

# FESTIVE FLAVOURS OF SANKRANTI

A Visual Journey through India



# A Graphic Repository

2023

Design Exploration Seminar – DES

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## Preface

This project aims to create a graphic repository for the Sankranti festival for various states in India. The repository will provide high-quality and colourful graphics and images related to the festival, including traditional decorations, food items, and other elements that are specific to different regions in India. The graphics will be bold and vibrant, with the aim of inspiring people to be creative and make visually striking posters, greeting cards, or other materials.

Overall, this project will be a valuable resource for people who want to celebrate the Sankranti festival and promote cultural diversity and understanding. By providing a comprehensive repository of colorful and bold graphics and information, this project will help people create visually striking and culturally accurate graphics for the Sankranti festival.

## Introduction

Sankranti, also known as Makar Sankranti, is a major harvest festival celebrated in India on the same day every year, which is January 14th or 15th, depending on the solar calendar. It marks the transition of the Sun into the zodiac sign of Capricorn (Makara), which is why it is also called Makar Sankranti.

Despite India being a diverse country with many regional cultures, Sankranti is celebrated in a similar way across the country with some local variations. People across India celebrate this festival with great enthusiasm, and it is a time of joy, happiness, and new beginnings.

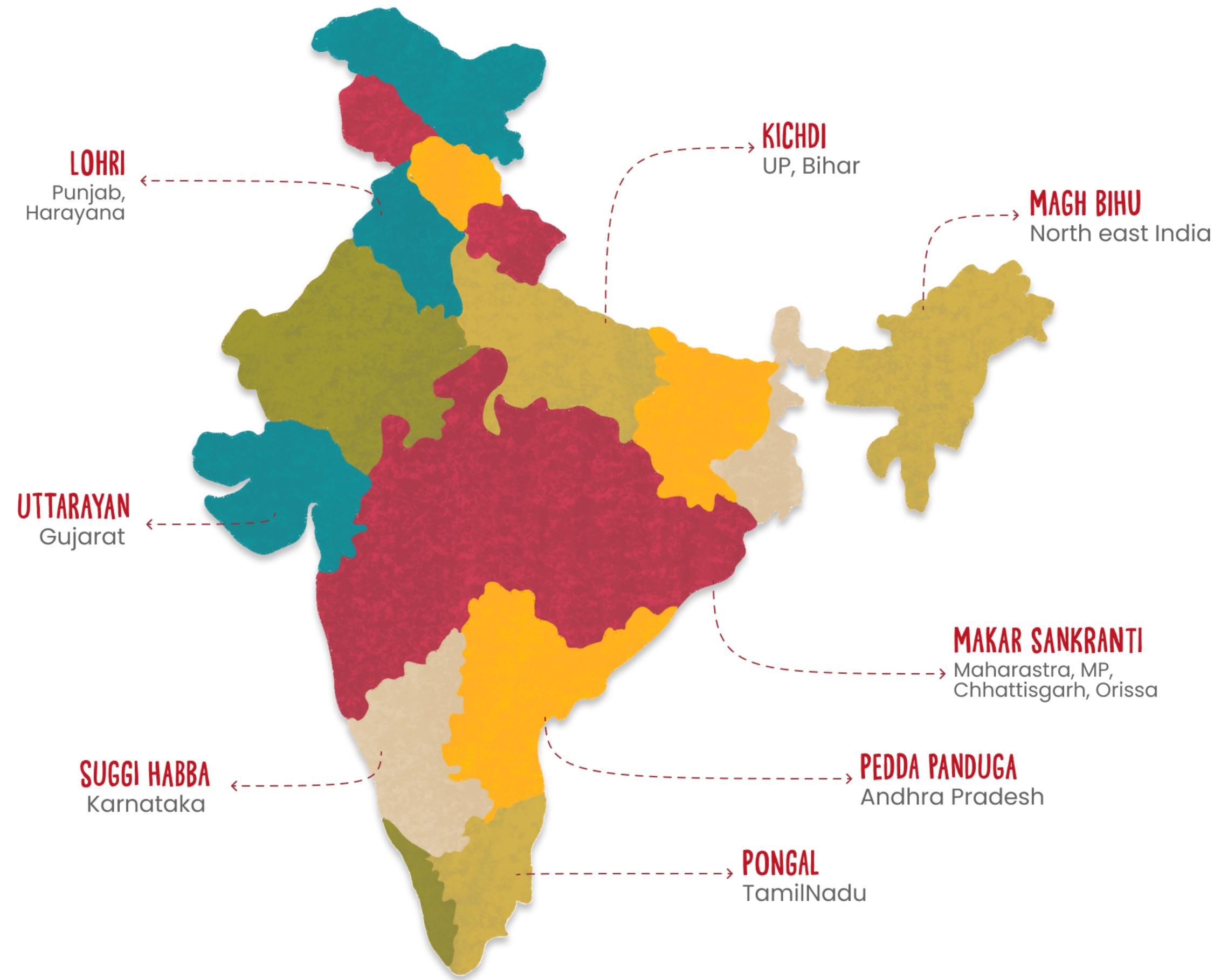
The festival is celebrated by flying kites, exchanging sweets made of jaggery and sesame, and taking dips in holy rivers like the Ganges.

