



Research Paper

Agricultural Festivals and Its Implications: A Case Study from India

MITA SARKAR DAS

INDIRA GANDHI CENTRE, VISVA-BHARATI
RESEARCH ASSOCIATE (ANTHROPOLOGY)

ABSTRACT:- India is a country where agriculture is one of the main livelihood of a number of people. Till date a big part of the economy is resting on agriculture. Festivals are connected with this. Festivals are simply not the occasion for greeting and meeting guests and relatives, but with various dimensions, which are narrated in the following paper.

*Received 09 Mar., 2025; Revised 20 Mar., 2025; Accepted 22 Mar., 2025 © The author(s) 2025.
Published with open access at www.questjournals.org*

India is a country where people from the different sector as well of various caste creed and community live under a single umbrella. The country does not only consists of the state person but also of people of very many religions. They celebrate various agricultural festival round the year. Makar Sankranti is one of them. This is the festival which is in its truest form is the festival of completion of the winter harvest and beginning of a new part of the year. Makar Sankranti has various names. It is termed as Makar Sankranti in West Bengal. The name of Makar Sankranti is termed as Pongal in Tamilnadu, Magha Saaji in Himachal Pradesh, as Lohri in Punjab and Haryana, Makara Chawala in Orissa, Uttarayan in Gujarat, Pongal in Tamilnadu, as Bhogali Bihu in Assam, Sakraat in Rajasthan. Kichiri parab in Uttar Pradesh and Bihar.

Makar Sankranti is the day for shifting of Sun to the zodiac sign Makar. This shifting plays significant role in the lives of the people. People take a holy dip in rivers, fly kites, and have traditional dishes like khichiri, Tilgur, and Gajak in their lunch and dinner.

Pongal is celebrated in Tamilnadu. Pongal is a four day harvest festival in the state, Karnataka, and parts of Telangana. The name Pongal refers to the offering of boiled rice, lentils, and sweetener such as jaggery, or sugar, to the Sun God. The festival is celebrated to thank Sun God, the farm animals for the bountiful of harvest. On the first day of the Pongal festival which is also termed as the Bhogali Pongal, people discard all the old possession, light the Bonfire to signify the start of a new beginning. The second day is the date of Surya Pongal, dedicated to the Sun God and is considered the main day of the festival. The third day is the Mattu Pongal and is dedicated to the worship of the cows and buffaloes. The fourth day is known as the kannum Pongal. This is the day when friends and families gather together and enjoy amongst themselves.

Bhogali Bihu is also known as Magh Bihu. This is more or less celebrated

during the time of Makar Sankranti. This is the time when farmers give thanks to the nature and god for bountiful harvest and the beginning of a new season which is spring. This festival is celebrated in three days. The first day is called Uruka when house holders make huts of bamboo and banana leaf. The second day is called Bihu when people offer prayers to the Gods and ancestors. In the evening people of Assam perform Bihu dance and the traditional songs along with the traditional musical instruments.

Onam is a major annual harvest festival of Kerala that is celebrated to mark the beginning of the harvest season in the state. The festival is celebrated for long ten days at a stretch. During Onam, people of Kerala prepare various vegetarian dishes which are served on the banana leaf. This is termed as the Onam sadya. People also participate in various traditional sports and games like boat race, bullfights and Onnathallu [a kind of martial art]. People adorn the gate of the homes with intricate flower arrangements. It is termed as the Onapookalam. Onam is also marked by the elaborate dances such as Thiruvathirakali and kummatikali. Men and women perform this wearing traditional attire. Onam is the most important and widely celebrated agricultural

festival in Kerala and it brings together people from all walks of life .It is a time for families and friends to come together ,give thanks for bountiful harvest ,and celebrate the rich cultural heritage of the state .

Gudi pawda is celebrated at Maharastra and in some parts of Karnataka .It typically falls in the month of March or April and points the beginning of the last month of the Bengali year .In the word Gudi Pawda the first part of the word denotes the long pole. People on this day put a big pole along with a triangular piece of cloth tied with the pole before their houses. It is believed by the Maharastrians that this pole with the triangle piece of cloth can ward off evil spirits The bamboo pole is decorated with Neem leaves ,a silk scarf ,garland of mango leaves and a silver or copper pot .People clean their houses and prepare traditional food like Srikhand and Puri during this time . It is also the time for people to visit friends and family and exchange gifts and sweets.In maharastra this festival is celebrated as the start of the sowing season and also the victory of Lord Rama over the Demon King Ravana.

In Karnataka this is known as the Ugadi .It is the combination of the end of the harvesting season and the beginning of the New year.

In Andhra pradesh and Telegana Ugadi is celebrated in a different manner .On the first day of the Hindu Calendar the festival is celebrated .It is believed by the people that on this auspicious day Lord Brahma began the creation of the universe .People take a holy dip in the sacred river and pray to God .

Maghi Sajji is the name of the festival of agriculture in Himachal Pradesh.It is the festival which says the end of the winter solstice and the start of the Rabi harvest.

Makara Chawla is the agricultural festival of the state Orissa.It typically falls in the month of September and is celebrated to make the start of the new agricultural season .

Uttarayan is the agricultural festival of the state Gujrat .It is the day when people celebrate new beginnings ,prosperity and good fortune .It is also believed that it is the day when Sun God is most powerful It is a day when farmers begin their new harvest .People of Gujrat fly kites ,exchange sweets ,lite the bonfire and dance in the traditional attire around it ,in the evening .

Harvest festivals are the important part of the multi layered ,and multifaceted culture of India .Celebrating in different states of India in different name ,these festivals serve as the reminder of the importance of agriculture in life of Indians .Agricultural festivals give time to a group of people to interact between themselves ,outside and within ,and time for exchanging gifts ,love and respect . festivals give time to remember the stories of different heroes from epics and non epics where the heroes kill the villains and bring prosperity and peace amongst the people .The stories give time to the people to think and remember the epic heroes and the villains . Agricultural festivals indicate the beginning of a season and the completion of the same on other day . It reminds that human lives also begin on a particular time and end some other day .Both the occasion implies the circular form of the human life and the festivities ,where there are always a beginning and an end .

Bibliography

- [1]. B. Thakre, Ramesh: Indian Agriculture. Story mirror, New Delhi 2017