



Traditional New Year Festivals

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Why in News

The Vice President of India greeted the people on festivals ‘**Chaitra Sukladi, Gudi Padwa, Ugadi, Cheti Chand, Vaisakhi, Vishu, Puthandu, and Bohag Bihu**’.

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

Key Points

- **Chaitra Sukladi:**
 - 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.

- **Vaishakhi:**

- It is also pronounced as **Baisakhi**, observed by **Hindus and Sikhs.**
- It marks the **beginning of Hindu Solar New year.**
- It commemorates the formation of **Khalsa panth** of warriors under **Guru Gobind Singh in 1699.**
- Baisakhi was also the day when colonial British empire officials committed the **Jallianwala Bagh massacre** at a gathering, an event influential to the Indian movement against colonial rule.

- **Vishu:**

- It is a **Hindu festival celebrated in the Indian state of Kerala, Tulu Nadu region in Karnataka, Mahé district of Union Territory of Pondicherry**, neighbouring areas of Tamil Nadu and their diaspora communities.
- The festival marks the first day of **Medam, the ninth month in the solar calendar** followed in Kerala.
- It therefore always falls in the middle of April in the Gregorian calendar on **14th or 15th April** every year.

- **Puthandu:**
 - **Also known as Puthuvarudam or Tamil New Year**, is the first day of the year on the Tamil calendar and traditionally celebrated as a festival.
 - The festival date is set with the solar cycle of the lunisolar Hindu calendar, as the first day of the Tamil month Chithirai.
 - It therefore falls on or about 14th April every year on the Gregorian calendar.
- **Bohag Bihu:**
 - **Bohag Bihu** or **Rongali Bihu** also called **Xaat Bihu** (seven Bihus) is a traditional aboriginal ethnic festival celebrated in the state of **Assam** and other parts of northeastern India by the indigenous ethnic groups of Assam.
 - It marks the beginning of the **Assamese New Year**.
 - It usually falls in the **2nd week of April**, historically signifying the time of harvest.

Source:PIB