



Fairs and Festivals of India

Key Topics

- Festivals of India
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Hindu Festivals

Diwali

The festival of Diwali lasts for five days, beginning with Dhanteras, during which people buy jewellery or utensils and pay homage to the deity. Naraka Chaturdashi, also known as Chhoti Diwali or Small Diwali, is the second day and commemorates the death of the demon king Narakasura.

People put flowers and mango leaves on entrances and windows and light firecrackers to ward off malevolent spirits. The third day is the main day of celebration when devotees worship Lord Ganesha and Goddess Lakshmi to seek their blessings for prosperity and abundance. The fourth day is dedicated to Govardhan Puja, while the fifth and final days are observed as Bhai-Dooj, where sisters pray for their brothers' long and happy lives, and brothers offer gifts to their sisters. Diwali is celebrated in many countries, including India, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Myanmar, Mauritius, Guyana, Trinidad and Tobago, Suriname, Malaysia, Singapore, and Fiji.



Diwali, a Five-Day Festival to Celebrate the Victory of Good over Evil

Holi

The festival of colours, known as Holi, is observed with great enthusiasm every year in March by followers of the Hindu religion. Holi is a celebration of joy and happiness with loved ones. The festival is referred to as the festival of colours because people play with different hues and apply them on each other's faces, symbolizing the essence of the festival.

History of Holi: Lord Brahma blessed the devil king in mythology, making him invincible. However, this blessing turned into a curse when he became arrogant and demanded worship. Despite being the devil king's son, Prahalad remained a devotee of Lord Vishnu and refused to worship his father. The devil king conspired with his sister to kill Prahalad. However, he failed, as Prahalad emerged unharmed from the



Holi Celebrated with Colours (Gulal)

fire. This indicated that Prahalad was protected by his Lord due to his devotion. As a result, people started celebrating Holi as the triumph of good over evil.

The festival of Holi is a celebration of togetherness and the changing of seasons. It is customary for people to seek blessings from Gods and elders by sprinkling colours or 'Gulal' on their feet. Holi brings communities together and signifies the start of an auspicious time period for all Hindu lunar calendar ceremonies.

Holi is known by different names in different states of India. Here are some of them:

- Uttar Pradesh and Bihar—Holi, Phagwa
- West Bengal and Odisha—Dol Jatra
- Assam—Phakuwah
- Kerala—Manjal Kuli
- Tamil Nadu—Kamavilas, Kaman Pandigai
- Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh—Kama Dahanam
- Maharashtra and Goa—Ranganchami

Chhath Puja

Chhath Puja is a significant Hindu Vedic celebration that is observed with immense devotion and enthusiasm in various North Indian states, dedicated to the Sun God. The festival is celebrated twice a year, during the months of Chaitra (March–April) and Kartika (October–November). It is believed that the festival brings longevity, prosperity, and well-being by worshipping the sun and taking dips into the holy waters of the river Ganga. The festival lasts for four days and emphasizes frugality and abstinence from food and water. Various rituals are performed each day, including Nahay Khay on Chaturthi, Lohanda or Kharna, Sandhya Arghya, and Usha Arghya. The Prasad offered during Chhath Puja generally includes sweets, Kheer, Thekua, Kassar, and seasonal fruits. Devotees engage in sacred rituals that include taking dips in holy waters, fasting, and refraining from drinking water. They stand in water to present offerings and pay homage to the sun at dusk and dawn. Additionally, some followers partake in a reverent procession towards the river's edge.



A Representation of Chhath Puja

Dev Deepawali

Dev Deepawali is a Hindu festival that takes place in Varanasi, India, on the full moon day of the Hindu month of Kartik. The festival is also known as Diwali of the Gods, and it celebrates the triumph of Lord Shiva over the demon Tripurasura. During this festival, thousands of earthen lamps are used to decorate the riverfront steps of the River Ganges. People take part in various cultural and religious activities, offer prayers, and take dips in the holy river.



Dev Deepawali at the Ghats of Varanasi

Makar Sankranti

The end of winter solstice and the arrival of longer days is marked by Makar Sankranti, a Hindu festival celebrated in January. This festival is dedicated to the sun god and is observed with various names and traditions across India. People celebrate by flying kites, feasting on sweet dishes, taking holy dips, and offering prayers to commemorate the occasion.

Navratri

Navratri is a festival that has several mythological stories attached to it. Sati and Ramayana are some of the stories that are related to this festival. There are four other festivals that are similar to Navratri, but the most important one is Sharad Navratri, which is observed during the Hindu Lunar month called Ashwin. During this festival, devotees worship various forms of Shakti with great devotion. It is related to several mythological stories, including the battle between Adhya Shakti and Mahishasur. Devotees worship various forms of Shakti for nine nights during this festival, which culminates on the 10th day known as Vijaya Dashami.

MahaShivratri Mahotsav

Mahashivaratri is an annual Hindu festival that is celebrated as a day of devotion to Lord Shiva. It takes place on the 14th day of the dark half of the Hindu month Phalgun, which usually falls in February or March. In Varanasi, the Shiva temples are beautifully decorated for this occasion, and one of the unique traditions is the marriage procession of Lord Shiva from Mahamrityunjaya Temple to Kashi Vishwanath Temple. The Mahashivaratri Mahotsav is a cultural event that lasts for 3–4 days and is held



Mahashivratri Celebration

in honour of Mahashivaratri. During this event, various artists from all over the country perform classical and folk dance and music.

Durga Puja

Durga Puja, an important religious festival in India, has significant social, cultural, and artistic value. It marks the homecoming of the goddess Durga and signifies the victory of good over evil. This socio-cultural event is one of the most prominent festivals in India, and people believe that the goddess blesses her devotees during this time. The festival represents the conquest of good over evil, inspired by the mythical legend of how Goddess Durga defeated the demon king Mahishasur. It is believed that the goddess descended on earth during this period to bless her devotees.



Durga Puja

Ganesh Chaturthi Festival

The Hindu festival of Ganesh Chaturthi, also known as Vinayaka Chaturthi or Vinayaka Chavithi, celebrates the birth of Lord Ganesha and lasts for 10 days. The festival celebrates Lord Ganesha's arrival on Earth, marking a time of success and wisdom. It starts on the fourth day (Chaturthi) of the Hindu month Bhadrapada (around August-September). Known as the deity who brings new beginnings and removes hurdles, Lord Ganesha is also honoured as the God of Wisdom. This special occasion is widely celebrated across India, especially in states such as Maharashtra, Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh, Karnataka, Goa, and Andhra Pradesh.



Ganesh Chaturthi

Janmashtami

The Hindu festival of Janmashtami commemorates the birth of the god Krishna on the eighth day of the dark fortnight of the Bhadrapada month (August-September). Interestingly, the number eight holds significance in the Krishna legend as he is the eighth child of his mother, Devaki. In the Hindu calendar, this important day is observed on **Ashtami**, the eighth day of the **Krishna Paksha** (the waning phase of the moon) during the month of **Bhadon**.

The second day of Janmashtami is dedicated to Dahi-Handi, which celebrates Lord Krishna's childhood habit of stealing butter. This event is a re-enactment of Lord Krishna's playful spirit.



Janmashtami Celebration

Dussehra

The festival of Dussehra, also known as Vijayadashami or 'the day of victory', follows the nine nights of Navratri and celebrates the triumph of good over evil. It commemorates the day when Lord Rama defeated the demon king Ravana. The name of the festival is derived from the Sanskrit words 'Dasha' (meaning 'ten') and 'hara' (meaning 'defeat'). Dussehra is celebrated on the 10th day of the month of Ashwin (September–October), which is the 7th month of the Hindu calendar. The festival coincides with the appearance of the full moon during the bright fortnight, also known as 'Shukla Paksha'.



