

FESTIVALS OF SOUTH ASIA

This is a curated list of festivals celebrated in the Indian Subcontinent. (Dates are subjected to change, this list will be updated annually.)

This list has been made by the South **Asian Languages** Discord server.

<https://discord.gg/sjU4xwt5GC>

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INDIA

[JANUARY](#)

[FEBRUARY](#)

[MARCH](#)

[APRIL](#)

[MAY](#)

[JUNE](#)

[JULY](#)

[AUGUST](#)

[SEPTEMBER](#)

[OCTOBER](#)

[NOVEMBER](#)

[DECEMBER](#)

PAKISTAN

[JANUARY](#)

[FEBRUARY](#)

[MARCH](#)

[APRIL](#)

[MAY](#)

[JUNE](#)

[JULY](#)

[AUGUST](#)

[SEPTEMBER](#)

[OCTOBER](#)

[NOVEMBER](#)

[DECEMBER](#)

BANGLADESH

JANUARY

FEBRUARY

MARCH

APRIL

MAY

JUNE

JULY

AUGUST

SEPTEMBER

OCTOBER

NOVEMBER

DECEMBER

NEPAL

JANUARY

FEBRUARY

MARCH

APRIL

MAY

JUNE

JULY

AUGUST

SEPTEMBER

OCTOBER

NOVEMBER

DECEMBER

AFGHANISTAN

JANUARY

FEBRUARY

MARCH

APRIL

MAY

JUNE

JULY

AUGUST
SEPTEMBER
OCTOBER
NOVEMBER
DECEMBER

SRI LANKA

JANUARY
FEBRUARY
MARCH
APRIL
MAY
JUNE
JULY
AUGUST
SEPTEMBER
OCTOBER
NOVEMBER
DECEMBER

MALDIVES

JANUARY
FEBRUARY
MARCH
APRIL
MAY
JUNE
JULY
AUGUST
SEPTEMBER
OCTOBER
NOVEMBER
DECEMBER

BHUTAN

JANUARY
FEBRUARY

[MARCH](#)

[APRIL](#)

[MAY](#)

[JUNE](#)

[JULY](#)

[AUGUST](#)

[SEPTEMBER](#)

[OCTOBER](#)

[NOVEMBER](#)

[DECEMBER](#)

INDIA

JANUARY

- **13th January: Lohri**

Lohri is a popular winter Punjabi folk festival celebrated primarily in Northern India. The significance and legends about the Lohri festival are many and these link the festival to the Punjab region. It is believed by many that the festival marks the passing of the winter solstice. It is observed by People of North India: Punjab, Jammu, Haryana and Himachal Pradesh by Punjabis, Dogras, Haryanvis, and Himachalis. Bonfires, dance and songs are observed.



- **14th January: Pongal**

Pongal, also referred to as Thai Pongal, is a multi-day Hindu harvest festival celebrated by Tamils and Telugus in India and Sri Lanka. It is observed at the start of the month. It is a celebration to thank the Sun, Mother Nature and the various farm animals that help to contribute to a bountiful harvest. It is celebrated with Pongal dishes, decorations, flour dishes, homecoming, prayers, processions, and gift giving.



- **14th January: Uttarayan**



Makara/Makar Sankranti or Uttarayan or Maghi or simply Sankranti, also known in West Bengal as Moker Sonkranti, in Mithila as Til Sakraait and in Nepal as Maghe Sankranti, 'Sankranti' here means 'transfer', this day is considered as the transition day of Sun into Capricorn. Kite flying is generally observed on this day.

- **23rd January: Subhas Chandra Bose Jayanti**

23rd of January (known as Parakram Diwas) is marked to celebrate Netaji's courage, selflessness, and the spirit of service to Mother India! Subhas Chandra Bose was an Indian nationalist whose defiance of British authority in India made him a hero among Indians. Subhas Chandra Bose's birthday is celebrated on 23rd January every year to remember and honour Netaji's vigour as one of the greatest freedom fighters of India.



- **26th January: Republic Day**

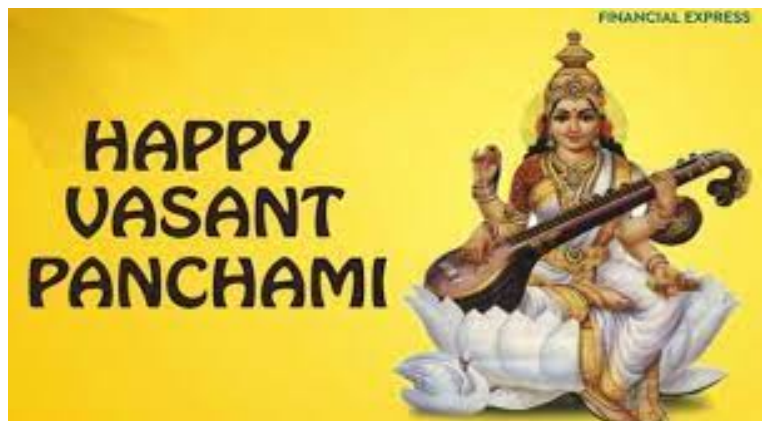
Republic Day is a public holiday in India, when the country marks and celebrates the date on which the Constitution of India came into effect on 26 January 1950, replacing the Government of India Act 1935 as the governing document of India and thus, turning the nation into a newly formed republic. Parades, speeches and cultural dances depicting sentiments of nationalism are observed on this day.



FEBRUARY

- **5th February: Basant Panchami, Saraswati Puja**

Vasant Panchami, also called Saraswati Puja in honor of the Hindu goddess Saraswati, is a festival that marks the preparation for the arrival of spring. The festival is celebrated by people of Dharmic religions in the Indian subcontinent and Nepal in different ways

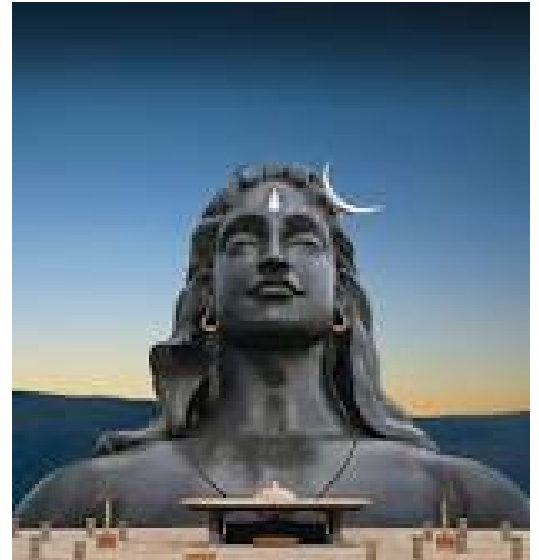


depending on the region. Common observations are pujas and offering respect to the Goddess of education (Saraswati) and social functions.

MARCH

- **1st March: Mahashivratri**

Maha Shivaratri is a Hindu festival celebrated annually in honour of the god Shiva. The name also refers to the night when Shiva performs the heavenly dance called Tandava. Shivratri is said to be the night when Shiva and Shakti, the masculine and feminine energies that keep the planet in balance, come together. This is an important festival in Hindu culture that commemorates 'overcoming darkness and ignorance in life. On this day devotees of Lord Shiva, observe a day-long fast, remain awake all night and perform puja during Nishita Kaal to celebrate the auspicious occasion of Maha Shivratri.



- **17th March: Holika Dahan**

Holika Dahan is celebrated by burning Holika, an asuri. For many traditions in Hinduism, Holi celebrates the victory of good over evil. On the day of Holika Dahan, people lit bonfires to celebrate the triumph of good over evil. The day is associated with the story of demon king Hiranyakashipu and his son Prahlad.



- **18th March: Holi**

Holi is a popular ancient Hindu festival, also known as the Festival of Spring, the Festival of Colours or the Festival of Love. The festival celebrates the eternal and divine love of Radha Krishna. On the day of Holi, entire streets and towns turn red, green and yellow as people throw colored powder into the air and splash them on others. People also splash water on each other in celebration.



APRIL

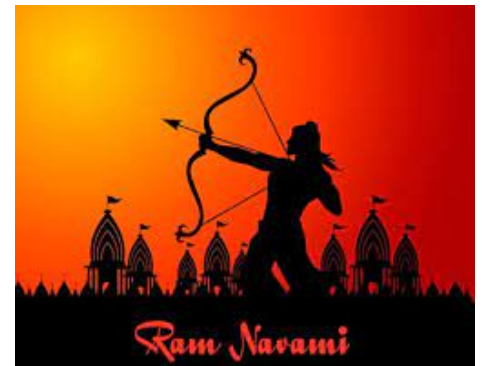
- **2nd April: Gudi Padwa**

Gudi Padwa is a spring-time festival that marks the traditional new year for Marathi and Konkani Hindus, but is also celebrated by other Hindus as well. Predominantly celebrated in the state, the festival marks the creation of the universe by Lord Brahma. As a result, Gudi Padwa is one of the most important Hindu festivals, and it is thought to bring a lot of good luck, success, wealth, and happiness. On the day of Gudi Padwa, devotees get up before sunrise and take a bath. They then decorate the main entrance of the house with mango leaves and install the Gudi with prayers of Lord Brahma. After the Gudi is installed, devotees worship Lord Vishu as per the tradition and rituals.