In many parts of India, people prepare special dishes made of freshly harvested crops like sugarcane, sesame, and jaggery. In some parts of the country, like in Maharashtra, people exchange til-gul (sesame and jaggery) laddoos and greet each other with the phrase "til-gul ghya, god god bola" which means "eat sesame and jaggery and speak sweet words".

In southern India, particularly in the states of Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, and Tamil Nadu, Sankranti is celebrated as Pongal. People make sweet rice pudding called Pongal, which is cooked in earthen pots outdoors, and it is a time for families to come together and share the festive meal. In the state of Karnataka, people make a special dish called "Ellu-Bella" which is a mix of sesame seeds, jaggery, dry coconut, peanuts, and fried gram.

In summary, Sankranti is celebrated on the same day all over India with similar traditions of flying kites, preparing special dishes made of sesame and jaggery, and taking dips in holy rivers. However, there are some local variations in the way the festival is celebrated, reflecting the rich cultural diversity of India.

# Graphical representation of India



# Methodology and process

## 1. Research

The research for this project was conducted by gathering information about the festival, its significance, and the traditional customs and practices associated with it, from various reliable sources such as books, online resources, and interviews with experts and individuals familiar with the festival.

## 2. Creation of graphics

- A mood board was created to showcase the significance of colors and elements used during various festivals.
- Keeping this in mind, vibrant and striking graphics and design elements were developed, which represent the diverse cultural traditions and practices associated with six major festivals celebrated in India, namely Pongal, Makar Sankranti, Uttarayan, Suggi Abba, Lohri, and Magh Bihu.

## 3. Making greetings, posters

These graphics were utilized to create sample posters and greetings, which were designed by myself and other individuals who utilized the graphics created for this project.



# PONGAL

Tamil Nadu

Pongal is a four-day harvest festival celebrated in the southern Indian states of Tamil Nadu. The festival is celebrated in mid-January, coinciding with the winter solstice, and marks the end of the traditional farming season. The word "Pongal" means "boiling over" or "spilling over," and refers to the act of cooking a sweet rice dish of the same name, which is traditionally prepared on the festival.

Pongal is celebrated as a time of thanksgiving, with people expressing gratitude to the Sun God for the abundant harvest and offering prayers for prosperity and well-being. The festival is marked by feasting, decorating homes with colorful rangolis, and performing traditional dances and songs.

The highlight of the festival is the Jallikattu event, a traditional bull-taming sport that is unique to Tamil Nadu. Pongal is a time of joy, renewal, and community celebration, and is one of the most important festivals in the southern Indian calendar.



### PONGAL POT

The practice of cooking rice in a new mud pot on an open fire not only signifies new and bountiful beginnings but also adds an old world charm to festival.



### KARUMBU (SUGARCANE)

Sugarcane is an important crop that is harvested during the winter season, and it plays a significant role in the daily lives of farmers in southern India. During the Pongal festival, sugarcane is used in several ways to symbolize the abundance and prosperity of the harvest season.



## VIRUNDHU

Virundhu in "Tamil" means feast when guests are invited during happy ceremonial occasions to share food



## SUN

Suriya pongal is celebrated in honor of the Sun God, who is believed to bless the harvest and provide sustenance to all living beings.



## JALLIKATTU

Jallikattu is an important cultural event during the Pongal festival in Tamil Nadu, as it is believed to preserve the cultural heritage and valorize the traditional bull-taming sport.



## BHOGI

Bhogi, the first day of the Pongal festival, holds great importance as it symbolizes the new beginnings and discarding of old and unwanted things, preparing for the fresh harvest season.