Dussehra

Gauri Habba

Gowri Habba or Gowri festival, a very important festival celebrated in Karnataka, is observed one day before Ganesh Chaturthi. The festival is dedicated to Goddess Gowri, who is considered to be the incarnation of Adi Shakti Mahamaya and is the mother of Lord Ganesha and wife of Lord Shiva. In the northern states of India, including Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Jharkhand, Rajasthan, Chhattisgarh, Maharashtra, and Madhya Pradesh, the festival is known as **Hartalika**.

Ratha Yatra

Ratha Yatra, also known as the Festival of Chariots, is a Hindu festival that is celebrated in the city of Puri, located in the Indian state of Odisha. This festival is dedicated to Lord Jagannath and is marked by the procession of the deities of Lord Jagannath, Balabhadra, and Subhadra, which are carried in beautifully decorated chariots by devotees who pull the chariots through the streets. The festival takes place in either June or July and is believed to bring salvation to those who partake in it.



Rath Yatra of Odisha

Kharchi Puja

The Kharchi Puja festival is a well-known celebration in Tripura, India, which is devoted to the worship of 14 deities. The festival spans over seven days in July and involves a procession of the deities for a ritual bath in the river. The purpose of the festival is to purify sins and protect against evil spirits.

During the festival, a vibrant and colourful fair is held for seven days. The festival is unique in which it symbolizes peace, harmony, and brotherhood as people of all religions, castes, and creeds come together to celebrate.

Karva Chauth

On Karva Chauth, married Hindu women fast from dawn until the moon appears for their husbands' well-being. This festival is observed on the fourth day following the full moon in the Hindu month of Kartik, typically in mid to late October. The word 'Karva' means an earthen pot with a spout, and 'Chauth' means fourth. Women dress up in traditional attire, apply henna on their hands, and perform rituals together. The fast is broken only after sighting the moon.



Karva Chauth

Raksha Bandhan

The term *raksha bandhan* comprises two words, namely *raksha* and *bandhan*. In Sanskrit, it means 'the act of tying a protective knot'. The word *raksha* denotes protection, while *bandhan* implies tying.

Raksha Bandhan is a celebration in which sisters bind a holy thread, known as Rakhi, around their brothers' wrists as a prayer for their prosperity. Brothers, in turn, vow to protect and stand by their sisters. It is celebrated in August and is a day of family gatherings, feasting, and exchanging gifts.



Raksha Bandhan

Ram Navami

Ram Navami is an important Hindu festival that marks the birth of Lord Rama, who is regarded as the seventh manifestation of Lord Vishnu. This festival usually falls in April and is observed on the ninth day of the Hindu lunar calendar. The event is celebrated with great devotion and enthusiasm by the Hindu community across the globe. Followers go to temples, offer prayers, and engage in a variety of cultural and religious activities.



Ram Navami, the Birth of Lord Rama

The festival is also characterized by the recitation of the Ramayana, a Hindu epic that narrates the life and accomplishments of Lord Rama.

Attukal Pongaala

Attukal Pongaala is a prominent festival held at the Attukal Bhagavathy temple in Thiruvananthapuram, known for setting the Guinness record for the largest women's religious gathering. This temple is also known as the Sabarimala for Women. The event takes place on the ninth day of the Malayalam month *Makaram* or *Kumbham* (February/March). The ceremonial offerings include a mix of flattened brown rice, roasted white rice, betel leaf, areca nut, banana, jaggery, flowers, incense, a traditional lamp, a bowl of water, and a rice-measuring vessel. The ritual begins with a tribute to Lord Ganapathi and the lighting of the hearth inside the temple, followed by the devotees' hearths. Devotees present white rice, desserts made of jaggery and rice, *theraly* (a sweet made by steaming), and *manda putt*. The ritual concludes as priests bless the offerings with holy water.

Bathukamma Festival

Women in Telangana celebrate Bathukamma, a significant festival, using vibrant flowers that are native to the region. The festival lasts for nine days and embodies the essence of Telangana's rich culture and identity. During the festival, the women worship Maha Gauri, the goddess of womanhood, and pray for a life partner of their choice. The term 'Bathukamma' means 'The Mother Goddess comes to life', and it involves the worship of Maha Gauri, the 'Life Giver', who is represented as Gauri Devi, the patron goddess of womanhood.



Bathukamma Festival Depicted in a Kalamkari Design

Makaravilakku Festival

The Sabarimala temple in Kerala celebrates the significant festival of Makaravilakku with sacred processions and festivities. Makar Sankranti is also observed during this festival, which involves holy processions and celebrations. The festival includes important rituals such as the distribution of holy prasada, known as Prasadasadhi, and the lighting of diya or camphor by the sadhus and higher temple authorities, known as Deeparadhana, to initiate the holy festival.



Devotees Undertake Strict Penance before Alighting the Holy Hill of Sabarimala

Situated atop the rugged hills of the Western Ghats, the Sabarimala Temple is a renowned pilgrimage centre dedicated to Lord Ayyappa. The pilgrimage to this holy site takes place every year between November and January, and devotees undergo strict penance before embarking on this spiritual journey.

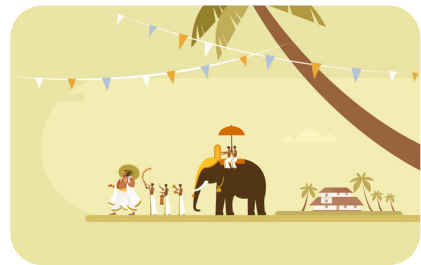
Nabakalebara Festival

The Nabakalebara festival is a significant religious event in the Jagannath Sanskruti that takes place at the Jagannath Temple in Odisha. During this festival, the four deities of the temple relinquish their old bodies and acquire new ones.

The Nabakalebara rituals are performed during a specific period, which occurs when a full moon occurs twice in the month of Asada as per the Hindu calendar. This period, known as Adhimasa or Malamasa, is considered the most auspicious time for the rebirth of deities and occurs once every 8, 12, or 19 years. It is worth noting that Joda Adhimasa generally falls in a 19-year interval, though it may fall under an eight or 12-year interval in some instances.

Onam

Onam is a beautiful festival celebrated in Kerala, India, with great enthusiasm. It is a 10-day harvest festival that commemorates the homecoming of the mythical king Mahabali, who once ruled over the land. The festivities begin with the atham asterism in the month of Chingam, which falls between August and September as per the local calendar. The legend has it that Lord Vishnu tested Mahabali's generosity by disguising himself as a dwarf named Vamana, and Mahabali granted him a wish to visit his subjects once a year. The festival is celebrated with cultural events, boat races, flower arrangements, traditional dances like Kathakali, and a grand feast called Onam Sadhya.



Onam

Pongal

Pongal is a significant festival celebrated in Tamil Nadu, India. It marks the beginning of the sun's six-month journey towards the North and is celebrated over four days known as Uttarayan Punyakalam. This festival is of immense importance in the Hindu Solar Calendar. Falling between January 15th and 18th, it coincides with the solar equinox, which is when days start to get longer and nights become shorter. The festival is considered highly auspicious as it is believed that the Gods awaken from their six-month-long slumber to shower prosperity and wealth on the mortals. People of Tamil Nadu believe that this festival heralds the New Year and brings with it a sense of new

beginnings. The festival involves the worship of the Sun as the life force behind all creation. Pongal, which is also the name of the dish made and consumed during this festival, is a sweet and savoury mixture of boiled rice and lentils flavoured with ghee, cashews, and raisins. The dish is named after the Tamil word 'pongu', which means 'to boil over', as it is traditionally cooked in a clay pot until it overflows, symbolizing abundance and prosperity.



Pongal

Gyana Panchami

The festival of Gyana Panchami holds great significance in the Hindu religion and is predominantly celebrated in Karnataka in South India. It falls on the fifth day of the waxing moon during the month of Margashirsha in the Hindu calendar. This festival is a devoted tribute to Goddess Saraswati, who is regarded as the Hindu deity of knowledge, music, and art. On this propitious day, devotees offer their prayers to Saraswati, seeking her blessings for success in their academic and creative endeavours by gaining wisdom and knowledge.