- **10th April: Ram Navami**

Rama Navami is a Hindu festival that celebrates the birthday of Rama, the seventh avatar of the deity Vishnu. Rama is particularly important in the Vaishnava tradition of Hinduism. Ram Navami is celebrated to mark the birth of Lord Ram to King Dasharath and Queen Kausalya in Ayodhya in Treta Yuga.



- **14th April: Baisakhi**

Vaisakhi, also pronounced Baisakhi, marks the first day of the month of Vaisakh and is traditionally celebrated annually on 13 April and sometimes 14 April as a celebration of spring harvest primarily in Northern India. Further, other Indian cultures and diaspora celebrate this festival too. Baisakhi is a



major event for the farmers as it commemorates the harvest time of the Rabi season. Wheat crops could be seen growing and swinging all across Punjab at this time of year. Farmers get ecstatic and delighted when they see the crop.

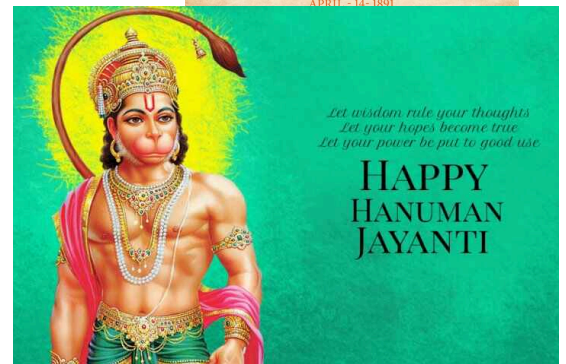
- **14th April: Ambedhkar Jayanti**

Ambedkar Jayanti or Bhim Jayanti is an annual festival observed on 14 April to commemorate the memory of B. R. Ambedkar, Indian polymath and civil rights activist. It marks Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar's birthdate was on 14 April 1891.



- **16th April: Hanuman Jayanti**

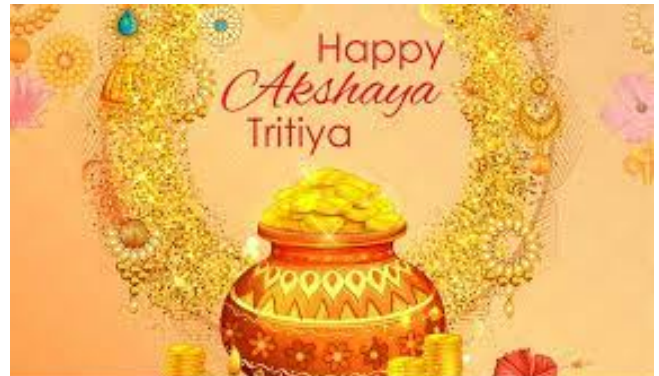
Hanuman Jayanti or Janmotsav is a Hindu religious festival that celebrates the birth of Hindu God Hanuman, who is immensely venerated throughout India and Nepal. This festival is celebrated on different days in different parts of India. It commemorates the birth of Hanuman.



MAY

- **3rd May: Akshaya Tritiya**

Akshaya Tritiya, also known as Akti or Akha Teej, is an annual Hindu and Jain spring festival. It falls on the third tithi of the bright half of the month of Vaisakha. It is regionally observed as an auspicious day by Hindus and Jains in India, it signifies the "third day of unending prosperity". People celebrate Akshaya Tritiya to bring good luck to their lives. As per common belief, buying gold and properties on this day brings prosperity and wealth in the future.



JUNE

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JULY

- **1st July: Jagannath Rath Yatra**

Odisha is known for its famous and sacred Jagannath Temple, which is in Puri. The Ratha Yatra or the Chariot festival is celebrated at the temple of Jagannath, associated with God Jagannath. Ratha Yatra is a Hindu festival associated with Lord Jagannath held at Shri Kshetra Puri Dham in the state of Odisha, India. Ratha Yatra is a Hindu festival associated with Lord Jagannath held at Shri Kshetra Puri Dham in the state of Odisha, India.



- **13th July: Guru Purnima**

Guru Purnima is a tradition dedicated to all the spiritual and academic Gurus, who are evolved or enlightened humans, ready to share their wisdom, based on Karma Yoga. It is celebrated as a festival in India, Nepal and Bhutan by Hindus, Jains and Buddhists. It is a day dedicated to teachers and mentors.



AUGUST

- **2nd August: Nag Panchami**

Nag Panchami is a day devoted to the Nag Devta or the snake god in the Hindu tradition. Every year, this day is celebrated during the auspicious month of Sawan, according to the Hindu calendar. It's an important day for the devotees of Lord Shiva and Lord Vishnu.



- **11th August: Raksha Bandhan**

Raksha Bandhan, is a popular, traditionally Hindu, annual rite, or ceremony, which is central to a festival of the same name celebrated in South Asia, and in other parts of the world significantly influenced by Hindu culture. The festival of Raksha Bandhan is observed as a symbol of duty between brothers and sisters. The occasion is meant to celebrate any type of



brother-sister relationship between men and women who may/may not be biologically related.

- **15th August: Independence Day**

Independence Day is celebrated annually on 15 August as a national holiday in India commemorating the nation's independence from the United Kingdom on 15 August 1947. As India freed herself from the clutches of the British empire, the whole country roared in happiness, marking the reign of an independent and free land, away from the terror rule of the 200-year British rule.



- **19th August: Janmashtami**

Krishna Janmashtami, also known simply as Janmashtami or Gokulashtami, is an annual Hindu festival that celebrates the birth of Krishna, the eighth avatar of Vishnu. Janmashtami is celebrated to mark the birth of Lord Krishna. People celebrate by fasting, breaking dahi-handi, singing hymns, visiting temples, preparing feasts and praying together. It is a grand celebration particularly in Mathura and Vrindavan. Raas Lila or Krishna Lila are also a part of the celebrations.



- **31st August: Ganesh Chaturthi**

Ganesh Chaturthi, also known as Vinayaka Chaturthi, or Vinayaka Chaviti is a Hindu festival celebrating the arrival of Lord Ganesh to earth from Kailash Parvat with his mother Goddess Parvati/Gauri. Some observances are prayer, celebrations and the immersion of deities. Celebrations include Chanting of Vedic hymns and Hindu texts, prayers, last day: processions, idol immersion.



SEPTEMBER

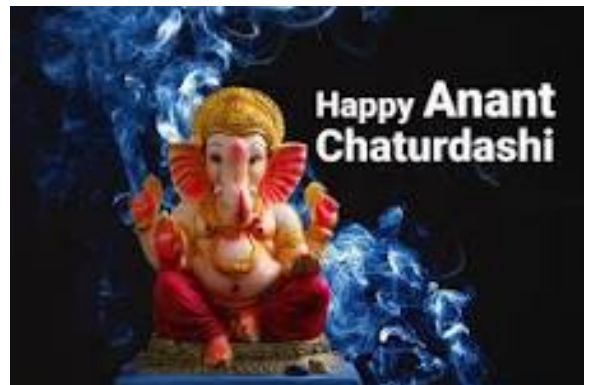
- **8th September: Onam**

Onam is an annual Hindu harvest festival celebrated in the Indian state of Kerala. A major annual event for Keralites, it is the official festival of the state and includes a spectrum of cultural events. Onam is the biggest festival of the year in Kerala. The purpose of the festival is to commemorate the mythical King Mahabali, celebrate the end of the monsoon season, and welcome the harvest. This is a great festival to experience in India as it is full of happiness, excitement, and enjoyment by people of all ages. The festival lasts for ten days and is celebrated with a great splendour.



- **9th September: Anant Chaturdashi**

Anant Chaturdashi / Ganesh Visarjan is a festival observed and celebrated by Jains and Hindus. Anant Chaturdashi is the last day of the ten-day-long Ganesh utsav or Ganesh Chaturthi and is called Ganesh Chaudas when devotees bid adieu to Lord Ganesha by Anant Chaturdashi Ganesh Visarjan. Anant Chaturdashi is a day dedicated to Lord Vishnu. It's the most significant day to worship Lord Vishnu in his eternal form — Anant. On the day of Anant Chaturdashi, the story of Anant Chaturdashi is recited while bathing and worshipping Lord Vishnu. Anant Sutra is made by adding 14 sacred knots to a cotton thread with turmeric, kumkum and saffron.



- **26th September: Sharad Navratri**

Navaratri is a biannual Hindu festival that spans over nine nights, first in the month of Chaitra and again in the month of Sharada. It is observed for different reasons and celebrated differently in various parts of the Hindu Indian cultural sphere. Theoretically, there are four seasonal Navaratri.

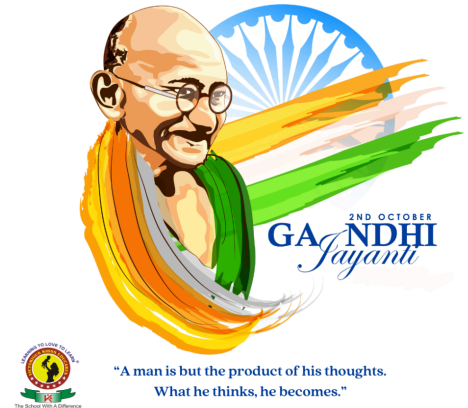


Sharad Navratri marks the end of monsoon and is observed during the lunar month of Ashvin. In some parts of India, it is celebrated after the autumn harvest and in some others, during the harvest. The festival celebrated the victory of Goddess Durga against the demon Mahishasura.

