



Traditional New Year Festivals

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Why in News

The President of India has greeted the people on the eve of Chaitra Shukla Pratipada, Ugadi, Gudi Padava, Cheti Chand, Navreh and Sajibu Cheiraoba.

These festivals of the **spring season** mark the beginning of the **traditional new year** in India.

Chaitra Shukla Pratipada

- It marks the beginning of the **new year of the Vikram Samvat** also known as the **Vedic [Hindu] calendar**.
- Vikram Samvat is based on the day when the emperor Vikramaditya defeated Sakas, invaded Ujjain and called for a new era.
- Under his supervision, astronomers formed a new calendar based on the **luni-solar system** that is still followed in the northern regions of India.
- It is the first day during the waxing phase (in which the visible side of moon is getting bigger every night) of the moon in the **Chaitra (first month)** of Hindu calendar).

Gudi Padwa and Ugadi

- These festivals are celebrated by the people in the **Deccan region** including **Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh and Maharashtra**.
- The common practice in the celebrations of both the festivals is the **festive food** that is prepared with a **mix of sweet and bitter**.
- A famous concoction served is jaggery (sweet) and neem (bitter), called **bevu-bella** in the South, signifying that life brings both happiness and sorrows.
- **Gudi** is a doll prepared in **Maharashtrian** homes.

A bamboo stick is adorned with green or red brocade to make the gudi. This gudi is placed prominently in the house or outside a window/ door for all to see.

- For **Ugadi**, doors in homes are adorned with **mango leaf decorations** called **toranalu or Torana in Kannada**.

Cheti Chand

- **Sindhis** celebrate the new year as Cheti Chand. **Chaitra** month is called '**Chet**' in Sindhi.
- The day commemorates the birth anniversary of **Uderolal/Jhulelal**, the **patron saint of Sindhis**.

Navreh

- It is the **lunar new year** that is celebrated in **Kashmir**.
It is the **Sanskrit** word '*Nav-Varsha*' from where the word 'Navreh' has been derived.
- It falls on the first day of the Chaitra Navratri.
- On this day, Kashmiri pandits look at a bowl of rice which is considered as a symbol of riches and fertility.

Sajibu Cheiraoba

- It is a **ritual festival of Meiteis** which is observed on the first day of **Manipur lunar month Shajibu**, which falls in March/April every year.
- On the day of the festival, people arrange a **joint family feast** in which traditional cuisines are offered to local deities at the entrance gates of the houses.

Meities

- The Meiteis are **one of the most eminent ethnic groups of Manipur**, hailing from the Manipur Valley.
- They speak **Tibeto-Burman language** and most of the people belonging to the group, **follow Hindu customs**.

Source: PIB