Sarhul

The tribal communities residing in the Indian states of Jharkhand, Odisha, and some parts of West Bengal hold Sarhul, a traditional festival of significant cultural and religious importance. This festival is celebrated during the spring season and serves as a precursor to the new agricultural cycle. During the festival, the Sal tree is worshipped, and devotees offer prayers to their deities for a fruitful harvest. The celebration is marked with various religious customs, traditional dance performances, music, and feasting and is observed with great zeal and enthusiasm.

Muslim Festivals

Eid-ul-Fitr

Eid-ul-Fitr is an important Islamic festival celebrated globally. It marks the conclusion of Ramadan, the ninth month of the Hijri or Islamic Calendar. During Ramadan, Muslims fast from sunrise to sunset. Eid-ul-Fitr marks the beginning of the 10th month, Shawwal. Muslims gather with their loved ones on this day to pray, exchange gifts, and enjoy delicious food. It is a time of joy, forgiveness, and unity and is considered one of the most significant festivals for Muslims.



Eid-ul-Fitr Signifies the End of the Holy Month of Ramadan

Eid-al-Adha or Eid-ul-Zuha

Eid-al-Adha, or Bakr-Eid, honours Prophet Ibrahim's (Abraham's) readiness to sacrifice his son for Allah's command. This is why it is also known as the Festival of Sacrifice. It is observed on the 10th day of Dhu al-Hijjah—the 12th month of the Islamic calendar. It also marks the end of the annual Hajj pilgrimage. Muslims celebrate Eid-al-Adha by performing prayers, sacrificing an animal (usually a goat or sheep), and sharing the meat with family, friends, and those who are less fortunate. This festival is a time for reflection, forgiveness, and unity.



Eid-Al-Adha Marks the End of the Hajj Pilgrimage Season

Eid Milad-un-Nabi

Eid Milad-un-Nabi is a significant festival in Islam that celebrates the birth of the Prophet Muhammad. It is observed on the 12th day of Rabi' al-Awwal, the third month of the Islamic calendar. During the festival, people offer prayers, recite the Quran, and gather together to reflect on the life and teachings of the Prophet.

In addition, many Muslims participate in processions and other festivities to pay tribute to the Prophet's life and teachings. Even though the festival is celebrated differently in different parts of the world, it is always a time of happiness and contemplation for the Muslim community.

Muharram

Muharram is not a festival but a period of mourning, marking the beginning of a new year in the Islamic calendar and considered to be one of the four sacred months in Islam. Shia Muslims dedicate a month to mourning in remembrance of Imam Hussain, Prophet Muhammad's grandson, and his followers in the Battle of Karbala. Sunni Muslims also observe Muharram but differently, fasting on the 10th day of Muharram, known as the Day of Ashura, to commemorate the day when Prophet Moses was saved from the Pharaoh's army. During Muharram, Muslims mourn the tragedy of Karbala and pay tribute to Imam Hussein's sacrifice by participating in processions, reciting poetry, and listening to religious sermons. The observance of Muharram is a time for Muslims to renew their commitment to their faith and reflect on the importance of standing up for justice and truth.

Shab-e-Barat

Muslims observe a special night called Shab-e-Barat every year on the 15th of Shaban, which is also known as the Night of Emancipation. This night is all about forgiveness

and salvation, and people pray and seek forgiveness for their sins. It is believed that on this night, the destiny of every individual for the upcoming year is decided. In addition, people also visit cemeteries to pay their respects to their loved ones.

Shab-e-Miraj

Shab-e-Miraj, an important event in Islamic history, honours Prophet Muhammad's incredible journey from Mecca to Jerusalem and then to heaven. It occurs on the 27th day of the Islamic month of Rajab. According to Islamic tradition, Prophet Muhammad travelled on a winged horse named Buraq and met numerous prophets, receiving the gift of prayer (Salah) during his ascension. Muslims mark Shab-e-Miraj by offering special prayers and reciting verses from the Quran. This occasion is a time for reflection, gratitude, and spiritual rejuvenation.

Sair-e-Gul-Faroshan

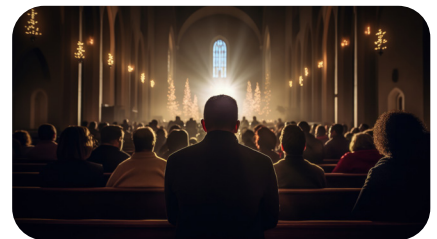
The Sair-e-Gul-Faroshan festival, also called 'Phool Walon Ki Sair', is an annual event in Delhi where a festive parade features a fan made of palm leaves or flowers. The procession starts at the tomb of Khwaja Bakhtiyar Kaki in Mehrauli and ends at the Yogamaya temple. This festival dates back to the 19th century and was initiated by the Mughal Emperor Akbar II. The British later banned the festival, but it was reinstated by JL Nehru in 1962.

Christian Festivals

Christmas

The birth of Jesus Christ, who is believed to be God's son in the Christian faith, is celebrated on 25 December, which is considered a significant religious festival known as Christmas. The actual date of Jesus' birth is unknown, but the Roman Catholic Church chose this date to honour his birthday. The word 'Christmas' originates from the Old English phrase 'Cristes Maesse', meaning 'mass of Christ'. The abbreviation 'Xmas' also has historical roots, going back to the 16th century. Here, the letter 'X' stands for the Greek letter 'Chi,' the initial letter in the Greek word for Christ, Χριστός (pronounced 'Christos').

The name 'Santa Claus' evolved from 'Sinterklaas,' which translates to Saint Nicholas. Saint Nicholas was a Christian bishop known for his kindness and generosity in the fourth century and later became the patron saint of children.



Christmas Celebration

Good Friday

Good Friday is observed on the Friday preceding Easter with reverence, mourning, and fasting. Also known as Karfreitag in German, it is a day of reflection and remembrance for Christians globally, marking Christ's crucifixion. Other names for this solemn day include Holy Friday, Great Friday, and Black Friday.

Good Friday is a day that signifies the possibility of hope and new beginnings. It serves as a reminder that even in the darkest of times, hope can be found. Jesus Christ's death on the cross was not the end but rather the beginning of a new era. Through his resurrection, Jesus conquered death, and his victory offers the possibility of eternal life to all who believe in him. This message of hope is applicable to everyone and continues to be an essential aspect of Christian tradition.

Easter

Easter is an important holiday in Christianity, marking Jesus Christ's resurrection three days post-crucifixion. It signifies the end of the Lenten season, a period of fasting and repentance, and is embraced as a joyful festivity. The earliest recorded Easter celebrations trace back to the 2nd century, with indications that the earliest Christians also honoured the resurrection, which is a fundamental tenet of the faith.

Sikh Festivals

Gurpurab

The Guru Purab, celebrated by the Sikh community globally, commemorate the birth anniversaries of all 10 Sikh gurus, with special emphasis on Guru Nanak and Guru Gobind Singh. The martyrdoms of Guru Arjan Dev and Guru Tegh Bahadur, who sacrificed their lives while upholding the Sikh doctrine under the Mughal rule, are also remembered during this period. During Guru Nanak Jayanti, a major Guru Purab, special services are held at all Gurudwaras, including the distribution of langar to the public. The festivities consist of an Akhand Path, congregational singing of praise hymns, and a procession with the Guru Granth Sahib carried on a decked floral float. The procession is led by five-armed guards waving Sikh flags (Nishan Sahibs) who represent the Panj Pyare or 'five adored men.' All days of Guru Purab offer an opportunity to commemorate and pay homage to the Lord.



Guru Purab Celebration

The festival occurs on Kartik Poornima, the 15th day of the lunar cycle in the Kartik month of the Hindu calendar, which typically aligns with November in the Gregorian calendar.

