Rongali Bihu

Why in News

For the first time, **Assam is celebrating Bohag or Rongali Bihu without rong** (meaning merriment), because of the **Covid-19 lockdown.**

Key Points

- Bihu is the **main festival of Assam.** It is **celebrated three times a year.**
- **Rongali or Bohag Bihu** is observed in **April. Kongali or Kati Bihu** observed in **October** and **Bhogali or Magh Bihu** observed in **January.**
- Rongali or Bohag Bihu is the **Assamese new year and spring festival.** The Rongali Bihu **coincides with Sikh New Year- Baisakhi.**
- The Bohag Bihu dates are April 13 to April 21. It is a harvest or sowing festival. It **marks the first day of the Hindu solar calendar** and is also observed in Bengal, Manipur, Mithila, Nepal, Orissa, Punjab, Kerala and Tamil Nadu.
- **Festive food -** pitha (rice cake) and larus (traditional food made of rice, coconut) are prepared.
- Men and women in traditional **Muga silk (golden silk)** attires dance to the rhythm of Bihu tunes and beatings of the bihu dhol (traditional drum) across the State.
    - Bihu dance is Assam’s most popular folk dance.
- The **traditional gamocha** woven on handlooms is offered as bihuwan to one's near and dear and also to guests.
    - The gamosa’s graph as a symbol of protest rose during the anti-foreigners Assam Agitation from 1979 to 1985.
    - The gamosa staged a comeback as a political statement with the protests against the **Citizenship (Amendment) Act** from mid-December 2019.
    - The Covid-19 has turned gamosas into masks.

Source: TH

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