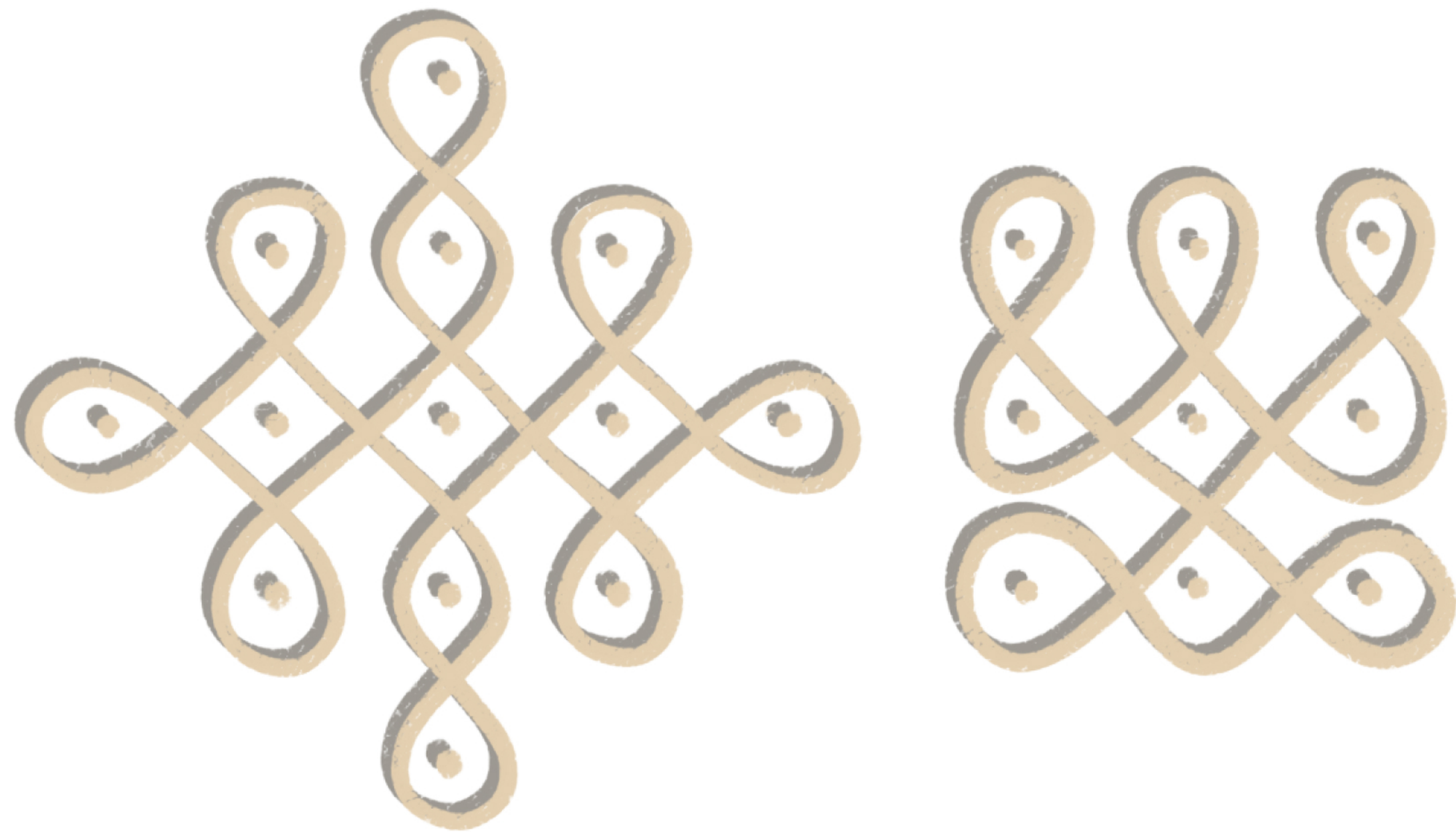
### MAAVILAI THORANAM

Maavilai Thoranam is a decoration during the Pongal festival in South India, as it is believed to bring prosperity and ward off evil spirits from the households.