Parkash Utsav Dasveh Patshah

This celebration is of significant cultural and religious importance, as it symbolizes the birth of divine knowledge, also known as the 10th Divya Jyoti. Every year on the 31st of January, the Sikh community commemorates the birth of the tenth Sikh Guru, Sri Guru Gobind Singh Ji, who is closely associated with the birth of the 10th Divine Light or divine knowledge. This occasion is observed with great reverence.

Maghi

The Maghi festival is a yearly celebration in the Sikh community that recognizes the bravery of the Chali Mukte. These individuals defended Guru Gobind Singh in a battle near Khidrane di Dhab in 1705. To pay homage to those who sacrificed their lives, the Sikh community commemorates this day by marching to the battleground and taking a dip in the Muktsar stream. This festival takes place every year on the 14th of January.

Hola Mohalla

Hola Mohalla is a Sikh festival held annually in Anandpur Sahib during the second day of the lunar month, Chett, in March. The fair is typically a three-day festival with attendees camping out for a week, engaging in various exhibitions of fighting skills, and enjoying kirtan, music, and poetry. Established by Guru Govind Singh, the tradition includes simulated battles and military drills, kirtan, and poetry competitions. It is also referred to as the 'Sikh Olympics' due to its sports and competitions, including horseback riding and swordsmanship.

Vaisakhi or Baisakhi

Vaisakhi is a significant Hindu and Sikh Solar New Year celebration that takes place annually on April 13th or 14th. It is also a spring harvest festival that is observed by numerous Indians. The Sikh community commemorates the Sikh New Year and the Khalsa-Panth's birthday by participating in kirtans, visiting local Gurdwaras, community fairs, Nagar kirtan processions, flag-raising, and consuming festive food. Kirtans are held at decorated Gurudwaras, and after prayers, the congregation is served Karah Parshad. The celebrations come to a close with a community meal called Langar.

Lohri

Lohri is a festival that is observed on 13th January, which is one day prior to Makar Sankranti. It marks the end of the winter season and the commencement of sun's journey towards the Northern Hemisphere. Farmers use this occasion to celebrate the rabi crops by gathering together around bonfires, singing, exchanging greetings, and expressing their gratitude towards the Supreme Being. Lohri represents the triumph of light over darkness.



Lohri Celebration

Sodal Mela

The celebration of Baba Sodal's annual fair is a significant event in Punjab that holds a special place in the hearts of Sikh devotees. Typically held in Jalandhar during the month of Bhadon, which falls in September, the fair is considered an auspicious occasion by the followers of Sikhism. Baba Sodal's Samadhi is the site where the fair takes place, and his portrait is displayed with rosaries and flowers. The Sodal ka Sarovar, a sacred tank where people immerse themselves in holy water and offer sacrifices to the Samadhi, is also an integral part of the fair. The fair's cultural and spiritual significance is remarkable, and its celebration is a testament to the rich customs and traditions of the region.

Jain Festivals

Mahavir Jayanti

Mahavir Jayanti is a prominent festival celebrated globally by the Jain community to commemorate the birth of Lord Mahavira, the 24th Tirthankara, and one of the key founders of Jainism. Marked by fervent zeal and grandeur, this festival takes place on the 13th day of the lunar month Chaitra. The saffron flag is hoisted above all Jain temples during this time, adding to the festive spirit.

Mahavira's auspicious birth is celebrated by both the Digambaras (sky-clad or naked) and the Svetambara's (white-clad or clothed) Jain sects. On this day, Mahavira's idol is bathed in milk and given a ceremonial bath (Abhishek), after which it is taken out in a parade. This day is considered sacred, and Jain followers visit the sacred sites of Jainism to pay their respects to their religious gurus and Tirthankaras.

Paryushana

Jains worldwide celebrate an annual eight-day festival known as Paryushana. The festival is observed during the Bhadrpada month of the Hindu calendar, which

usually falls in August or September. The word Paryushana originates from the Sanskrit words 'pari', meaning 'all-around', and 'ushana', meaning 'to stay close'. Jains engage in various religious activities, including fasting, prayer, and self-reflection during Paryushana. The festival provides Jains with an opportunity to reflect on their past actions, seek forgiveness, and show compassion towards all living beings. Paryushana reminds Jains to live in harmony with nature and to strive towards inner peace and enlightenment. It is essential to note that the Svetambara sect of Jains are the primary observers of Paryushana, although the Digambara sect also celebrates the festival. The Digambara sect's celebration lasts 10 days instead of the usual eight, and they refer to it as Das Lakshana Parva. The festival concludes with the celebration of Samvatsari, which is the last day of the festival. On this day, Jains seek forgiveness from all living beings and commit to living a virtuous life. Finally, the festival ends with the breaking of the fast and a grand feast.

Mahamastakabhisheka

Mahamastakabhisheka is a festival of great significance for Jains celebrated in the state of Karnataka, India, once every 12 years. The highlight of this festival is the anointment of the towering 57-foot-tall monolithic statue of Lord Bahubali, also known as Gomateshwara, with various sacred substances like milk, saffron, and sandalwood. It is a divine and awe-inspiring spectacle that attracts devotees from all over the world seeking blessings from Lord Bahubali.

Varsha Tapa or Akshay Tertiya Tapa

The end of Lord Adinath Risabhdev's fast is marked by the consumption of sugarcane juice on Akshaya Tertiya, which also signifies the conclusion of Risabhdev's 13-month fast, culminating on the third day of the light fortnight of the Vaisakha month in the Jain calendar. These festivals hold a great spiritual significance, as evident from the observance of Varshi tapa, wherein people fast for a year with alternate day fasting. The Jains demonstrate a deep level of commitment to spiritual growth and enlightenment through the ascetic austerities they practice, especially at pilgrimage sites such as Palitana in Gujarat.

Maun-Agiyara

The celebration of Maun Ekadashi, a Jain festival held on the 11th day of the Magshar month (Magshar Sud 11), is an intriguing observance that involves complete silence and fasting. The primary focus of the celebration is on meditation as a means of



Mahamastakabhisheka

enhancing spiritual growth. Additionally, the day is marked by the retelling of the story of Suvrat Shresthi, and the significant events surrounding the 150 Jina Swaras are commemorated through holy recitation. According to Jainism, the performance of all the ceremonies outlined in the Jain Philosophy can lead to the attainment of Moksha, the ultimate state of happiness similar to that of Suvrat Sheth.

Navapad Oli

The Jain community follows a period of semi-fasting called Oli that lasts for nine days, during which they eat only one modest meal per day. This practice happens twice every year, in March-April and September-October. Navapad is also known as Siddha Chakra, which is a circular formation where Siddha is positioned at the top. Navpad Oli celebrations take place annually, and each of the nine days is dedicated to one of the nine Siddha Chakra posts. Devout Jains observe Ayambil tap during these days, which involves consuming only boiled water and food before sunset. They show their respect for Navpad by performing activities like reading, meditation, and chanting religious melodies for the entire nine-day duration.

Buddhist Festivals

Buddha Purnima: A Celebration of Love of Compassion

Buddha Purnima, also known as Buddha Jayanti or Vesak, is a significant festival celebrated by Buddhists worldwide. The festival is observed in April and May and is particularly important in north-east India. In Sikkim, it is known as Saga-Dawa (Dasa), and in the Theravada tradition, it is called Vaisakha Puja. Buddha Purnima is celebrated on the Full Moon Day of May (Vaisakha) and is considered as the thrice blessed day because all the significant events of Lord Buddha's life, including his birth in Lumbini, his attainment of enlightenment in Bodhgaya, and his entry into Mahaparinirvana in Kushinagar, happened on this eventful day.



Buddha Purnima

The day is commemorated through prayer meetings, sermons, meditation, cultural programs, and charitable activities. People also visit Buddhist temples to offer prayers and offerings to Lord Buddha. The celebrations of Buddha Purnima demonstrate the profound impact that Lord Buddha has had on people's lives worldwide.

