



Harvest Festivals

[Source: HT](#)

Why in News?

Recently, the Prime Minister of India has greeted people across the nation on the occasion of [Harvest Festivals](#) **Makar Sankranti, Uttarayan, Bhogi, Magh Bihu and Pongal.**

- Along with these festivals Rooster Fights are organized in some parts of Andhra Pradesh.

What are the Harvest Festivals in India?

▪ 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 Magh Bihu/Bhogali 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.

▪ 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.

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What is a Rooster Fight?

▪ About:

- A rooster fight, also known as "**Kodi Pandalu**" in local parlance, involves specially bred and trained birds with sharp leg blades in a small arena, where they fight until one is killed or critically injured. Betting on these fights is common, resulting in significant sums changing hands.

▪ Laws Related to Rooster Fights:

- Rooster Fights are banned under [Prevention of Cruelty to Animals \(PCA\) Act, 1960](#). It includes **provisions that prohibit the organization and participation** in animal fights.
- Additionally, the Supreme Court of India has issued rulings banning the use of animals for entertainment purposes, **including in events like rooster fights**.