

Yuma Sammang (Sumnima) and Theba Sammang (Parohang)

The Supreme God, Tagera Ningwa Bhumang, is worshiped in the form of Yuma Sammang (Sumnima) as Motherly Power and Theba Sammang (Parohang) as Fatherly Power. These deities are revered from before birth until death during various religious ceremonies such as the foetus protection ceremony (Sappok Chomen), naming ceremony (Yangdhang Phongma), marriage ceremony (Tendham Mekkhim), Sail of Curse and Sin (Sakmura Wadhemma), Head Raising High Ritual (Manggenna Sewa), housewarming ceremony (Kusang Him Chomen), Mubhekwa Sewa (མར་ངོའི་ཚཱགས་སྐྱེར), Khebhekwa Sewa (ཡར་ངོའི་ཚཱགས་སྐྱེར), and also during natural disasters, outbreaks of seasonal flu, and other significant events.

Akwanama Sammang / Chuwmasang

The Kirat people believe that Akwanama Sammang protects the house. Because of this, Akwanama Sammang is worshiped at the time of laying the foundation, at the main pillar during the consecration of a new house, and during the Mubhekwa Sewa (མར་ངོའི་ཚཱགས་སྐྱེར) and Khebhekwa Sewa (ཡར་ངོའི་ཚཱགས་སྐྱེར) ceremonies. There is a strong belief that the house will not be protected or safe from natural calamities, outbreaks of seasonal flu and deadly diseases, envy, jealousy, and other misfortunes if Akwanama Sammang is not worshiped during the consecration of the new house and annually thereafter.



Fig. 3 Akwanama

Nahen Sammam / Sarima

Besides Akwanama Sammam, there is another significant Sammam called Nahyen. Nahyen is the deity of envy and jealousy, worshipped every three years. It is strongly believed that if Nahyen Sammam is not worshipped, family members will fall prey to envy and jealousy, which can gradually lead to the outbreak of horrifying diseases and even death.

Tambhungna Sammam :/ Khoklimang

Tambhungna, also called Pung Sammam, is the collective name for deities of the forest, including those of mountains, lakes, water springs, trees, plants, birds, animals, and more. There is a strong belief that if these deities are not propitiated in a timely manner, misfortune, natural calamities, outbreaks of seasonal flu and deadly diseases, as well as envy and jealousy, may occur. Because of this, the Kirat people worship Tambhungna Sammam during Mubhekwa Sewa (མར་ངོའི་ཚལ་སྐྱོར་), Khebhekwa Sewa (ཡར་ངོའི་ཚལ་སྐྱོར་), and whenever it is necessary to propitiate them.

Manggenna Mang / Sayachongma

The Mundhum states, "Tagera Ningwabhungma Yamanara Kenara," which means that you are the embodiment of God; therefore, your head should always be held high and erect. The Kirat society believes that the Tagera Ningwa Bhungma is awakened during the head-raising ritual.

Additionally, Mangenna refers to a significant annual family and community ritual that is a core aspect of the Kirat people's cultural identity and ancestral worship. It symbolizes dignity, success, and cultural identity for the Kirat community. Performed by Kirat priests, Mangenna promotes peace, prosperity, well-being, and harmony among family members. According to the Mangenna Mundhum, this ritual connects participants with their ancestral lineage.

Nahangma Manggenna Mang

In the Kirat Mundhum tradition, "Nahangma Manggenna" refers to rituals associated with the warrior goddess and the concept of "Manggenna" as an ancestral origin. The worship of the goddess Nahangma is performed to honor the head of the household, with the aim of enabling them to hold their head high and embody courage and strength. It is believed that Nahangma Mundhum represents an earlier form of the Manggenna Mundhum. Both are central to the Kirat people's social, cultural, and ritual life, reinforcing their history and ancestral heritage. Nahangma Manggenna is performed in the name of the head of the family on behalf of all family members to ensure long life, peace, and prosperity by protecting them from difficulties and negative influences.

Muden Sammangs

The Kirat Mundhum tradition includes the worship of "Muden Sammang," an ancestral deity or spirit. This episode is part of the Tungdunge Mundhum, a unique mythology and cultural heritage of the Kirat community. The Kirat people also worship Sayamuden Sammang, and Payanglungma Sammang is another specific manifestation or name of an important female deity who acts as a mediator between the human and spirit worlds, facilitating healing and well-being in the Kirat belief system.

In ancient times, these deities were worshipped by the Kirat people of the Himalayan region through the preparation of ritual cakes (གཞི་རྩམ་), a practice that continues among Kirat communities today.

Similarly, during the time of the Mahabharata, when the five sons of the Pandavas were sent into exile, they came across the village of the Kirat people. As a result, there is a custom among the Kirat people to still worship the five sons of the Pandavas as Atithi Devatas (Guest Gods).



Fig. 4:
Prayer
flags

(Mangnisa= ཏཱ)

The first flag on the right represents Thebamang, the middle red flag represents Himmang, and the last one represents Yumamang. They are installed near rivers, mountains, valleys, outside houses and temples, spring waters, and other such places. The

Kirat believe that installing Mangnisa (མང་མེ་ལྷ་མོ།) can ward off evil forces, bring luck, and protect one from natural disasters, diseases, and enemies. It is also installed for world peace, human unity, and the well-being of all living beings.

Pung Kudap:/ wabumang

A small area outside the house and the temple is reserved for worshipping the local deities. The deities worshiped at Lakat include Teneba, Seseba, Thungdangba, Pungsammang, Kudapmang, Khunjama, and others. Among these, Pungsammang is the main deity and is worshiped every morning and evening. The Pung Kudap sammangs (deities) serve as supporters of the other local deities. The Kirat community performs the Pung Kudap sewa for the well-being of people both inside and outside the house, for world peace, human unity, and to protect people from natural disasters.

Sawa Yet-Warok & Sakmura-Wademmma Sewa

As our ancestors did, we offer divine fire smoke to the gods and goddesses associated with rivers, streams, ponds, and other bodies of water. We do this to seek protection from landslides and misfortunes, to safeguard the world from natural disasters throughout the year, and to preserve water and its purity. With faith, we pray that the world's pandemic viruses will be eradicated, and that peace, human welfare, and the safety of all living beings will be ensured. The Sawa Yet-warok Sewa ceremony will be performed once a year at their respective locations.



Fig.5 Sak mura Wademmma:/ yasawa dosawa

The Kirat people, according to the Samjik Mundhum, believe that the Sakmura-Wademmma is a ritual performed to ward off the "evil eye" and cleanse from unknown sins, the mind and soul of negative emotions such as greed and jealousy. The Sewa is conducted to purify ourselves from unknown sins passed down from previous generations, allowing us to be free from sin and to lead a holy life like the river and the sea. We go to flowing rivers and worship the local deities. We offer the smoke of the divine fire to the gods and goddesses to protect the world from pandemic viruses and to ensure world peace, human welfare,

and the safety of all living beings. Regardless of which deity is worshipped, the Sakmura-Wademma Sewa is performed once a year or once every two or three years.

Sawa Yet-Kokma Sewa

The Kirat people, following the traditions of their ancestors, pray to the deities associated with the mountains to protect the world from natural disasters such as wind, storms, and fire. In this belief, they offer divine fire smoke to the gods and goddesses, praying with faith that global pandemics will be eradicated and that world peace, human welfare, and the safety of all living beings will be ensured. The Sawa Yet-Kokma Sewa ceremony is performed once a year at their respective sacred places.

The above are just a few examples of the gods and goddesses worshipped by the Kirat people. In addition to these, many other deities are revered within Kirat traditions.