja songs especially for Krishna. Out of the 61, 32 songs are dedicated to childhood and Rasa Lila of Krishna.
- **Vinaya Patrika:** It has a collection of Braja stanzas. Out of all, around 43 hymns are attended to a variety of deities, Rama's courtiers, and attendants.

His Minor Works:

- Barvai Ramayana: It has 69 verses created in the Barvai meter and divided into seven Kands.
- Parvati Mangal: it has verses describing the marriage of

the Parvati and Lord Shiva in the Awadhi.

- Janaki Mangal: It has verses describing the marriage of Sita and Rama in the Awadhi.
- Ramalala Nahachhu: It described the Nahachhu ritual (cutting the nails of the feet before the Vivaha) of the child Rama in the Awadhi.
- Ramagya Prashna: It described the Will of Rama in Awadhi
- Vairagya Sandipani: It consists of 60 verses in Braja describing the state of realization and Vairagya.

Popularly Recognized Works:

- Hanuman Chalisa: It consists of 40 verses devoted to the Hanuman in the Awadhi, 40 Chaupais and 2 Dohas and is a prayer to Hanuman.
- Sankatmochan Hanumanashtak: It consists of 8 verses for the Hanuman in the Awadhi.
- Hanuman Bahuka: It has 44 verses in the Braja describing the Arm of Hanuman (praying to the Hanuman for curing his hand).
- Tulsi Satsai: It has a collection of dohas in both Awadhi and Braja and is separated into seven Sargas or cantos.