### RATTINAM/GIANT WHEEL

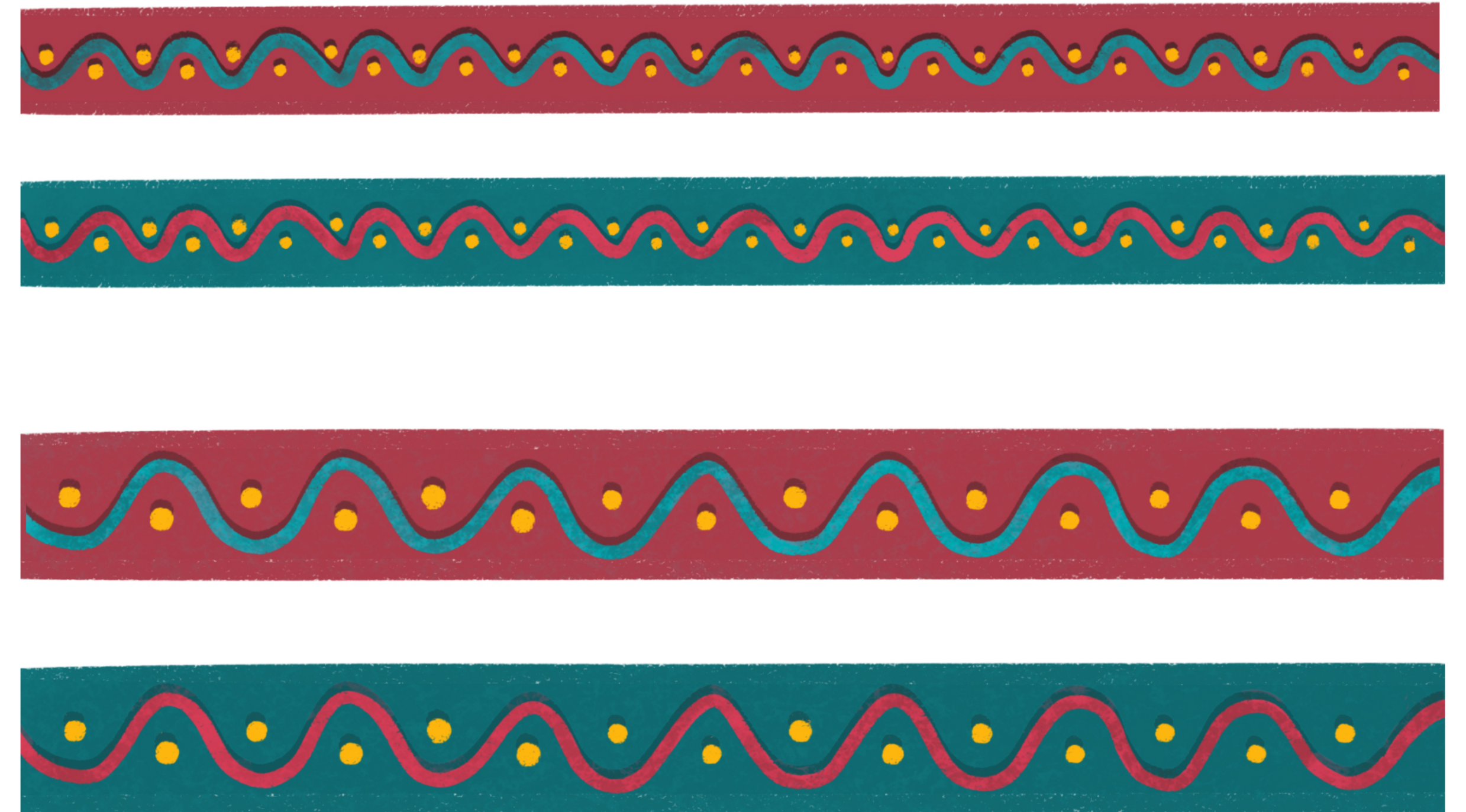
Rattinam or Giant wheel is a popular attraction during the festival, symbolizing joy, happiness, and togetherness, and is enjoyed by people of all ages.



## KOLAM

Kolam is a daily women's ritualistic art form created by women. This art not only beautifies one's house, but also serve as food for crows, squirrels and ants, as it is usually drawn with rice flour traditionally.

## COMMON PATTERNS FOUND DURING PONGAL



PHRASES

PONGALO  
PONGALI!

HAPPY  
PONGALI!

INIYA PONGAL THIRUNAL  
NALVALTHUKAZH

# LOHRI

Punjab, Jammu and  
Himachal Pradesh &  
haryana

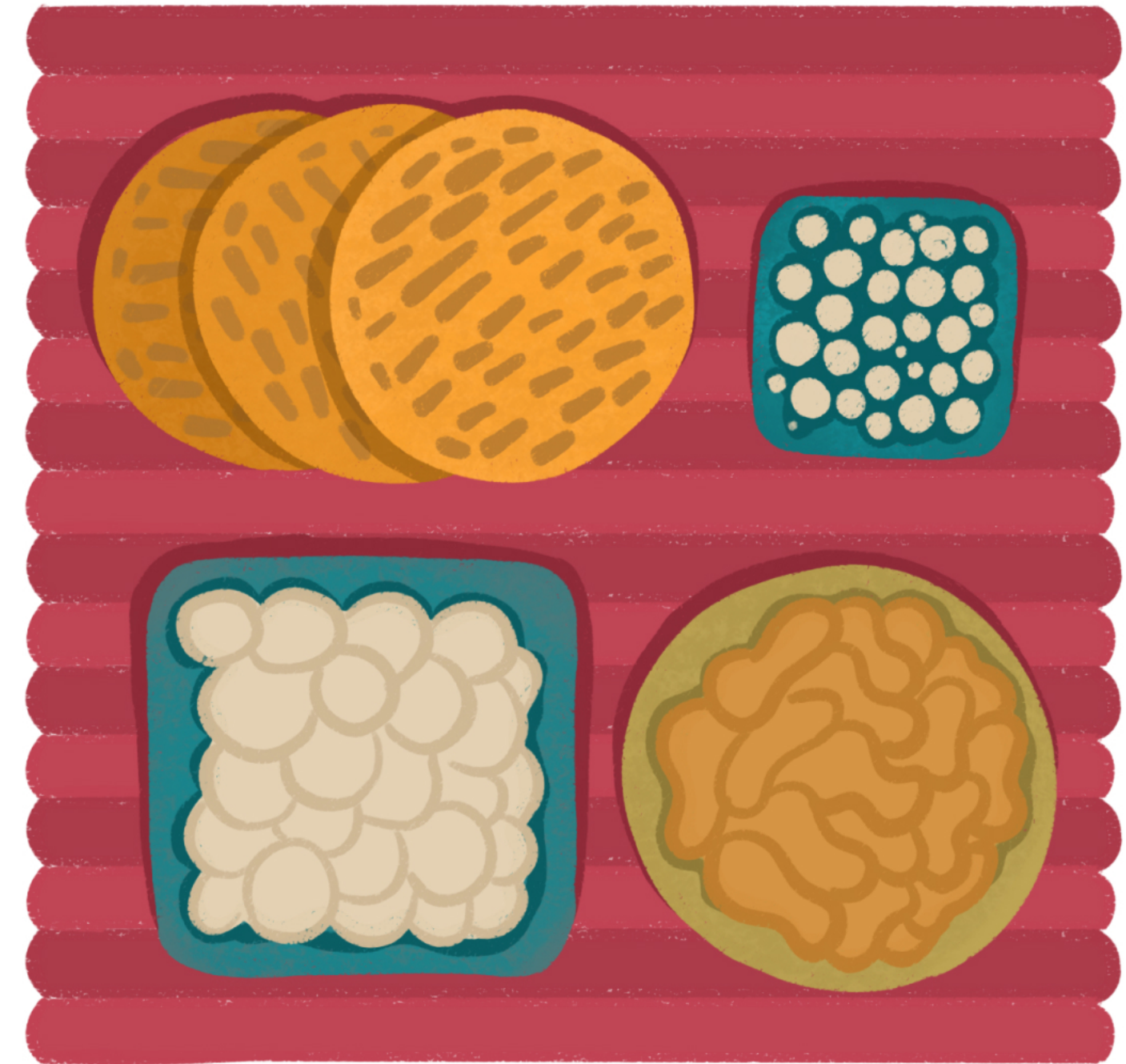
Lohri is a popular winter festival celebrated primarily in the north Indian states of Punjab, Haryana, and Delhi. The festival is observed on 13th January every year and is celebrated to mark the end of the winter solstice. Lohri is a harvest festival that is celebrated with great enthusiasm and is associated with the harvesting of rabi crops.