OCTOBER

- **2nd October: Gandhi Jayanti**

Gandhi Jayanti is an event celebrated in India to mark the birthday of Mahatma Gandhi. It is celebrated annually on 2 October, and is one of the three national holidays of India. Father of the Nation, as he was called, led India's freedom movement along with many other national leaders against British rule in India. The International Day of Non-Violence is observed on 2 October, the birthday of Mahatma Gandhi, leader of the Indian independence movement and pioneer of the philosophy and strategy of non-violence.



- **3rd October: Durga Puja Ashtami**

Durga Ashtami or Maha Ashtami is one of the most auspicious days of the five days long Durga Puja Festival. Traditionally, the festival is observed for 10 days in Hindu households but the actual puja that takes place in the 'pandals' is held over a period of 5 days (starting from Shashthi). On the day of Durga Ashtami, devotees wake up early in the morning and worship her by making several offerings including flowers, chandan (sandalwood paste), dhoop, kumkuma, fruits, etc. Devotees also chant various devi mantras on this day.



- **5th October: Dussehra**

Dashain, is a major Hindu religious festival in Nepal and some parts of India. It is also celebrated by Hindus elsewhere in the world, including among the Lhotshampa of Bhutan and the Burmese Gurkhas of Myanmar. Observances during the celebration are putting tika on forehead, prayers, religious rituals like



burning an effigy of Ravana. This day marks the end of Durga Puja,

- **13th October: Karva Chauth**

Karwa Chauth is a festival celebrated by Hindu women of Northern and Western India on the fourth day after Purnima in the month of Kartika. Karva Chauth is a one-day festival celebrated annually by married Hindu women in which they observe a fast from sunrise to moonrise and pray for the well-being and longevity of their husbands. The festival is also observed by unmarried women who pray in the hope of securing a desired life partner.



- **23rd October: Dhanteras**

Dhanteras, also known as Dhanatrayodashi, is the first day that marks the festival of Diwali in India. The word Dhanteras is made of two words - Dhan which means wealth, and Teras which means 13th day. According to Hindu calendar, Dhanteras falls on the 13th lunar day of Krishna Paksha (dark fortnight) in the month of Ashwin. People also celebrate this day as Dhanvantri Jayanti, by praying to the God of Ayurveda ie Lord Dhanvantari. Dhanteras is the birth anniversary of Lord Dhanvantari, who imparted the knowledge of ayurveda to mankind.



- **24th October: Diwali**

Diwali is a festival of lights and one of the major festivals celebrated by Hindus, Buddhists, Jains, and Sikhs. The festival usually lasts five days and is celebrated during the Hindu lunisolar month Kartika. Candles, clay lamps, and oil lanterns are lit and placed throughout the home, in the streets, in areas of worship, and floated on lakes and rivers. Fireworks are also set off on the night of Diwali.



- **26th October: Bhai Dooj**

Bhai Dooj marks the end of the five-day festivities of Diwali. It is celebrated to mark the bond and love between a sister-brother relationship. Bhai Dooj is similar to the Indian festival of Raksha Bandhan as it is commemorated to celebrate the unbreakable bond between a brother and sister.



- **30th October: Chhath Puja**

Chhath is an ancient Hindu festival historically native to the Indian subcontinent, more specifically, the Indian state of Bihar along with West Bengal, Uttar Pradesh, Jharkhand, and the southern parts of Nepal. Chhath Puja holds a special place in the Hindu mythology and it is believed that following the puja with utmost dedication can help in removing obstacles, bring prosperity and happiness to the family. Observances include Prayers and religious rituals, including puja and prasad, bathing in the Ganges, and fasting.



NOVEMBER

- **14th November: Children's Day**

Every year 14 November is celebrated as Children's Day to pay tribute to India's former Prime Minister, Pandit Jawahar Lal Nehru, for his contribution to building the nation. It is a day celebrating the spirit of childhood. After Jawaharlal Nehru's death, it was decided that India would celebrate Children's Day on November 14 to mark his birth anniversary. Jawaharlal Nehru was born on November 14, 1889. His affection for children is acknowledged by all and Children's Day celebrates that bond.



DECEMBER

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PAKISTAN

JANUARY



FEBRUARY

- **5th February: Basant Panchami**

Vasant Panchami, also called Saraswati Puja in honor of the Hindu goddess Saraswati, is a festival that marks the preparation for the arrival of spring. The festival is celebrated by people of Dharmic religions in the Indian subcontinent and Nepal in different ways depending on the region. Common observations are pujas and offering respect to the Goddess of education (Saraswati) and social functions.



MARCH

- **1st March: Shab-e-Meraj**

This festival is celebrated to commemorate the night when Allah took the Prophet Mohammad to the heaven after completing the journey of Mecca to the Jerusalem. The customs and tradition of celebrating this festival varies among Islamic communities. Some people celebrate it by spending whole night in listening or reading the Isra and Mi'raj story at any of the mosque or home. They decorate their houses and whole area of the celebration with the candles, electric lights and many other means.



- **17th March: Holi**

Holi is a popular ancient Hindu festival, also known as the Festival of Spring, the Festival of Colours or the Festival of Love. The festival celebrates the eternal and divine love of Radha Krishna. On the



day of Holi, entire streets and towns turn red, green and yellow as people throw colored powder into the air and splash them on others. People also splash water on each other in celebration.

- **18th March: Shab-e-Barat**

Shab-e-Barat is one of the major festivals for the Muslims, celebrated on the 15th night of the month of Sha'ban, the eighth month of the Islamic calendar. The history of this festival dates back to the time when the twelfth Imam of the Shia Muslims named Muhammad al-Mahdi was born. The night of Shab-e-Barat is celebrated as his birthday. On the other hand, the Sunni Muslim community believes that on this day only, God saved the Ark of Noah from the flood.



- **23rd March: Pakistan Day**

Pakistan Resolution Day, also Republic Day, is a national holiday in Pakistan commemorating the Lahore Resolution passed on 23 March 1940 and the adoption of the first constitution of Pakistan during the transition of the Dominion of Pakistan to the Islamic Republic of Pakistan on 23 March 1956.



APRIL

- **21st April: Ridván**

The Festival of Ridván commemorates the 12 days when Bahá'u'lláh, the prophet-founder, lived in paradise, which is called Ridván. During this time, Bahá'u'lláh declared that he was the messenger of God for that time. This is the holiest of days in the Baha'i tradition. Baha'i houses of worship hark back to Ridván.



MAY

- **3rd May: Eid-ul-Fitr**

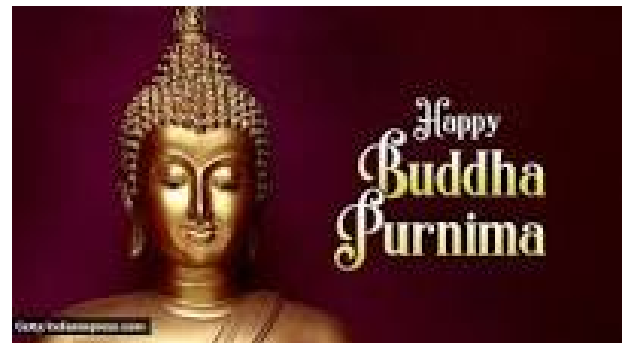
Eid ul-Fitr is a very important festival in the Islamic calendar and was started by the Prophet Muhammad himself. It is also known as 'The Feast of Breaking the Fast' and is celebrated by Muslims worldwide to mark the end of Ramadan. In the evening, everyone goes to visit their relatives wearing new clothes. Eid special food is served there. This continues during the whole period of Eid, 2-3 days after the Eid. Some people go on holiday after the Eid day and stay their as long as their leave permits.



- **16th May: Buddha Purnima**

Buddha's Birthday is a Buddhist festival that is celebrated in most of East Asia and South Asia commemorating the birth of the Prince Siddhartha Gautama, later the Gautama Buddha, who was the founder of Buddhism.

Buddha Purnima celebrates Buddhism which stands for – peace, non-violence and harmony. It marks the birth anniversary of Gautam Buddha who was the founder of Buddhism. The day honours the philosopher, spiritual guide, religious leader and meditator who got liberated from the cycle of birth and rebirth.



JUNE

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JULY

- **10th-12th July: Eid-al-Adha**

Eid al-Adha is the latter of the two official holidays which are celebrated within Islam. It honors the willingness of Ibrahim to sacrifice his son Ismail as an act of obedience to Allah's command. Observances of this day are sacrifice of a sheep, cow, goat, buffalo or camel and Eid prayers.



AUGUST

- **7th August: Ashura**

Ashura is an Islamic holiday that occurs on the tenth day of Muharram, the first month in the Islamic lunar calendar. In general, the two main practices performed on the day are fasting and mourning. This day marks the day that Musa was saved by God and marks the martyrdom of Husayn ibn Ali and members of his family.



- **11th August: Raksha Bandhan**

Holi is a popular ancient Hindu festival, also known as the Festival of Spring, the Festival of Colours or the Festival of Love. The festival celebrates the eternal and divine love of Radha Krishna. On the day of Holi, entire streets and towns turn red, green and yellow as people throw colored powder into the air and splash them on others. People also splash water on each other in celebration.