Songkran

The Songkran festival is a significant event in the Buddhist calendar that occurs in the middle of April and lasts for several days. During this time, people engage in

various activities that symbolize the renewal and purification of the body, mind, and spirit, such as cleaning their homes, washing their clothes, and bathing in water scented with flowers and herbs.

One of the most recognizable traditions associated with Songkran is the ritual of 'sai sin', which involves participants tying white strings around their wrists as a symbol of good luck and blessings. Additionally, many people offer food to monks during the festival, which is believed to bring merit and good fortune.

The playful activity of water splashing has also become a popular feature of Songkran celebrations, particularly in Thailand, where the festival is widely observed. Water is poured over each other as a way of washing away the bad luck and misfortunes of the past year.

Ploughing Festival of Buddhism

An annual festival known as the Ploughing Festival is held in countries such as Cambodia, Myanmar, and Thailand. The festivity symbolizes the beginning of the rice-growing season and has its origin in the traditions of both Hinduism and Buddhism.

The event goes back to when Prince Siddhartha Gautama was seven years old, and it coincided with his first enlightenment. King Suddhodana initiated the festival to promote agriculture, and later, it evolved into a pleasant celebration.

Taking place on a half-full moon day, the Ploughing Festival marks the start of the rice-growing season. Two white holy oxen pull a gold-painted plough, and four girls dressed in white follow them, scattering rice seeds with gold and silver baskets.

Ullambana

Ullambana is a significant Buddhist festival celebrated in numerous parts of Asia, especially in China and Japan. This festival is also known as the Ghost Festival or the Hungry Ghost Festival and carries great importance in Buddhist culture. It is customary during Ullambana to offer food, gifts, and other forms of tribute to the spirits of ancestors and wandering souls who may not have anyone to care for them. According to the belief, during this time, the gates of hell are opened, and the spirits of the dead can return to the world of the living. The festival is usually observed in mid-August and lasts for around a month.

Losar Festival

The Tibetan New Year is celebrated with the Losar festival which lasts for approximately two weeks. It is usually observed in late January or early February in accordance with the lunar calendar. During this time, families come together to engage in

various festive activities, exchange gifts, and enjoy traditional meals. Besides being a time for festivities, it is also a time for spiritual purification and renewal. Therefore, many Tibetans participate in rituals and visit monasteries to offer prayers and make offerings. The celebration is not restricted to Tibet alone; it is also celebrated in other regions, including Bhutan, Nepal, and India, where there are significant Tibetan populations.



Losar Celebrates the New Year in Tibetan Lunar Calendar

Hemis Gompa

The Hemis Festival is a two-day yearly event celebrated in Ladakh at the Hemis Gompa monastery. The celebration is held in honour of Guru Padmasambhava's birth, and occurs on the 10th day of the fifth month of the Tibetan calendar, usually coinciding with June or July in the Gregorian calendar.

The festival features the traditional Cham Dance, which is performed with long pipes and also showcases giant Buddhist thangkas that are displayed for public viewing. On the first day of the festival, the largest thangka in Ladakh is unfurled, which happens every 12th year.

Sindhi Festival

Chaliha Sahib

The Sindhi community holds the Chaliha festival in high regard. It lasts for forty days between July and August and involves fasting and prayer to Jhulelal, their deity. According to legend, the festival started when the people of Sindh prayed to Varun Devta, the God of water, for forty days to protect them from a cruel Muslim invader named Mirkshah Badshah. Finally, on the last day of their prayers, Varun Devta answered their worship in the form of Jhulelal, who saved them from Badshah's tyranny.

During the Chaliha festival, people follow strict rules and avoid certain foods and activities while observing fasts for 10, 21, or a maximum of 40 days. They offer prayers in the morning and attend Kirtans in the evening. On the final or 41st day, the festival ends with the worship of Bahirana Sahib. The Chaliha festival is an essential event in the Sindhi community.

Cheti Chand

The Sindhi community observes a significant festival called Cheti Chand, which marks the beginning of the Hindu lunar year. The festival is typically celebrated in late March or early April with great devotion and enthusiasm. It commemorates the

birth anniversary of Jhulelal, the Sindhi patron saint who is revered by the community as the God of Water. People dress up in new clothes, decorate their homes, and offer prayers and offerings to Jhulelal on this auspicious day. The festival is also marked by processions and community gatherings where people sing and dance to the beat of traditional musical instruments like dhol.

Parsi Festival (Zoroastrian)

Jamshedi Navroz

The festival of Navroz is celebrated in Central Asia and India and is increasingly recognized as the beginning of a new year, symbolizing new life. The United Nations has acknowledged Navroz as the ‘Festival of Spring’, and its popularity continues to grow. In India, the Zoroastrian community observes Navroz as the New Year during the Spring or Vernal Equinox, which takes place annually on 21 March.

Parsi New Year

The Parsi community observes the Parsi New Year, also known as Navroz, as a cultural festival that heralds the start of a new year in the Zoroastrian calendar. This event typically occurs on the day of the Spring Equinox, around 21 March. The festival is celebrated with great fervour and comprises several customs such as cleaning, decorating homes, donning new attire, preparing special dishes, and visiting friends and family. It is an occasion that promotes renewal, introspection, and gratitude for the blessings of the previous year.

Zarthost No Deeso

Some followers of the Zoroastrian religion believe that the 11th day of the 10th month (Khorshedroz, Daemah) in the calendar year, which usually takes place in June, marks the anniversary of Prophet Zoroaster’s passing. This day carries a significant weight for many members of the community, who may spend time contemplating the teachings and legacy of the prophet. However, it’s worth noting that the exact circumstances of the prophet’s death are uncertain, and different factions of Zoroastrians may observe this event differently.

Pateti

Some members of the Parsi community perform a ceremony called Pateti on the final Gatha day of their calendar. This day holds great importance as it is thought to be a period of self-examination and contemplation. It is an occasion to apologize for any misdeeds or errors made during the year and to request absolution from those affected.

Khordad Sal

Khordad Sal is a significant celebration in the Zoroastrian faith that commemorates the birth of the prophet Zarathustra. It is observed on the sixth day of the Khordad month and involves offering prayers and performing rituals to honour the prophet and his teachings. This day is dedicated to reflecting on the core values of the faith, which revolve around the principles of good thoughts, good words, and good deeds.

North-East Festivals

Behdienkhlam Festival

The Pnar people in Meghalaya celebrate the Behdienkhlam Festival, a significant dance festival that takes place in July after the sowing period. This festival serves as an invocation to God for a fruitful harvest. The cultural dances and offerings of sacrificial food to their forefathers' spirits by women are prominent features of the festival celebrated in Jowai. People from all walks of life eagerly await and attend this highly anticipated festival.

Saga Dawa

The celebration of Saga Dawa is a grand and important festival that is observed with great zeal and fervour every year in Sikkim. Devotees of Mahayana Buddhism hold this festival in high regard as it marks the birth of Lord Buddha, his enlightenment, and his liberation from the material world, making it an auspicious occasion.

Losoong Festival

The Losoong Festival marks the beginning of the Sikkimese New Year. It is celebrated in December every year and is a time of celebration, dancing, and competitions such as archery. The Black Hat dance symbolizes good's triumph over evil and is a highlight of the festival, which continues for several days.



Loosong Festival

Bihu

Bihu is a significant festival celebrated in Assam with enthusiasm. It includes three events: Bohag Bihu in April, Magh Bihu in January, and Kati Bihu in October. Bohag Bihu, also known as Rongali Bihu, welcomes the Assamese New Year and celebrates the arrival of spring. It has two days: Goru Bihu and Manuh Bihu. People dress up in new clothes, prepare special dishes, and visit their friends and relatives with food and gifts. Close relatives and friends are honoured with hand-woven scarves called 'Gamucha'.