The festival is marked by lighting bonfires, singing and dancing around them, and offering prayers to the Sun God for a bountiful harvest. Lohri is a time of joy, togetherness, and community celebration, and is an important cultural event in the northern Indian calendar.



## DHOL

A traditional musical instrument played during the Lohri festival, symbolizes the rhythm and heartbeat of the community and is an essential part of the celebratory mood.



## GUR REWRI, PEANUTS AND POPCORN

Gur rewri, a traditional sweet made from jaggery and sesame seeds, is a significant part of the celebration as it represents the abundance and sweetness of the winter harvest.



## DHOL

The bonfire in Lohri is traditionally lit at sunset, and people gather around it to offer prayers and seek blessings for a bountiful harvest, while also singing and dancing around it to celebrate the festive spirit



## WHEAT

Wheat, a symbol of prosperity and abundance, is an important crop associated with the Lohri festival and is used to prepare traditional dishes such as sarson da saag and makki di roti.



### MAN DURING LOHRI

The male costume worn during Lohri celebrations in Punjab is commonly known as a "kurta pajama" or "sherwani" and is often paired with a turban, which is an essential part of traditional Punjabi attire.



### WOMAN DURING LOHRI

Women typically wear traditional outfits like salwar kameez or lehenga choli paired with a dupatta, which is brightly colored and intricately embroidered, during Lohri celebrations.

## COMMON PATTERNS FOUND DURING LOHRI



## PHRASES

**SUNDER  
MUNDRIYE HO!**

**HO JAMALO,  
HO JAMALO!**

**AA GAYI LOHRI,  
PICHLE DUKH KI BHEEDI PICHKARI NA MAAR,  
SAB KUCHH JHOOTHA HAI!**



# MAKAR SAKRANTI

Maharashtra, Andhra  
Pradesh

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### KITE FLYING

Kite flying during Makar Sankranti signifies the joy and celebration of the arrival of spring and the end of the winter solstice.



### COCKFIGHTING

Cockfighting is a traditional and controversial part of Makar Sankranti festivities, especially in the southern states of India, where it is seen as a symbol of valor and strength among roosters.



## SUN

The sun is worshipped as the deity Surya, who is believed to bless devotees with health, wealth, and prosperity. Special rituals, prayers, and offerings are made to the sun god, and people take holy dips in rivers and lakes to cleanse themselves of sins and negative energy.