- **14th August: Independence Day**

Independence Day, observed annually on 14 August, is a national holiday in Pakistan. It commemorates the day when Pakistan achieved independence and was declared a sovereign state following the end of the British Raj in 1947. On 14 August 1947, Pakistan achieved independence one day prior to Indian independence. India was partitioned, and an East and West Pakistan were created from Muslim majority areas.



- **19th August: Janmashtami**

Krishna Janmashtami, also known simply as Janmashtami or Gokulashtami, is an annual Hindu festival that celebrates the birth of Krishna, the eighth avatar of Vishnu. Janmashtami is celebrated to mark the birth



of Lord Krishna. People celebrate by fasting, breaking dahi-handi, singing hymns, visiting temples, preparing feasts and praying together. It is a grand celebration particularly in Mathura and Vrindavan. Raas Lila or Krishna Lila are also a part of the celebrations.

- **21st August: Birthday of Lord Zoroaster**

Khordad Sal is the birth anniversary (or birthdate) of Zoroaster. Zoroastrians all over the world, celebrate the day in a great glamor. Parties and ghambars are held. Special prayers and jashan are also held throughout the entire day. This is known as the 'Greater Noruz' and happens six days after Noruz. The chosen date is symbolic since the actual date of the Prophet's birth cannot be identified accurately. This festival is considered one of the most important in the Zoroastrian calendar.



SEPTEMBER

- **17th September: Chelum**

Chehellom (Persian: چهلم, "the fortieth day") is a Shiite religious observance that occurs forty days after the Day of Ashura. It commemorates the martyrdom of Al-Husayn ibn Ali, the grandson of Muhammad, who was martyred on the 10th day of the month of Muharram.



OCTOBER

- **9th October: Eid Milad un-Nabi**

Mawlid is the observance of the birthday of the Islamic prophet Muhammad which is commemorated primarily on 12th of Rabi al-Awwal, the third month in the Islamic calendar. It is observed by the majority of Muslims throughout the world.



NOVEMBER

- **9th November: Iqbal Day**

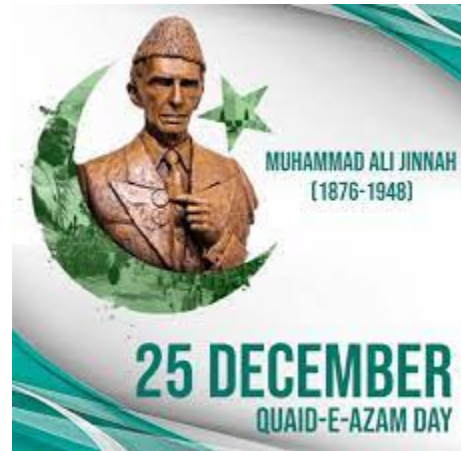
Iqbal day is organized and celebrated on 9 November every year in all the provinces as a tribute to Allama Muhammad Iqbal, the "Poet of the East". Iqbal was born on 9 November 1877 in Sialkot, within the Punjab Province of British India (now in Pakistan). He died on 21 April 1938 in Lahore, Punjab, British India.



DECEMBER

- **25th December: Quaid-e-Azam Day**

Quaid-e-Azam Day in Pakistan is celebrated every year on December 25. It is a celebration of Muhammad Ali Jinnah's birthday across Pakistan. He is believed to be the founder of the country and was known as 'Quaid-e-Azam,' which means 'Great Leader. On Pakistan Day, wreaths are laid at his mausoleum in Karachi to commemorate his role in the founding of Pakistan. Special programmes about Jinnah will be broadcast on TV and radio stations.



BANGLADESH

JANUARY

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FEBRUARY

- ***21st February: Language Martyr's Day***

Language Movement Day, also called State Language Day or Language Martyrs' Day, is a national holiday of Bangladesh taking place on 21 February each year and commemorating the Bengali language movement and its martyrs. 21 February was declared to be the International Mother Language Day by UNESCO in 1999. It has been observed throughout the world since 21 February 2000. The declaration came up in tribute to the Language Movement done by the Bangladeshis (then the East Pakistanis).



MARCH

- ***17th March: Sheikh Mujibur Rahman's Birthday***

Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, often shortened as Sheikh Mujib or Mujib and widely known as Bangabandhu was a Bangladeshi politician and statesman who is regarded as the Father of the Nation of Bangladesh. This holiday may also be known as 'Father of the Nation's birth anniversary' and it commemorates the birthday of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman who is regarded as the father of the nation of Bangladesh and is popularly known as Bangabandhu ("Friend of Bengal"). The day is also celebrated as National Children's Day.



- ***18th March: Shab-e-Barat***

Shab-e-Barat is one of the major festivals for the Muslims, celebrated on the 15th night of the month of Sha'ban, the eighth month of the Islamic calendar. The history of this festival dates back to the time when the twelfth Imam of the Shia Muslims named



Muhammad al-Mahdi was born. The night of Shab-e-Barat is celebrated as his birthday. On the other hand, the Sunni Muslim community believes that on this day only, God saved the Ark of Noah from the flood.

- **26th March: Independence Day**

The Independence Day of Bangladesh, which takes place on 26 March, is a Bangladeshi national holiday. It commemorates the country's declaration of independence from Pakistan in the early hours of 26 March 1971. On the morning of March 26, 1971, Sheikh Mujibur Rahman declared Bangladesh's independence from Pakistan, which were known at the time as East Pakistan and West Pakistan, respectively. The day is characterised by parades, speeches, fairs, and ceremonial events to commemorate that historic day in 1971.



APRIL

- **14th April: Bengali New Year**

Pohela Boishakh is the first day of the Bengali calendar which is also the official calendar of Bangladesh. This festival is celebrated on 14 April in Bangladesh and 15 April in the Indian states of West Bengal, Tripura, and Assam by Bengalis regardless of religious faith. Pohela Boishakh is a significant celebration since it symbolises the start of a new fiscal year.



- **29th April: Shab-e-Qadr**

Shab-e-Qadr is among the sacred nights in the Islamic calendar month of Ramadan. Muslims believe that praying during these nights will make their every wish come true. In English, the term Shab-e-Qadr is understood to be the Night Of Destiny, Power, and Value. Shab-e-Qadr is celebrated to commemorate the occasion when the holy book of Muslims, the Quran, was sent to earth from heaven and it was on this night that the first verse of the Quran was revealed to Prophet Muhammad.



Shab-e-Qadr falls on one of the odd-numbered nights on the last ten days of Ramadan.

- **29th April: Jumatul Bidah**

Jumatul Bidah translates as 'Friday of farewell' and marks the last Friday prayers in the holy month of Ramadan. Some Muslims regard this day as the second holiest of Ramadan and spend a large part of the day in worship. The term Jumat-ul-Wida has been taken from two words 'juma' and 'wida.' Juma means gathering and wida means farewell.



MAY

- **3rd May: Eid-Al-Fitr**

Eid ul-Fitr is a very important festival in the Islamic calendar and was started by the Prophet Muhammad himself. It is also known as 'The Feast of Breaking the Fast' and is celebrated by Muslims worldwide to mark the end of Ramadan. In the evening, everyone goes to visit their relatives wearing new clothes. Eid special food is served there. This continues during the whole period of Eid, 2-3 days after the Eid. Some people go on holiday after the Eid day and stay there as long as their leave permits.



- **16th May: Buddha Purnima**

Buddha's Birthday is a Buddhist festival that is celebrated in most of East Asia and South Asia commemorating the birth of the Prince Siddhartha Gautama, later the Gautama Buddha, who was the founder of Buddhism. Buddha Purnima celebrates Buddhism which stands for – peace, non-violence and harmony. It marks the birth anniversary of Gautam Buddha who was the founder of Buddhism. The day honours the philosopher, spiritual



guide, religious leader and mediator who got liberated from the cycle of birth and rebirth.

JUNE

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JULY

- **10th July: Eid-ul-Azha**

Eid al-Adha is the latter of the two official holidays which are celebrated within Islam. It honours the willingness of Ibrahim to sacrifice his son Ismail as an act of obedience to Allah's command. Observances of this day are sacrifice of a sheep, cow, goat, buffalo or camel and Eid prayers.



AUGUST

- **8th August: Ashura**

Ashura is an Islamic holiday that occurs on the tenth day of Muharram, the first month in the Islamic lunar calendar. In general, the two main practices performed on the day are fasting and mourning. This day marks the day that Musa was saved by God and marks the martyrdom of Husayn ibn Ali and members of his family.



- **15th August: National Mourning Day**

Every 15 August is National Mourning Day in Bangladesh to remember and mourn the brutal murder of the nation's first president, Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, who also led the independence movement for East Pakistan (Bangladesh) against West Pakistan.



SEPTEMBER

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OCTOBER

- **4th October: Durga Puja**



Durga Puja, also known as Durgotsava or Mahashtami, is a Hindu festival in South Asia that celebrates the worship of the goddess Durga. Durga Puja celebrates the ten-armed mother goddess and her victory over the evil buffalo demon Mahishasura. To Hindus, Durga represents the embodiment of shakti, the powerful feminine force that governs all cosmic creation, existence, and change.

- **9th October: Eid-e-Miladunnabi**

Mawlid is the observance of the birthday of the Islamic prophet Muhammad which is commemorated primarily on 12th of Rabi al-Awwal, the third month in the Islamic calendar. It is observed by the majority of Muslims throughout the world.