Hornbill Festival

The Hornbill Festival in Nagaland is a cultural event showcasing traditional Naga Morungs exhibitions, local games, and various displays, including art, music, and food. It provides an opportunity to experience Nagaland's vibrant diversity of food, handicrafts, traditional songs, and dances. The festival also features a national rock concert where bands from across the country compete. It usually takes place between 1 and 10 December every year mainly in the Kohima district.



Hornbill Festival

Moatsu Mong Festival

The Moatsu festival is a three-day celebration in May that fosters community bonding among the Ao tribe of Nagaland. It includes gift exchanges, feasting, bonfires, and the formation of new friendships. Villagers express their appreciation for one another and strengthen their bonds of friendship. The festival commemorates the end of strenuous work and culminates in three days of joyful celebration featuring songs and dances.

Cheiraoba Festival

The Meitei community celebrates Cheiraoba, a significant festival in Manipur, during April to signify the beginning of the lunar new year. The festival is associated with Sanamahism, which is observed on the first day of the lunar new year. Meanwhile, the Vaishnav Hindus celebrate it on April 13/14, according to the solar Hindu calendar.

Wangala—The 100 Drums Festival of Meghalaya

The Wangala Festival is a popular harvest festival among the Garo people of Meghalaya, India. The festival is observed to pay tribute to Saljong, the Sun God of fertility, signifying the conclusion of an exhausting season and the onset of winter. Festivities include offering sacrifices to the Sun God, while participants don colourful costumes and feathered headpieces, moving rhythmically to the beats of elongated drums. The festival is celebrated for two days and is a time for relaxation and enjoyment.

Kang Chingba Festival

The Meitei community in Manipur celebrates 'Kang' or 'Rath-Yatra'. Originating from Puri, the festival marks the day when Lord Jagannath, Balabhadra, and Subhadra

were enshrined in Jagannath Temple. Celebrated with slight variations, it's an annual Vaishnavism festival.

Ambubachi Mela

The Ambubachi Mela is a festival celebrated at the Kamakhya temple in Eastern India. During this festival, the shrine is closed for four days due to the belief that Goddess Kamakhya undergoes a menstrual cycle. It ends with the opening of the doors on the 12th day which is followed by a grand fair.



Kamakhya Temple, the Site for Ambubachi Mela

Majuli Festival

The Majuli festival is an important cultural event that occurs annually in Assam. The festival is held on the bank of River Luit, which is also home to the world's largest river island. The festival lasts from 21st to 24th November and takes place in the sub-divisional headquarters of Majuli Island, Garmur, which is known for its enchanting scenic beauty. During the festival, cultural groups from Majuli and other parts of Assam organize a variety of cultural programs.

Lui-Ngai-Ni Festival

Lui-Ngai-Ni is a significant festival celebrated in Manipur, marking the beginning of spring and seed sowing. The festival brings together various Naga tribes, including Mao, Maram, Poumai, Liangmai, Maring, Tarao, Chothe, Anal, Kharam, Koireng, and Thangal, to showcase their cultural heritage in unison.

Dree Festival

The Apatani tribe's unique practice of wet rice farming is renowned for its sustainable agricultural techniques. Their lives revolve around the agricultural cycle, with the festival of Dree serving as its highlight. During this festival, five primary deities are appeased, and they are propitiated for various reasons, including warding off pests and diseases, purifying agricultural fields, and seeking blessings for healthy crops and human prosperity. The Danyi ritual, which involves sacrificing a Mithun, was introduced in 1967.

Zo Kutpui

The Zo Kutpui festival is celebrated in 10 states in India and countries such as the USA, Myanmar, and Bangladesh. This event aimed to bring together and reinforce

the Mizo tribes globally, presenting cultural programs and performances by Zo ethnic artists from Mizoram and the Northeast region.

Dwijing Festival

The Dwijing Festival sounds like an incredible celebration of Assam's cultural heritage. The festival is held on the banks of the river Aie, which holds such importance in the local community. During the festival, the vibrant celebrations are a sight to see.

Me-Dam-Me-Phi

The Me-Dam-Me-Phi festival, celebrated on 31st January in Assam, is a traditional festival of ancestor worship and has been celebrated by the Ahom community since the 12th century. It's always wonderful to learn about different cultural celebrations and their significance.

Ali Ai Ligang Festival

The Ali Ai Ligang festival is a spring celebration lasting for over five days, celebrated by the Mishing Tribe in Assam. It marks the beginning of sowing seeds and promotes harmony and brotherhood.

Rongker and Chomangkan Festival

The two most important festivals of the Karbis, an indigenous tribe living in the Karbi Anglong region of Assam, are Rongker and Chomangkan. Rongker is celebrated during the spring season and is considered as the start of the New Year. This festival is marked with great zeal and enthusiasm.

Bare Saharia Bhaona

The festival known as Bare Saharia Bhaona takes place every two years in Jamugurihat, Assam. It is a celebration of the traditional art form of Bhaona, which is over 200 years old. This festival has a rich history dating back to 1797–1798 and is attended by many people.

Fairs of India

Kumbh Mela

The Kumbh Mela is an important religious event in India. It is the largest gathering of its kind, with millions of people attending over a month-long period. The local government, authorities, and police organize the event, which includes a massive tented township with facilities for the attendees.

Legend has it that Vishnu spilled four drops of Amrit (nectar) from a Kumbh (pot) during a scuffle. The drops fell on earth at four Tirthas, which are places where people can attain salvation. The Kumbh Mela is held every three years at each Tirtha, and once every 12 years at the Sangam, which is the confluence of three rivers and known as Tirtharaj, or the 'King of Tirthas'. This is the most important and holiest of all Kumbh Melas.



Mahakumbh Mela

The location of the Kumbh Mela is influenced by the astrological placements of the Sun, Moon, and Jupiter across various zodiac signs at the time of the event. The most recent Maha Kumbh Mela took place in 2013, and the next one is scheduled for 2025. The calculations for determining the location of the Kumbh Mela are as follows.

Kumbh Mela at Prayag

The Kumbh Mela is held at Prayag when Jupiter resides in Aries or Taurus, and the Sun and Moon are in Capricorn during the Hindu month of Magha, which corresponds to January-February in the Gregorian calendar.

Kumbh Mela at Haridwar

The Kumbh Mela is held at Haridwar during the Hindu month of Chaitra, which falls in March-April when Jupiter is positioned in Aquarius and the Sun in Aries.

Kumbh Mela at Ujjain

The Kumbh Mela is held at Ujjain when Jupiter is positioned in Leo with the Sun in Aries, or alternatively, when the Sun, the Moon, and Jupiter are all in Libra during the Hindu month of Vaisakha, which is usually April-May in the Gregorian calendar.

Kumbh Mela at Nashik

The Kumbh Mela is held at Nashik during the Hindu month of Bhadrprada, occurring in August-September, when the Sun and Jupiter are in conjunction with the constellation of Leo.

In 2017, UNESCO recognized the Kumbh Mela as part of the Representative List of the Intangible Culture Heritage of Humanity.

Sonepur Mela

The Hariharnath Kshetra Sonpur Mela is Asia's largest cattle fair held in Sonepur, Bihar, on Kartik Purnima. It has ancient origins, with Chandragupta Maurya buying elephants and horses from across the Ganges. Today, it includes traditional bathing, temple visits, stalls, and amusement parks.

Chitra Vichitra Fair

Women gather by the river to mourn their deceased on new moon's eve. The fair starts the next day in Gunbhanhari village, located in Poshina taluka, Sabar-kantha near the Gujarat-Rajasthan border. The fair is held for two days, starting on the first new moon after the Holi festival. It is located at the confluence of Sabarmati, Wakal, and Aakal rivers.



Sonepur Mela

Shamlaji Mela

The Shamlaji Mela or Kartik Purnima fair takes place for 2 weeks in November every year at the Shamlaji Temple, a Vaishnav Shrine built in the 11th century. Devotees from different communities visit the festival, including the 'Garasias' and 'Bhils', who come in groups, carrying religious flags and singing devotional songs. The festival is popular with tribal people, particularly the Bhils, who revere Shamlaji, the deity they call 'Kalio Bavji'. A bath in the Meshwo river is also considered essential by the pilgrims.