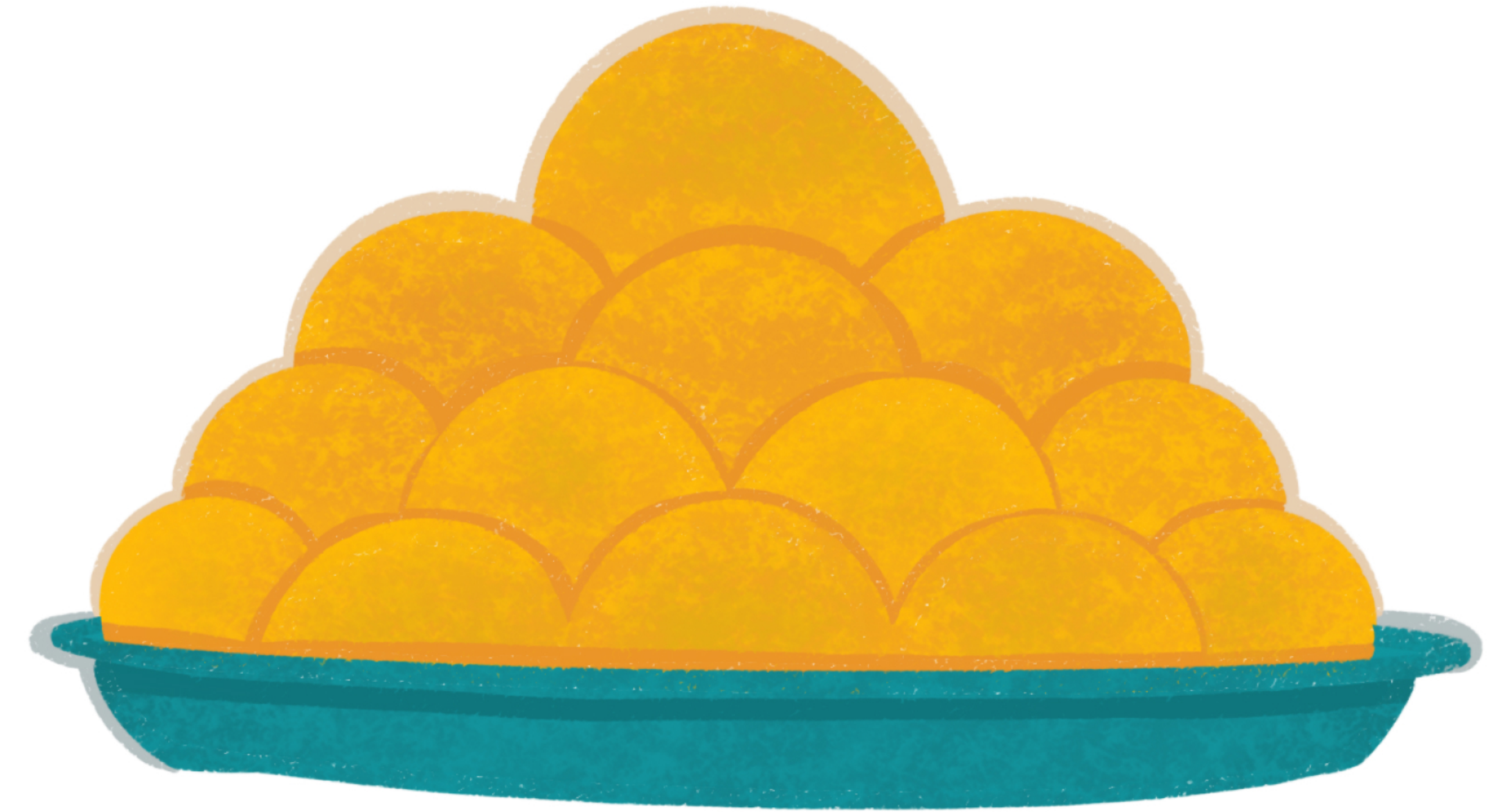
## CLAY POT & SUGARCANE

During Makar Sankranti, people in Maharashtra and Andhra Pradesh use clay pots, also known as 'Gangireddu' in Andhra Pradesh, for cooking traditional dishes and to symbolize the auspiciousness of the festival.



### POPULAR SWEETS DURING SANKRANTI

Tilgul Ladoo (made with sesame seeds and jaggery), Chikki (made with peanuts and jaggery), Pitha (rice cakes filled with coconut and jaggery), and Ariselu (made with rice flour and jaggery).



### LADOO

Ladoo, a sweet made with sesame seeds and jaggery, is a popular traditional food item during Makar Sankranti celebrations



### RANGOLI

Colorful and intricate pattern made using colored rice flour or sand and flowers, is an important part of the Makar Sankranti celebrations

### PHRASES

**SANKRANTI  
SUBHAKANKSHALU**

**HAPPY  
MAKAR SAKRANTI!**

**TIL GUL GHYA GOD GOD BOLA**

# MAGH BIHU

Assam

Magh Bihu, also known as Bhogali Bihu, is a harvest festival celebrated in the Indian state of Assam. It is observed in January, during the month of Magh in the Hindu calendar. Magh Bihu marks the end of the harvesting season and the beginning of the new agricultural cycle.

The festival is celebrated with great enthusiasm and merriment, with people gathering around a traditional bonfire called a Meji, made of bamboo and thatch. Traditional Assamese food is cooked and eaten, with rice cakes called pitha being a popular delicacy. The festival is also marked by the exchange of sweets and greetings among family and friends.