NOVEMBER



DECEMBER

- **16th December: Victory Day**

Victory day is a national holiday in Bangladesh celebrated on 16 December to commemorate the victory of the Bangladesh forces over the Pakistani forces in the Bangladesh Liberation War in 1971. Victory Day reminds us freedom must not be taken for granted. It must be cherished, safeguarded, & celebrated.



NEPAL

JANUARY

- **15th January: Maghe Sankranti**

Maghe Sankranti is a Nepalese festival observed on the first of Magh in the Vikram Sambat or Yele calendar bringing an end to the winter solstice containing the month of Poush. Maghe Sankranti is regarded as marking the beginning of an auspicious phase in Nepalese culture. It is cited as the 'holy phase of transition'. It marks the end of an inauspicious phase which according to the Hindu calendar begins around mid-December.



FEBRUARY

- **2nd February: Sonam Losar(Tamang New Year)**

The old year's farewell and New Year's greeting is called Lhosar or Losar. Sonam Lhosar is the most important and the biggest festival of the Tamang ethnic group. It is celebrated by the Tamang communities with great fervour living in every corner of Nepal along with the Tamang people throughout the world. In Sonam Lhosar the Tamang people visit monasteries and stupas where special rituals with mask dance are performed to drive away evil spirits. The houses and surroundings are cleaned to welcome gods and goddesses. Pork, chicken, mutton, fish, and sweet deserts are consumed in the Sonam Lhosar.



- **6th February: Basant Panchami**

With the end of winter, comes the beginning of spring season when Saraswati Puja is performed to pray to the goddess of art, music, science, wisdom, and knowledge. Saraswati Puja or Basant Panchami is celebrated on the day of the spring season. It is considered as an auspicious day to start learning new things.



- **19th February: National Democracy Day**

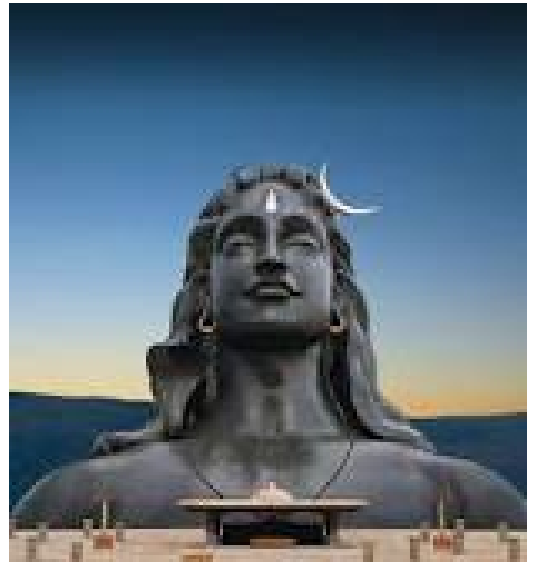


Every year, Falgun 7 of the Nepali calendar is commemorated as the National Democracy Day in Nepal. In 2007 Bikram Sambat, on this day, democracy was established in the Himalayan nation ending the over a century old autocratic Rana regime.

MARCH

- **1st March: Maha Shivratri**

Maha Shivaratri is a Hindu festival celebrated annually in honour of the god Shiva. The name also refers to the night when Shiva performs the heavenly dance called Tandava. Shivratri is said to be the night when Shiva and Shakti, the masculine and feminine energies that keep the planet in balance, come together. This is an important festival in Hindu culture that commemorates 'overcoming darkness and ignorance in life. On this day devotees of Lord Shiva, observe a day-long fast, remain awake all night and perform puja during Nishita Kaal to celebrate the auspicious occasion of Maha Shivratri.



- **3rd March: Gyalpo Losar**

Gyalpo Lhosar is a new year festival of Sherpa people of Nepal and Sikkim and Darjeeling regions of India. The festival is celebrated every year from Falgun Shukla Pratipada, the second day of the waxing moon until the full moon. Gyalpo Lhosar is also regarded as a Tibetan New Year. The main celebrations take place during the first three days. On the first day, a traditional beverage called Changkol, an equivalent of Chhaang, is drunk. On the second day, which is the start of the new year, Gyalpo Lhosar is celebrated. On the third day, people gather together to have a feast.



APRIL

- **10th April: Ram Navami**

Ram Navami is celebrated to mark the birth of Lord Ram to King Dasharath and



Queen Kausalya in Ayodhya in Treta Yuga. A spring festival, it is celebrated on the ninth day of Chaitra month – the first month in the Hindu lunar calendar.

- **14th April: Nepali New Year**

Nepali New Year is a national holiday in Nepal. This holiday marks the first day of Bikram Sambat, the official calendar of Nepal. New Year in this calendar usually falls on 14th April. According to their rituals, the Nepali spend their time early in the morning with prayers as well as worship inside their temples. They also offer Puja, which is a ritual devoted to their gods. After presenting the Puja, they walk around the temple opposing the direction of the clock as they ring bells.



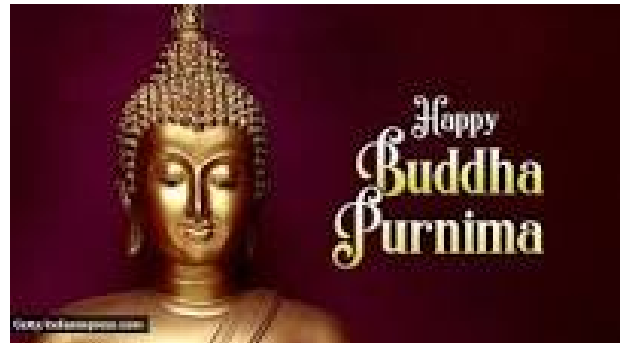
MAY

- **16th May: Buddha Jayanti**

Buddha's Birthday is a Buddhist festival that is celebrated in most of East Asia and South Asia commemorating the birth of the Prince Siddhartha

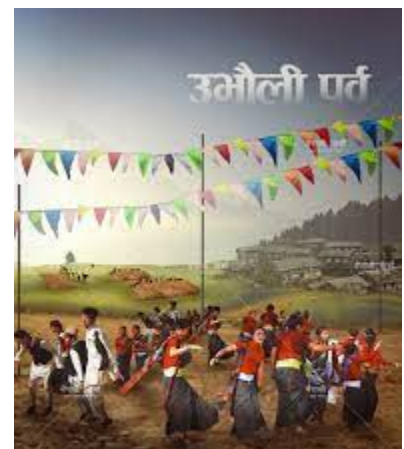
Gautama, later the Gautama Buddha, who was the founder of Buddhism. Buddha Purnima celebrates Buddhism which stands for – peace, non-violence and harmony. It marks the birth anniversary of Gautam Buddha who was the founder of Buddhism. The day honours the philosopher, spiritual

guide, religious leader and mediator who got liberated from the cycle of birth and rebirth.



- **16th May: Ubhauri Parva**

The festival is celebrated for good harvest, peace and prosperity in the community. Ubhauri is marked for a month from Baishakh Shukla Purnima of the lunar calendar, which also



coincides with Buddha Jayanti, the birth anniversary of Buddha.

- **29th May: Ganatantra Divas(Republic Day)**

Republic Day is a national holiday in Nepal. It commemorates the date on which the first meeting of the Constituent Assembly of Nepal took place on 28 May 2008, which ended the 240-year reign of the Shah kings and declared Nepal a republic. In the first meeting of the historic Constituent Assembly on 28th May 2008 (Jestha 15 2065BS) Nepal was declared a federal republic by ending a century-long monarchy. It is celebrated every year on the 15th of Jyeshtha with various programs commemorating the historic day of the declaration of the republic state.



JUNE

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JULY

- **10th July: Edul Aajaha**

Eid al-Adha is the latter of the two official holidays which are celebrated within Islam. It honours the willingness of Ibrahim to sacrifice his son Ismail as an act of obedience to Allah's command.

Observances of this day are sacrifice of a sheep, cow, goat, buffalo or camel and Eid prayers.



AUGUST

- **12th August: Janai Purnima**

Janai Purnima is one of the most sacred and important festivals of Hindu religion. The festival celebrates the bond of pureness and security. Janai means holy



thread and Purnima is the full moon. On this day, Hindu Nepalese men of Brahmin and Chhetri perform their annual ritual of changing Janai.

- **12th August: Gai Jatra**

Gai Jatra, is a festival celebrated in Nepal, mainly in Kathmandu valley by the Newar community. The festival is generally celebrated in the month of Bhadra. The date is set according to the lunar Nepa and falls on the first day of the dark fortnight of the month of Gunla. Gai Jatra is a festival of dancing, singing, mirth and laughter. The festival of cows is celebrated in the Kathmandu Valley to commemorate the death of loved ones. As part of the festival family members of the deceased of the past year send people mostly children. dressed as cows to parade on the streets.



- **19th August: Janmashtami**

Krishna Janmashtami, also known simply as Janmashtami or Gokulashtami, is an annual Hindu festival that celebrates the birth of Krishna, the eighth avatar of Vishnu. Janmashtami is celebrated to mark the birth of Lord Krishna. People celebrate by fasting, breaking dahi-handi, singing hymns, visiting temples, preparing feasts and praying together. It is a grand celebration particularly in Mathura and Vrindavan. Raas Lila or Krishna Lila are also a part of the celebrations.



- **30th August: Hartalika Teej**

Teej is the generic name for a number of Hindu festivals that are celebrated by women. Haryali Teej and Hartalika Teej welcome the monsoon season and are celebrated primarily by girls and women, with songs, dancing and prayer rituals.



