



Makar Sankranti and Amrit Snan (Shahi Snan) | Uttar Pradesh | 15 Jan 2025

Why in News?

The [Mahakumbh Mela 2025](#), currently underway in **Prayagraj**, witnessed its first **amrit snan or shahi snan** on 14th January, coinciding with the auspicious occasion of [Makar Sankranti](#).

- This ritual bath marked the beginning of a series of sacred dips in the confluence of the [Ganga, Yamuna](#), and the mythical **Saraswati** rivers.

Key Points

- **Significance of Makar Sankranti:**
 - Celebrated on 14th January, the festival marks the **Sun's transition into Makar raashi (Capricorn)**. This transition, known as **Sankranti**, is particularly special as it signals the **Sun's northward journey**, known as **Uttarayan**.
 - This movement heralds the **end of the harsh winter months** and the **onset of warmer, longer days**.
 - In Hindu mythology, **Uttarayan** is regarded as the **gods' daytime**, signifying an auspicious period for celebrations and spiritual endeavors.
 - **Bhishma Pitamah** of the **Mahabharata** chose to pass away during Uttarayan to attain spiritual liberation.
 - The festival is also significant as it **ends the karmas, a month-long period during which auspicious events are avoided**.
 - The Sun's entry into Capricorn, the house ruled by Shani (Saturn), who is considered the Sun's son, is celebrated as a familial reunion, a key theme in Hindu traditions.
- 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 Hindu and other South Indian Hindus.

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▪ **Other Significant Dates for Ritual Bathing Include:**

- **Mauni Amavasya (29 January):** A day of silence and introspection, considered highly auspicious for spiritual purification.
- **Vasant Panchami (3 February):** Celebrated as a festival of learning and wisdom, marking the arrival of spring.
- **Maha Shivratri (February 26):** The concluding day of the Kumbh Mela, dedicated to Lord Shiva, symbolizing the union of divine energy.