Magh Bihu is a celebration of the hard work of farmers and a time to give thanks to the deities for a bountiful harvest. The festival is an integral part of the cultural heritage of Assam and is a time for people to come together, celebrate, and strengthen their bonds with one another.



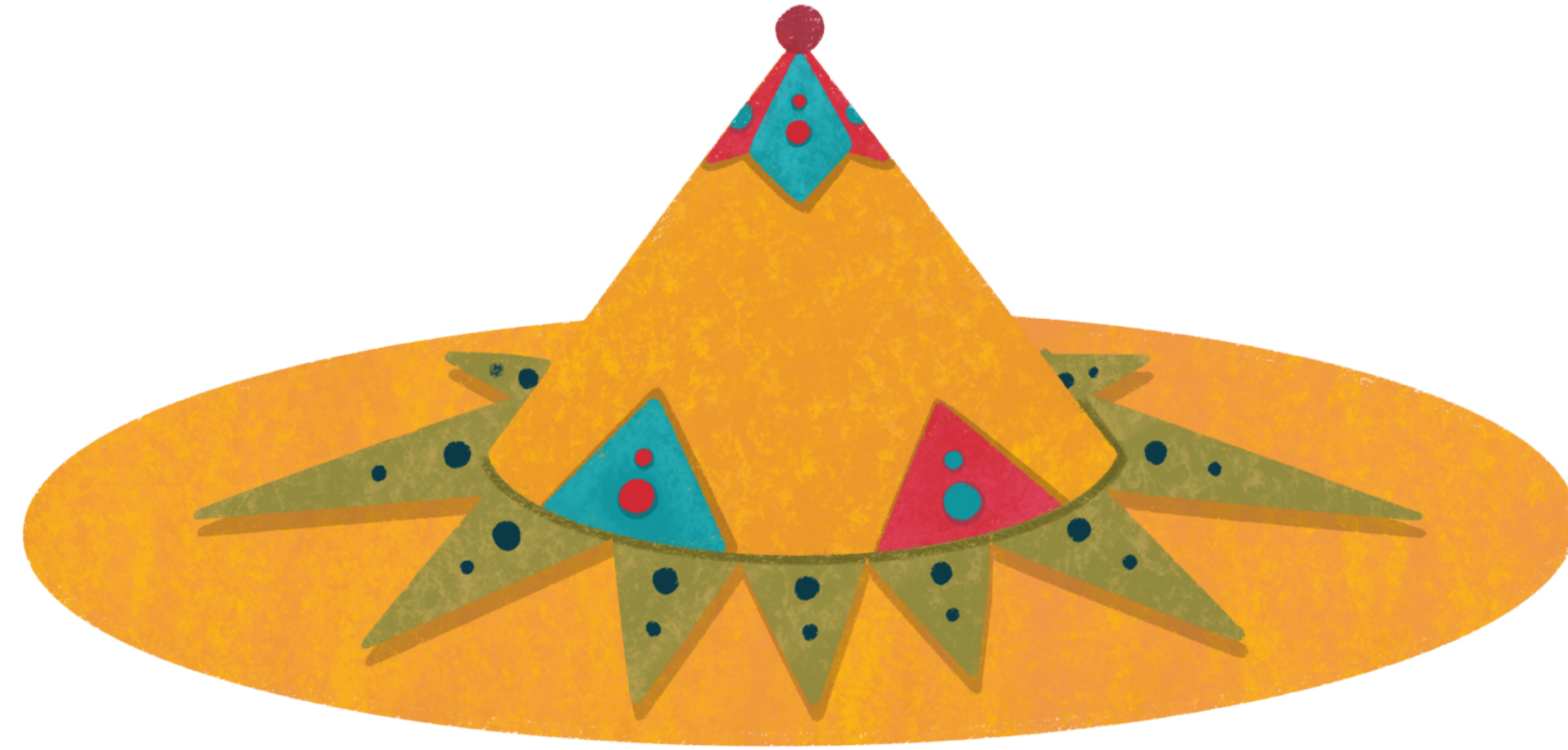
## DHOL

Double-sided drum made of wood and animal hide, and is played with two wooden sticks and is an essential instrument in Bihu music and is used to create energetic rhythms that accompany the traditional Bihu dance