SEPTEMBER

- **3rd September: Gaura Parba**

The celebration is believed to bring prosperity to a woman's spouse and her family members. This Hindu festival is not only celebrated for fun, but is also one of the identities of the far-western region. This festival is more women-centric as women observe fast, say prayers and take part in the celebrations.



- **20th September: Constitution Day**

Nepali Constitution Day is a public holiday in Nepal observed on September 20th each year. This is treated as the National Day of Nepal and celebrates the adoption of the current Constitution on this day in 2015.



- **26th September: Ghatasthapana**

It celebrates Hindu beliefs concerning the victory of various gods over evil demon spirits, with Durga "the mother goddess" being especially worshipped at this time. Nepali Hindus will go to local temples for special ceremonies at this time, but the greater part of the observances occur within private homes. Ghatasthapana is the first day of Vijaya Dashami. Ghata means "pot or vessel" and sthapana means "to establish".

Combining both words the literal meaning is to establish a pot.



OCTOBER

- **5th October: Dashami**

Dashain, is a major Hindu religious festival in Nepal and some parts of India. It is also celebrated by Hindus elsewhere in the world, including among the Lhotshampa of Bhutan and the Burmese Gurkhas of Myanmar. Observations include Putting tika on forehead, prayers, religious rituals like burning an effigy of Ravana. It marks the end of Durga Puja.



- **24th October: Laxmi Puja**

Lakshmi Pooja, is a Hindu religious festival that falls on Amavasya in the Vikram Samvat Hindu calendar month of Kartik, on the third day of Deepawali and is considered as the main festive day of Deepawali, To welcome the Goddess, devotees clean their houses, decorate them with finery and lights, and prepare sweet treats and delicacies as offerings. Devotees believe the happier Lakshmi is with the visit, the more she blesses the family with health and wealth.



- **25th October: Gai Tihar**

Tihar is the second biggest Nepali festival after Dashain, and is usually allocated a three-day-long national holiday. The festival is novel in that it shows reverence to not just the gods, but also to animals such as crows, cows, and dogs that have long-lived alongside humans. It celebrates the victory of good over evil.



- **26th October: Gobardhan Puja**

Govardhan Puja, also known as Annakut or Annakoot, is a Hindu festival in which devotees worship Govardhan Hill and prepare and offer a large variety of vegetarian food to Krishna as a mark of gratitude.



- **27th October: Bhai Tika**

Bhai Dooj, Bhaubeej, Bhai Tika or Bhai Phonta is a festival celebrated by Hindus on the second lunar day of Shukla Paksha in the Vikram Samvat Hindu calendar or of Shalivahan Shaka calendar month of Kartika. It is celebrated during the Diwali or Tihar festival. This day is a celebration of any Brother-Sister-like relationship.



- **30th October: Chhath Parwa**

Chhath is an ancient Hindu festival historically native to the Indian subcontinent, more specifically, the Indian state of Bihar along with West Bengal, Uttar Pradesh, Jharkhand, and the

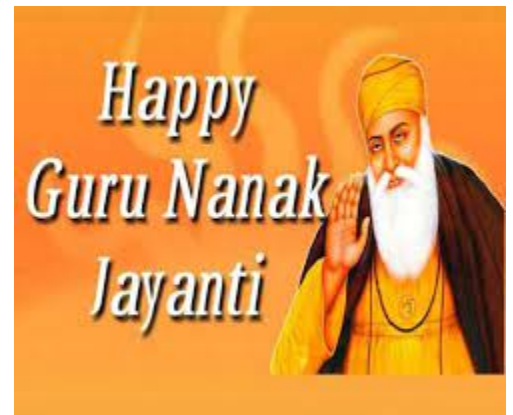


southern parts of Nepal. Chhath Puja holds a special place in the Hindu mythology and it is believed that following the puja with utmost dedication can help in removing obstacles, bring prosperity and happiness to the family. Observances include Prayers and religious rituals, including puja and prasad, bathing in the Ganges, and fasting.

NOVEMBER

- **8th November: Gurunanak Jayanti**

Guru Nanak Dev Ji Gurburab, also known as Guru Nanak's Prakash Utsav, celebrates the birth of the first Sikh guru, Guru Nanak. One of the most celebrated Sikh gurus and the founder of Sikhism, Guru Nanak Dev is highly revered by the Sikh community. This is one of the most sacred festivals in Sikhism, or Sikhi. The festival is celebrated on the day of Kartik Poornima, which is the fifteenth lunar day in the month of Kartik according to the Hindu calendar, and usually falls in the month of November by the Gregorian calendar.



- **11th November: Phalgunanda Jayanti**

The holiday is assigned to the Kirant community to commemorate the teachings and principles of Mahaguru Falgunanda. Phalgunanda is known as Mahaguru (the great teacher), especially among the Limbu, Rai, Sunuwar, Yakhkha, Lohorung, Dhimal and Jurel Kirat people. He is credited with the continuation of the ancient Kirat religion on puritan principles, which include vegetarianism, a ban on alcohol and following Limbu traditions and scripts. Mahaguru Falgunanda was greatly respected and remembered due to his exceptional influences in bringing the kirat social reforms at the time. In 2009, the National Government Academy had declared him as National Hero of Nepal and a postage stamp was issued in his honour.



DECEMBER

- **30th December: Tamu Losar**

Tamu is another name of the Gurung community of Nepal and Losar means New



Year. Tamu Losar is the celebration of Gurung's New Year. The Tamu Losar marks the beginning of the Tamu Sambat or Gurung Calendar Year. Numerous fairs are organised across the state. Friends and family members dress up in traditional attire and exchange greetings. Tamu Lochhar marks the end of winters, ushering in the spring season. The history of this festival is believed to date back to the pre-Buddhist era.

AFGHANISTAN

JANUARY

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FEBRUARY

- **15th February: Liberation Day**

Liberation Day in Afghanistan is celebrated on February 15 every year to commemorate the final departure of the Soviet army from the country on the same date in 1989. The Soviet-Afghan war was fought for nearly 10 years, and close to 2 million Afghani civilians were killed in the conflict.



MARCH

- **21st March: Nowruz**

Nowruz is the Persian-language term for the day of the Iranian New Year, also known as the Persian New Year. Nowruz is the day of the spring equinox, when the amount of light and dark is the same during the day. It is the beginning of the year in the Persian calendar. It is usually celebrated on March 21. Nowruz has been celebrated by people from different ethnic communities and religious backgrounds for thousands of years.



APRIL

- **28th April: Afghan Victory Day**

Mujahideen Victory Day is a political holiday observed in all parts of Afghanistan, falling on the 28 April each year. It commemorates the day when Mujahideen rebel forces overthrew the Communist regime in 1992.



MAY

- **1st May: Eid-al-Fitr**



Eid al-Fitr is the earlier of the two official holidays celebrated within Islam. The religious holiday is celebrated by Muslims worldwide because it marks the end of the month-long dawn-to-sunset fasting of Ramadan. Celebrations include Eid prayers, charity, social gatherings, festive meals, gift-giving.

JUNE

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JULY

- **9th July: Day of Arafat**

It is the day the Prophet Muhammad gave his farewell sermon upon Mount Arafah to the many Muslims with whom he completed Hajj, near the end of his life. While the Prophet Muhammad stood on the plain of Arafah, verse 5:3 of the Qur'an was revealed to him. Another name for the Day of Arafah is 'Freedom from Fire'. On this day, it is believed that everyone will be resurrected and gathered on Mount Arafah to be held accountable for their actions. Many people, on the Day of Arafah, will submit themselves in worship and fast to cleanse their souls to receive the ultimate reward of entering Jannah (Paradise)



- **10th July: Eid-al-Qurban**

Eid al-Adha is the latter of the two official holidays which are celebrated within Islam. It honours the willingness of Ibrahim to sacrifice his son Ismail as an act of obedience to Allah's command. Observances of this day include Sacrifice of a sheep, cow, goat, buffalo or camel, Eid prayers.



AUGUST

- **19th August: Independence Day**

Afghan Independence Day is celebrated as a national holiday in Afghanistan on 19 August to commemorate the Anglo-Afghan Treaty of 1919 and relinquishment from British protectorate status. The treaty granted a complete neutral relation between Afghanistan and



Britain. This day marks Afghanistan's regaining of full independence from British influence in 1919.

SEPTEMBER

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OCTOBER

- **8th October: The Prophet's Birthday**

Mawlid is the observance of the birthday the Islamic prophet Muhammad which is commemorated primarily on 12th of Rabi al-Awwal, the third month in the Islamic calendar. It is observed by the majority of Muslims throughout the world.



of

NOVEMBER

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DECEMBER

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SRI LANKA

JANUARY

- **14th January: Tamil Thai Pongal Day**

Pongal, also referred to as Poṅkal or Tai Pongal or Thai Pongal, is a multi-day Hindu harvest festival of South India, particularly in the Tamil community. It is observed at the start of the month Tai according to Tamil solar calendar, and this is typically about January 14. It is a celebration to thank the Sun, Mother Nature and the various farm animals that help to contribute to a bountiful harvest. Celebrated over four days, Pongal also marks the beginning of the Tamil month called Thai, which is considered an auspicious month.



- **17th January: Duruthu Full Moon Poya Day**

The significance of Duruthu Full Moon Poya Day is that it marks Gautama Buddha's first visit to Sri Lanka. It was on a day like today, nine months after the Enlightenment, that Gautama Buddha, set foot on Sri Lanka for the first time to solve a confrontation between the Yaksha and Naga Tribes.



