



Makar Sankranti

Why in News

Recently, the PM has greeted people across the nation on the occasion of [harvest festivals](#) Makar Sankranti, Uttarayan, Bhogi, Magh Bihu and Pongal.

- The festivals celebrate the hard work and enterprise of millions of farmers across the country.

Key Points

▪ Makar Sankranti:

- Makar Sankranti denotes the entry of the **sun into the zodiac sign of Makara (Capricorn) as it travels on its celestial path.**
- The day marks the onset of summer and the six months auspicious period for Hindus known as **Uttarayan - the northward movement of the sun.**
 - As a part of the **official celebration of 'Uttarayan', the Gujarat government** has been hosting the **International Kite Festival since 1989.**
- The festivities associated with the day is known by different names in different parts of the country:
 - Lohri by north Indian Hindus and Sikhs,
 - Sukarat in central India,
 - Bhogali Bihu by Assamese Hindus, and
 - Pongal by Tamil and other South Indian Hindus.

▪ Bihu:

- It is celebrated when the annual harvest **takes place in Assam.** People celebrate Rongali/Magh Bihu to mark the beginning of the Assamese new year.
- It is believed that the festival started from the time when people of the valley started tilling the land. Bihu is believed to be as old as river Brahmaputra.

▪ Pongal:

- The word Pongal means **'overflow' or 'boiling over'.**
- Also known as **Thai Pongal**, the four-day occasion is observed in the month of Thai, when crops such as **rice are harvested** and people show their gratitude to the almighty and the generosity of the land.
- Tamilians celebrate the occasion by making **traditional designs known as kolams** in their homes with rice powder.



Source: PIB

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