Pushkar Fair

The Pushkar Camel Fair, or Pushkar Mela, is a yearly festival hosted in Pushkar during October and November. Renowned as one of the world's most extensive camel fairs, it features unique contests like 'matka phod', 'longest moustache', and 'bridal competition', with vast crowds of tourists. Additionally, the fair has introduced a cricket game between the local Pushkar Club and a team composed of international visitors.



Pushkar Mela

Jaisalmer Desert Festival

The annual Jaisalmer Desert Festival takes place in the picturesque city of Jaisalmer, usually during February. The festival is celebrated three days before the full moon in the Hindu month of Magh. The event is located in the stunning Sam Dunes, which are situated about 42 kilometres away from Jaisalmer in the Thar Desert. The Jaisalmer Desert Festival is a thrilling and joyful event, with various activities to be enjoyed. Visitors can relish vibrant performances such as puppet shows, folk music, and dance. The attendees also have the opportunity to enjoy a variety of thrilling contests, including camel races, camel polo, tug of war, juggling, turban tying, and a competition for the longest moustache.



Jaisalmer Mela

Kolayat Fair also known as Kapil Muni Fair

The Kapil Muni Fair, the biggest fair in Bikaner, is named after Kapil, a great sage who is believed to have performed ‘tapasya’ here for the redemption of humanity. Kapil Muni is mentioned in the Puranas and is said to have descended from Lord Brahma, the creator of the world himself. Kapilayatan, now known as Kolayat, is an oasis in an arid region, featuring a lake surrounded by Banyan trees that provide shade to its 52 ghats. The Kapil Muni Ghat is home to a temple with a marble statue of Kapil Muni.

Surajkund Crafts Mela

Surajkund International Crafts Mela is an internationally acclaimed crafts fair, which is recognized as the world’s largest fair. It is a vibrant celebration of India’s rich diversity and showcases an array of crafts, music, art, and culture from around the globe. Whether you’re looking to shop for authentic traditional crafts, handlooms, and handicrafts, or immerse yourself in the cultural performances, or explore the culinary delights from different corners of the world, you’ll find it all at Surajkund Mela.



Surajkund Mela

Surajkund Crafts Mela is the biggest crafts fair in India and is held annually in the Surajkund district of Haryana. This fair is a highly popular event among all the fairs and festivals in Haryana, attracting visitors from all over the country in large numbers.

Gangasagar Mela

The annual Gangasagar Mela takes place in West Bengal, India, at the confluence of the Ganges and Bay of Bengal known as Gangasagar. Occurring annually during Makar Sankranti, the fair is held at Kapil Muni's ashram located on the Gangasagar. This celebration takes place on either 14th or 15th January each year and is the second-largest Hindu fair after Kumbh Mela. Each year, many people from different states in India come to Gangasagar to participate in the holy bath on Makar Sankranti day.

Goa Carnival

Goa Carnival is a famous festival celebrated in the state since the 18th century as a precursor to Lent. Introduced by the Portuguese, it features events showcasing Goa's unique heritage. The State Tourism Department organizes the float parades, with King Momo leading the parade in Panaji.



Goa Carnival

Joydev Kenduli Mela

The Kenduli Mela takes place in Kenduli, which is the birthplace of the renowned artist Jaidev in the Birbhum region of West Bengal. Kenduli is located approximately 42 km away from the peaceful town of Shantiniketan, which is known to be the residence of Rabindranath Tagore. The Kenduli Mela is famous for bringing together the Bauls, a group of mystical minstrels. They are recognized by their saffron attire and a unique musical instrument called the Ektara, and they carry a distinct musical tradition. The Bauls are proud to be included on UNESCO's list of 'Masterpieces of the Oral and Intangible Heritage of Humanity'.

Chillai Kalan

The period of Chillai Kalan in Kashmir Valley lasts for 40 days during which the weather becomes extremely cold. It begins every year on 21 December and continues until 29 January. Chillai Kalan is considered to be the coldest part of winter and the nights during this period are exceptionally cold. Even during the day, temperatures remain in single digits, often dropping to low single digits for a few days. The term Chillai Kalan comes from the Persian language, meaning Major Cold. An essential part of Kashmiri tradition is celebrating Chillai Kalan with a delicious dish called Harissa. Finally, the first day of Chillai Kalan is celebrated as World Pheran Day.

The table below showcases the list of festivals and fairs across India.

States/UTs	Festivals/Fairs
Andaman and Nicobar Islands	Island Tourism Festival, Swami Vivekananda Jayanti, Reh—Idu Festival
Andhra Pradesh	Pitr-Paksha Mahalaya Amavasya, Noopuraraavam, All India Industrial Exhibition (<i>Numaish</i>), Bhishma Ekadasi, Deccan Festival, Telugu New Year, Ugadi (Gudi Padwa), Sri Rama Navami Festival, Vinayaka Chaturthi, Durga Festival, Nagula Chavithi
Arunachal Pradesh	Boori Boot—Nyishi, Hill Miris Festival, Losar—Monpa Festival, Tamladu—Idu-Mishmi tribe, Oriah—Wancho tribe, Ali-Aye Ligang—Mishing tribe, Nyokum—Nishi Festival, Mopin—Adi Festival, Pongtu—Tutsa tribe, Sanken—Khampti and Singhpo tribe, Moh or Mol—Tangsa tribe, Dree—Apatani Festival, Solung—Adi Festival, Chalo Loku—Nocte tribe
Assam	Magh or Bhogali Bihu, Dehing Patkai Festival, Elephant Festival, Pragjyothi International Dance Festival, Bohag Bihu, Bihu, Ambubachi Mela
Bihar	Rajgir Dance Festival, Chhath Puja, Sonepur Cattle Fair
Dadra and Nagar Haveli and Daman and Diu	Holika Dahan, National Tribal Art & Food Festival, Monsoon Magic Festival, Heritage Festival, Nariyela Poornima
Delhi	Delhi Book Fair, Taj Mahotsav, Garden Tourism Festival, Mango Festival
Goa	Sunburn Festival, Zatra at Cansaulin, Goa Carnival, Feast of Sacred Heart of Jesus, Sao Joao, Feast of Assumption of our Lady, Feast of Three Kings, Gokulashtami, Chovoth, Ladainha or Ladin, Feast of St Francis Xavier, Feast of Immaculate Conception, Goa Liberation Day
Gujarat	Kutch Festival/Kutch Rann Utsav, Paragliding Festival, Saptak Music Festival, Pravasi Bharatiya Divas, Vibrant Gujarat Global Summit, Uttarayan Kite Festival, Modhera Dance Festival(Uttarardh Mahotsav), Vad Fest, Global Bird Watchers Conference, Bhavnath Fair, Great Indian Heritage Fest, Dangs Darbar, Kavant Fair, Chaitra Navratri, Chitra Vichitra Fair, Mango Festival, Monsoon Festival, Tarnetar Fair (Temple of Shiva or Trinetreshwar), Bhadrapada Purnima (Ambaji), Beach Festival, Shamlaji Fair, Vautha Fair, Madhavpur Mela
Haryana	Surajkund Handicraft Mela, Guru Ravidas's Birthday, Shaheedi Diwas of Bhagat Singh, Rajguru & Sukhdev, Baisakhi Festival, Maharana Pratap Jayanthi, Sant Kabir Jayanthi, Haryana Heroes Martyrdom Day, Maharaja Agrasen Jayanti, Haryana Day, Shaheed Udham Singh's Birthday
Himachal Pradesh	Losar, Himachal Day, Rakhadumni—Rakhi

List of Festivals and Fairs in India

(Continued)

List of Festivals and Fairs in India (Continued)