FEBRUARY

- **4th February: National Day**

National Day, also known as Independence Day, is a Sri Lankan national holiday celebrated annually on 4 February to commemorate the country's political independence from British rule in 1948. It is celebrated all over the country through a flag-hoisting ceremony, dances, parades and performances.



- **16th February: Navam Full Moon Poya Day**

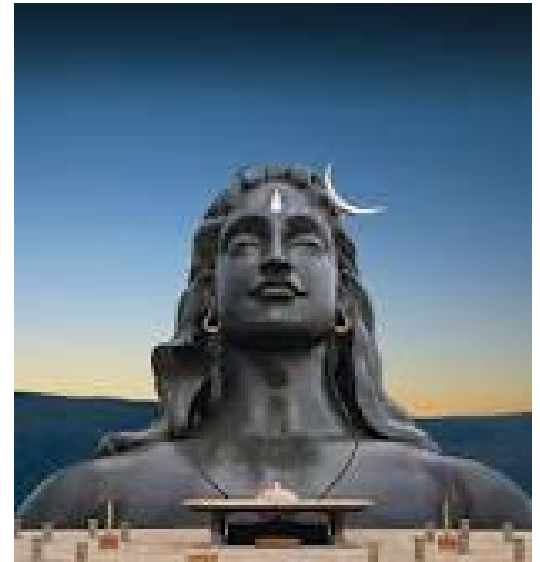
Bringing together all monks for the first-ever Buddhist congregation, the appointment of Arahants Sariputta and Moggallana by the enlightened one as his chief disciples, promulgation of pre-liberation or collection of precepts of Vinaya or discipline and the determination of the term of life of the enlightened one by Gautama Buddha are significant events associated with Navam Full Moon Poya Day. These events make Navam Poya a day of paramount importance for Buddhists worldwide.



MARCH

- **1st March: Mahashivratri Day**

Maha Shivaratri is a Hindu festival celebrated annually in honour of the god Shiva. The name also refers to the night when Shiva performs the heavenly dance called Tandava. Shivratri is said to be the night when Shiva and Shakti, the masculine and feminine energies that keep the planet in balance, come together. This is an important festival in Hindu culture that commemorates 'overcoming darkness and ignorance in life. On this day devotees of Lord Shiva, observe a day-long fast, remain awake all night and perform puja during Nishita Kaal to celebrate the auspicious occasion of Maha Shivratri.



- **17th March: Madin Full Moon Poya Day**

The full moon day in the month of March is known as the madin full moon Poya day. This poya marks the Buddha's first visit to his father's palace following his enlightenment. Therefore, this is an important day for all Buddhists around the world.



APRIL

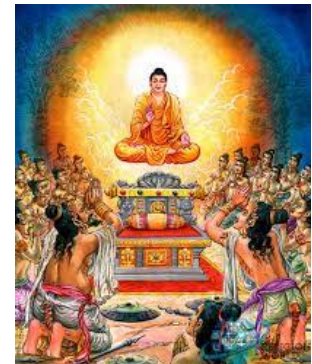
- **14th April: Tamil and Sinhala New Year's Day**

Sinhalese New Year, generally known as Aluth Avurudda in Sri Lanka, is a Sri Lankan holiday that celebrates the traditional New Year of the Sinhalese people of Sri Lanka. It is a major anniversary celebrated by not only the Sinhalese people but by most Sri Lankans. Also known as the sun festival, the Sinhala and Tamil new year is a ritual performed to honour the God of Sun for hundreds and hundreds of years now.



- **16th April: Bak Full Moon Poya Day**

Bak Full Moon Poya Day is a national holiday in Sri Lanka. It usually falls in April. This poya (Bak Pura Pasaloswaka Poya Day) commemorates the second visit of The Buddha to Sri Lanka which took place in the fifth year of his Supreme Enlightenment.



MAY

- **3rd May: Eid al-Fitr**

Eid ul-Fitr is a very important festival in the Islamic calendar and was started by the Prophet Muhammad himself. It is also known as 'The Feast of Breaking the Fast' and is celebrated by Muslims worldwide to mark the end of Ramadan. In the evening, everyone goes to visit their relatives wearing new clothes. Eid special food is served there. This continues during the whole period of Eid, 2-3 days after the Eid. Some people go on holiday after the Eid day and stay their as long as their leave permits.



- **15th May: Vesak Full Moon Day**

Buddhists across the world commemorate the significant events of Siddhartha Gautama's birth,



enlightenment (Nibbāna), and passing away (Parinirvāna) of Gautama Buddha on the Vesak Full Moon Poya Day.

JUNE

- **14th June: Poson Full Moon Poya Day**

Poson is one of the most important religious events for Buddhists in Sri Lanka. The day marks the introduction of Buddhism to the Island by Arahant Mahinda in the third century BC. It is believed the Great Arahant preached the Dhamma to King Devanampiyatissa, the then ruler of the country, in Mihintale, Sri Lanka.



JULY

- **10th July: Eid-al-Adha**

Eid al-Adha is the latter of the two official holidays which are celebrated within Islam. It honours the willingness of Ibrahim to sacrifice his son Ismail as an act of obedience to Allah's command. Observances of this day are sacrifice of a sheep, cow, goat, buffalo or camel and Eid prayers.



- **13th July: Esala Full Moon Poya Day**

Asalha Puja is a Theravada Buddhist festival which typically takes place in July, on the full moon of the month of Āsāḍha. It is celebrated in Indonesia, Cambodia, Thailand, Sri Lanka, Laos, Myanmar and in countries with Theravada Buddhist populations. Esala Poya takes place on the full moon in the eighth lunar month, usually in July. This public holiday Celebrates the Buddha's first sermon and the arrival of the Tooth Relic in Sri Lanka.



AUGUST

- **11th August: Nikini Full Moon Poya Day**

Nikini Full Moon Poya Day is celebrated around four important events in Buddhist history. Attainment of Arahantship by Buddha's chief attendant, Ananda Maha Thera, the commencement of the first Dhamma Sangayana, convocation to settle the Buddhist canon and Pasu Vas or the commencement of the Vas period by those who had not started the period of sojourn on the Esala Full Moon Day, are some of them. Buddhist monks commence Vas on Nikini Full Moon Day, in keeping with the enactment called Santhaha Karanaya. The circumstances which led to the enactment of Santhaha Karanaya was the hardships caused to the bhikkhus due to rain.



SEPTEMBER

- **10th September: Binara Full Moon Day**

On Binara Poya, Sri Lankan Buddhists commemorate the establishment of the Bhikkhuni Sasanaya (Bhikkhuni Sangha) or Order of the Female Buddhist Monastic. The very first bhikkuni ordained was the stepmother of Buddha, Mahapajapathi Gothami.



OCTOBER

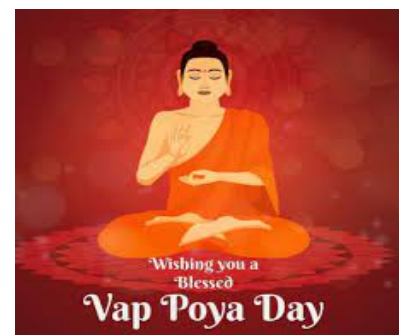
- **8th October: Milad-Un-Nabi**

Mawlid is the observance of the birthday of the Islamic prophet Muhammad which is commemorated primarily on 12th of Rabi al-Awwal, the third month in the Islamic calendar. It is observed by the majority of Muslims throughout the world.



- **9th October: Vap Full Moon Poya Day**

This public holiday in Sri Lanka takes place on the full moon day of Vap, the seventh month in the Sinhalese calendar. It usually falls in October in the Western calendar. The festival Marks Buddha's preaching of Abhidamma to



the gods in Tavatimsa and the end of the Buddhist period of fasting.

- **24th October: Deepavali**

Diwali is a festival of lights and one of the major festivals celebrated by Hindus, Buddhists, Jains, and Sikhs. The festival usually lasts five days and is celebrated during the Hindu lunisolar month Kartika. Candles, clay lamps, and oil lanterns are lit and placed throughout the home, in the streets, in areas of worship, and floated on lakes and rivers. Fireworks are also set off on the night of Diwali.



NOVEMBER

- **7th November: Ill Full Moon Poya Day**

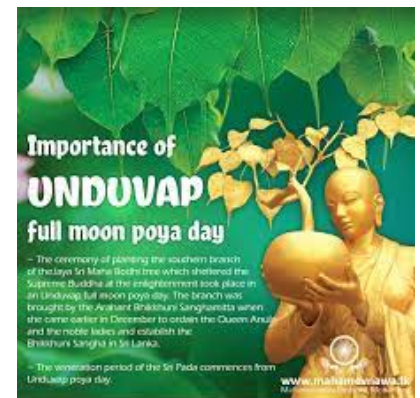
This Poya celebrates the obtaining of Vivarana (the assurance of becoming a Buddha) by the Bodhisatta Maitreya and the commissioning of 60 disciples by The Buddha to disperse his teachings.



DECEMBER

- **7th December: Unduvap Full Moon Poya Day**

Unduvap Poya is the last Full Moon Poya day of the year and commemorates the arrival of Sangamitta Theri in Sri Lanka with a Bo sapling from the sacred Jaya Sri Maha Bodhi in India during the month of Unduvap.



