

Harvest Festivals

Source: HT

Why in News?

Recently, the Prime Minister of India has greeted people across the nation on the occasion of <u>Harvest</u> <u>Festivals</u> 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:

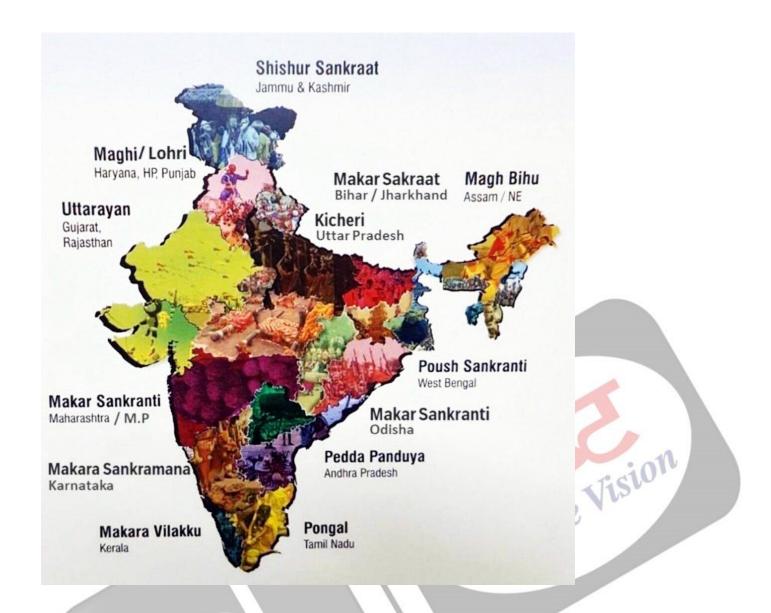
- Makar Sankranti denotes the entry of the sun into the zodiac sign of Makara (Capricorn) as it travels on its celestial path.
- The day marks **the onset of summer** and the six months auspicious period for Hindus known as Uttarayan **the northward movement of the sun.**
 - As a part of the official 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.



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 <u>Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (PCA) Act, 1960.</u> 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.