States/UTs	Festivals/Fairs
Jammu and Kashmir	Leh Sindhu Darshan, Kashmir Lavender Festival, 33rd Kalachakra, Guru Tse-Chu, Vikram Samvat, Wanchuk, Galdan Namchot, Lohri, Spitok Gustor Zanskar, Spituk Gustor, Basant Panchmi, Dosmochey Festival, Yargon Tungshak, Guru Tse-Chu, Stok Guru Tsechu, Matho Nagrang, Nagrang, Shab-e-Miraj, Yuru Kabgyat, Hemis Festival, Shachukul Gustor, Zanskar Karsha Gustor, Phyang Tsedup, Korzok Gustor, Dak-Thok Tse-Chu, Sakti Tse-Chu, Naszal, Ladakh Festival, Navratri, Thiksay Gustor, Chemrey Angchok, Galdan Namchot, Losar (New Year)
Karnataka	Makar Sankramana, Pattadakal Dance Festival, Gudi Padva or Ugadi, Naga Panchami
Kerala	Swathi Sangeethotsavam, Arthunkal Perunnal, Sabarimala Makaravilakku, Kanjiramattom Nercha, Nishagandhi Festival, Ernakulathappan Utsavam, Pattambi Nercha, Thaipooyam, Thaipooya Mahotsavam, Maramon Convention, Machattu Mamangam, Pariyanampetta Pooram, Adoor Gajamela, Kuttikkol Thampuratty Theyyam, Uthralikavu Pooram, Chettikulangara Bharani, Guruvayoor Utsavam, Chittur Kongan Pada, Chinakkathoor Pooram, Attukal Pongala, Parippally Gajamela, Thirunakkara Arattu, Attuvela Mahotsavam, Kodungalloor Bharani, Malanada Kettukazhcha, Arattupuzha Pooram, Nemmara Vallangi Vela, Feast Malayattoor Church, Kadammanitta Padayani, Vishu, Feast at Edathua Church, Thrissur Pooram, Kottiyoor Utsavam, Champakulam Boat Race, Nehru Trophy Boat Race, Thripunithura Athachamayam, Onam, Payippad Boat Race, Aranmula Boat Race, Pulikali, Feast at Manarcad, Neelamperoor Padayani, Vallarpadam Thirunal, Sree Narayana Guru Samadhi, Amrithanandamayi Birthday, Sree Narayana Guru Jayanthi, Soorya Music Festival, Soorya Dance Festival, Mannarasala Ayilyam, Feast at Parumala, Chembai Sangeetholsavam, Kalpathi Ratholsavam, Vaikathashtami Festival, Perumthitta Tharavad Kottamkuzhy, Kochi Biennale, Cochin Carnival, Theyyam at Kanathoor
Madhya Pradesh	Tejaji Fair, Nagaji Fair, Ijtima, Kumbh Mela (Ujjain), Khajuraho Dance Festival, Bhagoriya Festival, Jal Mahotsav, Tansen Music Festival, Madai Festival, Ameer Khan Festival, Karma Festival, Malwa Utsava, Nimar Utsava, Kumar Gandharva Samaroh, Alauddin Khan Samaroh, Chethiyagiri Vihara Festival
Maharashtra	Kalidas Festival, Bird Fest, Chikoo Utsav, Nag Panchami, Kumbh Mela (Nasik)
Meghalaya	Bob Dylan Festival, Ahaia Festival
Manipur	Chavang Kut
Mizoram	Chapchar Kut
Nagaland	Moatsu Festival, Hornbill Festival

List of Festivals and Fairs in India (Continued)

States/UTs	Festivals/Fairs
Odisha	Savitri Amavasya, Mukteswar Dance Festival, Sattila Ekadasi, Rajarani Music Festival, Bhaimi Ekadasi, Magha Purnima, Puri Beach Festival, Kumbha Sankranti, Pankoddhar Ekadasi, Konark Dance Festival, Phagu Dasami, Papanasini Ekadasi, Dola Purnima, Meena Sankranti, Papamochani Ekadasi, Chaitra Amavasya, Rama Navami, Kamada Ekadasi, Pana Sankranti, Baruthini Ekadasi, Chandan Yatra, Akshaya Tritiya, Mohini Ekadasi, Jala Krida Ekadasi, Brusha Sankranti, Sudasha Brata, Raja Sankranti, Rath Yatra, Bada Ekadasi, Bahuda Yatra, Singha Sankranti, Khudurukuni Osha, Gamha Purnima, Bali Trutiya, Kanya Sankranti, Rushi Panchami, Saraswati Puja, Garbhana Sankranti, Mahastami, Kumarotstaba Purnima, Kartik Purnima, Bichha Sankranti, Awala Navami, Konark Festival, International Sand Art Festival, Prathamastami, Manabasa—Gurubar Osha, Dhanu Sankranti
Puducherry	International Yoga Festival
Punjab	Muksar Fair, Lohri, Pracheen Kala Kendra Nritya and Sangeet Sammelan, Baisakhi, Guru Parab- Guru Nanak's Birthday
Rajasthan	Bikaner Camel Festival, Jaipur Literature Festival, Nagaur Fair/Ramdeoji Cattle Fair, Beneshwar Fair, Desert Festival, Braj Festival, Shekhawati Festival, Jambheshwar Fair, Elephant Festival, Gangaur Festival, Mewar Spring Festival, Rajasthan Day Celebration, Mahaveerji Fair, Jodhpur Flamenco and Gypsy Festival (JFG), Summer Festival, Urs Fair, Teej Festival, Kajli Teej Festival, Kota Dussehra, Marwar Festival, Galiyakot Urs, Pushkar Camel Fair, Kolayat Fair (Kapil Muni Fair), Chandrabhaga Fair, Matasya Festival, Bundi Utsav, Winter Festival
Sikkim	Saga Dawa, Drupka Tseshi, Lakshmi Puja, Lhabab Duechen, Kagyat Dance, Losoong Sikkimese, Maghe Sankranti Sanhamole, Losar Tibetan, International Flower Festival, Guru Rimpoche's Birthday, Pang Lhabsol
Tamil Nadu	Kambam Festival, Chennai Dance Festival (December Season), Chennai Music Festival (December Season), Arudra Darisanam/Thiruvathirai, Thyagaraja Aradhana, Bhogi Pongal, Surya Pongal, Mattu Pongal, Jallikattu Festival, Thiruvalluvar day, India International Leather Fair, Thaipusam, Natyanjali Festival, Tamil New Year, Velankanni Church Festival, Mamallapuram Dance Festival and Puthandu Festival
Telangana	Medaram Jatara or Sammakka Saralamma Jatara
Tripura	Rabindra / Nazrul Jayanthi, Kharchi Puja, Ker Puja, Diwali Festival
Uttarakhand	Magh Mela, Uttarayani Mela, International Yoga Week, Kumbh Mela (Haridwar)

(Continued)

List of Festivals and Fairs in India (*Continued*)

States/UTs	Festivals/Fairs
Uttar Pradesh	Ayurveda Jhansi Mahotsav, Kailash Fair, Ayudha Puja, Nag Nathaiya, Deva Mela Ramayan Mela Ayodhya, Kumbh Mela (Prayagraj), Magh Mela, Dhrupad Mela, Lathmar Holi, Sheetala Ashtami, Sankat Mochan Music Festival, Ganga Dussehras, Sri Krishna Janmashtami, Ram Leela, Matki Leela, Ganga Mahotsav, Dev Deepavali, Nauchandi Fair
West Bengal	Kenduli Mela, Gangasagar Mela, Dover Lane Music Conference, Birthday of Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose, Vasant Panchami, Birthday of Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa, Bengali Nava Barsha, Rabindra Jayanti, Durga Puja, Nandikar National Theatre Festival, Vishnupur (Bishnupur) Festival, Bera Utsav, Tibetan New Year (Loshar), Orange Festival, Rash Yatra Festival, Jalpesh Festival