MALDIVES

JANUARY

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FEBRUARY

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MARCH

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APRIL

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MAY

- **2nd May: Eid-ul-Fitr**

Eid ul-Fitr is a very important festival in the Islamic calendar and was started by the Prophet Muhammad himself. It is also known as 'The Feast of Breaking the Fast' and is celebrated by Muslims worldwide to mark the end of Ramadan. In the evening, everyone goes to visit their relatives wearing new clothes. Eid special food is served there. This continues during the whole period of Eid, 2-3 days after the Eid. Some people go on holiday after the Eid day and stay their as long as their leave permits.



JUNE

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JULY

- **8th July: Hajj Day**

The Day of Arafah(Hajj Day) is known as the day where if sought after, millions of Muslims' sins are forgiven by Allah. Arafah is known as the day Allah perfected the religion of Islam. It is also momentous because it was the day an important verse of the Qur'an, Surah al Maa'idah 5:3, was revealed.



- **9th-12th July: Eid-ul-Al'haa**

Eid al-Adha is the latter of the two official holidays which are celebrated within Islam. It honors the willingness of Ibrahim to sacrifice his son Ismail as an act of obedience to Allah's command. Observances of this day are sacrifice of a sheep, cow, goat, buffalo or camel and Eid prayers.



- **26th July: Independence Day**

In 1965 the Maldive Islands attained full political independence from the British, and in 1968 a new republic was inaugurated and the sultanate abolished. The last British troops left on March 29, 1976, the date thereafter celebrated in the Maldives as Independence Day.



- **30th July: Muharram**

Muharram is the first month of the Islamic calendar. It is one of the four sacred months of the year when warfare is forbidden. It is held to be the second holiest month after Ramadan. The tenth day of Muharram is known as Ashura.



AUGUST

-

SEPTEMBER

- **27th September: National Day**

National Day, in Maldives, commemorates the day when local resistance drove out the Portuguese occupiers after they had seized and ruled the islands for a span of 15 years.



OCTOBER

- **8th October: Milad un Nabi**

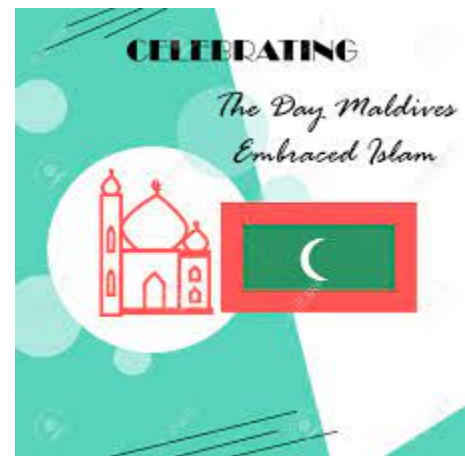
Mawlid is the observance of the birthday of the Islamic prophet Muhammad which is commemorated primarily on 12th of Rabi al-Awwal, the third month in the Islamic calendar. It is observed by the majority of Muslims throughout the world.

One of the most important parts of Eid Milad-un-Nabi is to celebrate the life of the Prophet, his teachings, sufferings, and his character, as he even forgave his enemies. Muslims celebrate the occasion by wearing new clothes, offering prayers, and exchanging gifts.



- **27th October: The Day Maldives Embraced Islam**

The primary religion in Maldives is Islam with the majority population practising Sunni Islam. It is the official and state religion and the practice of faith other than Islam is prohibited. According to tradition, the Maldives was converted to Islam in the year 1153 AD by a Muslim from Maghrib (Morocco) by the name of Abul Barakat Yoosuf Al Barbary.



NOVEMBER

- **3rd November: Victory Day**

On every November 3rd, the Maldives celebrate a public holiday called Victory Day to mark the defeat of an attempted coup against then-president Maumoon Abdul Gayoom in 1988.



- **11th November: Republic Day**

Republic Day in the Maldives comes on November 11th to celebrate the replacement of the longstanding Sultanate with a republican form of government in 1968. On 26 July 1965, Maldives gained independence under an agreement signed with United Kingdom. The British government retained the use



of the Gan and Hithadhoo facilities. In a national referendum in March 1968, Maldivians abolished the sultanate and established a republic.

DECEMBER



BHUTAN

JANUARY

-

FEBRUARY

- ***2nd February: Traditional Day of Offerings***

The Traditional Day of Offering (Dzongkha: buelwa phuewi nyim) is a holiday usually falling in January or February, on the 1st day of the 12th month of the calendar. The main purpose behind this holiday is to give thanks to Zhabdrung Ngawang Namgyal, the founder of Bhutan.



- ***21st February: King's Birthday***

Jigme Khesar Namgyel Wangchuck is Druk Gyalpo or "Dragon King" of the Kingdom of Bhutan. After his father Jigme Singye Wangchuck abdicated the throne in his favor, he became the monarch on 9 December 2006. A public coronation ceremony was held on 6 November 2008, a year that marked 100 years of monarchy in Bhutan.



MARCH

- ***3rd March" Losar(New Year)***

Losar (Tibetan: ལོ་གསར་འཇུག་, Wylie: lo-gsar; "new year") also known as Tibetan New Year, is a festival in Tibetan Buddhism. The holiday is celebrated on various dates depending on location (Tibet, Bhutan, Nepal, India) tradition. The holiday is a new year's festival, celebrated on the first day of the lunisolar Tibetan calendar, which corresponds to a date in February or March in the Gregorian calendar. In 2020, the new year commenced on the 24th of February and celebrations ran until the 26th of the same month. It also commenced the Year of the Male Iron Rat.



APRIL

-

MAY

- **2nd May: Birth Anniversary of Third Druk Gyalpo**

Jigme Dorji Wangchuck was born on May 2nd 1929. He ruled Bhutan as the Third Druk Gyalpo (Dragon King) for twenty years from March 1952 until his death at the age of 43 from a heart condition in July 1972.



- **11th May: Death Anniversary of Zhabdrung (Zhabdrung Kuchoe)**

Known as Zhabdrung Kuchoe, the Death Anniversary of Zhabdrung is a public holiday in this Himalayan Kingdom on the 10th day of the 3rd month in the Bhutanese lunar calendar. This means it takes place in either April or May in the western calendar.



JUNE

- **14th June: Buddha's Parinirvana**

Lord Buddha's Parinirvana or Duechen Nga Zom is observed on the 15th Day of the Fourth Month of the Bhutanese calendar which usually falls in either late May or June. It may also be known as Nirvana day. Parinirvana is a Mahayana Buddhist festival that marks the death of the Buddha. It is also known as Nirvana Day and is celebrated on February 15th. Buddhists celebrate the death of the Buddha, because they believe that having attained Enlightenment, he achieved freedom from physical existence and its sufferings.



JULY

- **9th July: Birth Anniversary of Guru Rinpoche**

The Birth Anniversary of Guru Rinpoche is an official public holiday in the Buddhist kingdom of Bhutan. It celebrates the birth of Padmasambhava, who is credited with introducing Buddhism to Bhutan. There are many stories explaining how Guru Padmasambhava was born. Some say that he instantly appeared on the peak of Meteorite Mountain, in Sri Lanka. Others teach that he came through his mother's womb, but most accounts refer to a miraculous birth, explaining that he spontaneously appeared in the center of a lotus.



AUGUST



SEPTEMBER

- **23rd September: Blessed Rainy Day**

Blessed Rainy Day is the holiday marking the end of the monsoon season in Bhutan. On this day all natural water resources in the country are considered to be sanctifying and citizens are encouraged to take an outdoor bath to be cleansed of "bad deeds, obstructions and defilements" and accumulated bad karma.



OCTOBER

- **5th October: Dashain**

Dashain, is a major Hindu religious festival in Nepal and some parts of India. It is also celebrated by Hindus elsewhere in the world, including among the Lhotshampa of Bhutan and the Burmese Gurkhas of Myanmar. Significance. Dashain symbolises the victory of good over evil. For followers of Shaktism, it represents the victory of the goddess Durga. In Hindu scripture, the demon



Mahishasura had created terror in the devaloka (the world where gods lives) but Durga killed the devils also known as demons.

NOVEMBER

- **1st November: King Jigme Khesar Namgyel's Coronation**

After his father Jigme Singye Wangchuck abdicated the throne in his favor, he became the monarch on 9 December 2006. A public coronation ceremony was held on 6 November 2008, a year that marked 100 years of monarchy in Bhutan.



- **11th November: Constitution Day**

The adoption of the constitution on July 18th 2008 by the first democratically elected parliament ushered in a new era in the history of Bhutan.



- **15th November: Descending Day of Lord Buddha**

Lhabab Düchen is one of the four Buddhist festivals commemorating four events in the life of the Buddha, according to Tibetan traditions. Lhabab Düchen occurs on the 22nd day of the ninth lunar month according to Tibetan calendar and widely celebrated in Tibet and Bhutan.



DECEMBER

- **17th December: National Day**

The Druk Gyalpo is the official title of the head of state of Bhutan, meaning Dragon King in Dzongkha. Each year, we come together to celebrate the 17th of December as our National Day– an occasion of great significance and importance. Celebrations are held at Changlimithang Stadium, and include a public address by the Druk Gyalpo and a procession including a statue



of Ugyen Wangchuck to honour the first Druk Gyalpo and the independent Bhutanese nation.

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