

Makar Sankranti

Makar Sankranti, also celebrated as 'Pongal' is a major harvest festival celebrated all over India. According to the lunar calendar, the sun moves from the Dakshinayana to Uttarayana, in the month of Pausha in mid-January. This commemorates the beginning of the harvest season and marks the cessation of northeast monsoon in South India.



Makar Sankranti signals the end of winter and the onset of spring throughout the northern hemisphere. The period is called Uttarayan Punyakala and is considered auspicious. For the next six months, the days are longer and warmer. As it is the festival of the Sun God and he is regarded as the symbol of divinity and wisdom, the festival also holds an eternal meaning to it.

This festival is celebrated for 4 days :

Day 1: Bhogi– discarding old materials by burning them, marking the ending of the old and emerging of the new.

Day 2: Harvest festival - offering prayers to the Sun God and visiting near and dear ones with an offering of sugar cane, turmeric, banana, "Ellu-bella" (mixture of sesame seeds, groundnuts, pieces of copra & jaggery).

Day 3: Offering thanks to the cattle for helping in agriculture; they are decorated with paint, flowers, bells.

Day 4: is celebrated to thank friends and relatives who helped in the harvest.



There are numerous legends and myths which add to the importance of Makara Sankranti.

- On getting a boon from his father to die when he wished, it is said that Bhishma chose the Uttarayana period. It is believed that people who die during Uttarayana merge with the Brahman, thus ending rebirth.
- Lord Vishnu buried the Asuras beneath the Mandara Mountain signifying the end of evil and the dawn of righteousness.
- Another legend is that King Bhageeratha brought Ganges to Patala on this day. This was to get salvation to his ancestors who were cursed by Sage Kapila and turned into ashes. On this day millions of people take bath in the Ganges. Makara Sankranti is also an important date during Kumbh Mela and Magh Mela.
- Puranas state that on Makar Sankranti day, Surya visits Lord Shani. In mythology Lord Shani, is the son of Surya. Kite flying is traditionally observed as a part of this festival.



Sankranti / Pongal/ Lohri is being celebrated all over the country with great enthusiasm, especially so in Karnataka. On this occasion the sky in Jaipur and Hadoti regions (Rajasthan and Malwa) is filled with kites, and youngsters engage in contests trying to cut each other's strings.



Being Sankranti, it is a holiday on **15th January 2019, Tuesday.**

HAPPY SANKRANTI.

Principal