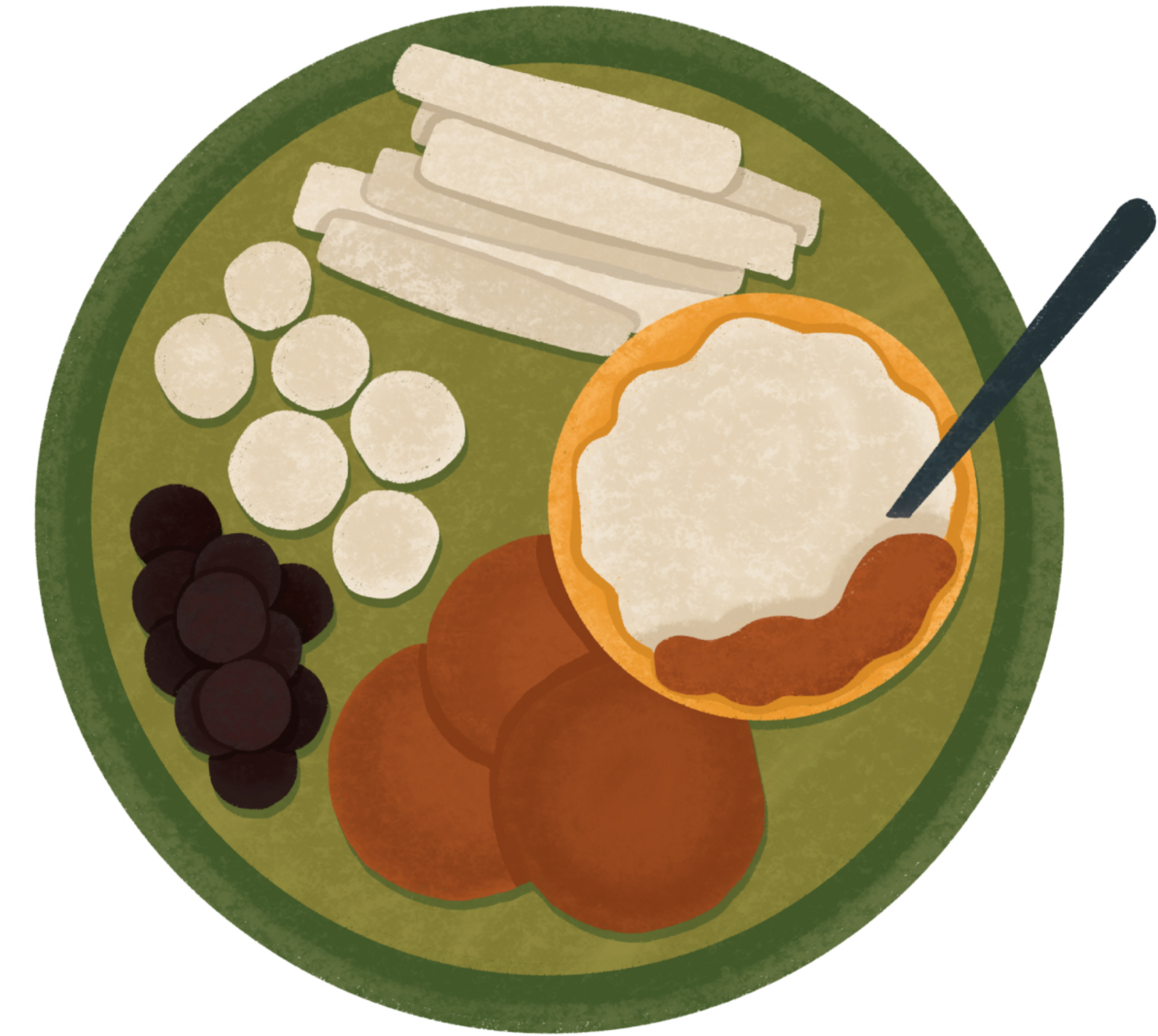
## PEPA

Traditional wind instrument made from buffalo horn, and is widely used in Assam during Bihu and the sound produced by the Pepa is an essential part of the cultural and musical heritage of the Assamese people, and is often used to accompany folk songs and dances during festive occasions.



## JAPI

Japi is a traditional conical hat made from bamboo and dried tokou leaves that is worn during the Magh Bihu festival in Assam, India. It is also used as a musical instrument, as people play it by striking the hat with their hands or a stick while singing traditional songs.



## POPULAR SWEETS DURING MAGH BIHU

Pitha (rice cakes), doi-chira (curd with flattened rice), laru (sweet balls made from coconut and sesame seeds), til pitha (rice cakes made with sesame seeds and jaggery) and narikol pitha (coconut cakes) are commonly prepared during the festival





### MAN DURING MAGH BIHU

During Magh Bihu, men typically wear traditional Assamese attire, which includes a dhoti, gamusa (a cotton towel), and a chadar (a long piece of cloth draped over the shoulders). The colors of the attire are usually white, cream, or beige, which reflect the simplicity and purity of the festival.



### WOMAN DURING MAGH BIHU

Women during Magh Bihu typically wear traditional Assamese attire such as Mekhela Chador or Riha-Mekhela with a shawl, often in vibrant colours like red, yellow, and green. They may also adorn themselves with traditional jewelry such as gam kharu (bangle), jon biri (earring), and gaam kharu (necklace)



MEJI

Meji is a tall, pyramid-shaped structure made of bamboo, wood, and thatch, and it is an essential part of Magh Bihu celebrations in Assam. On the night before Magh Bihu, people gather around the meji, set it on fire, and offer prayers for a bountiful harvest and a prosperous year ahead.

## COMMON PATTERNS FOUND DURING MAGH BIHU



PHRASES

**BIHU BIHU LAGISE**

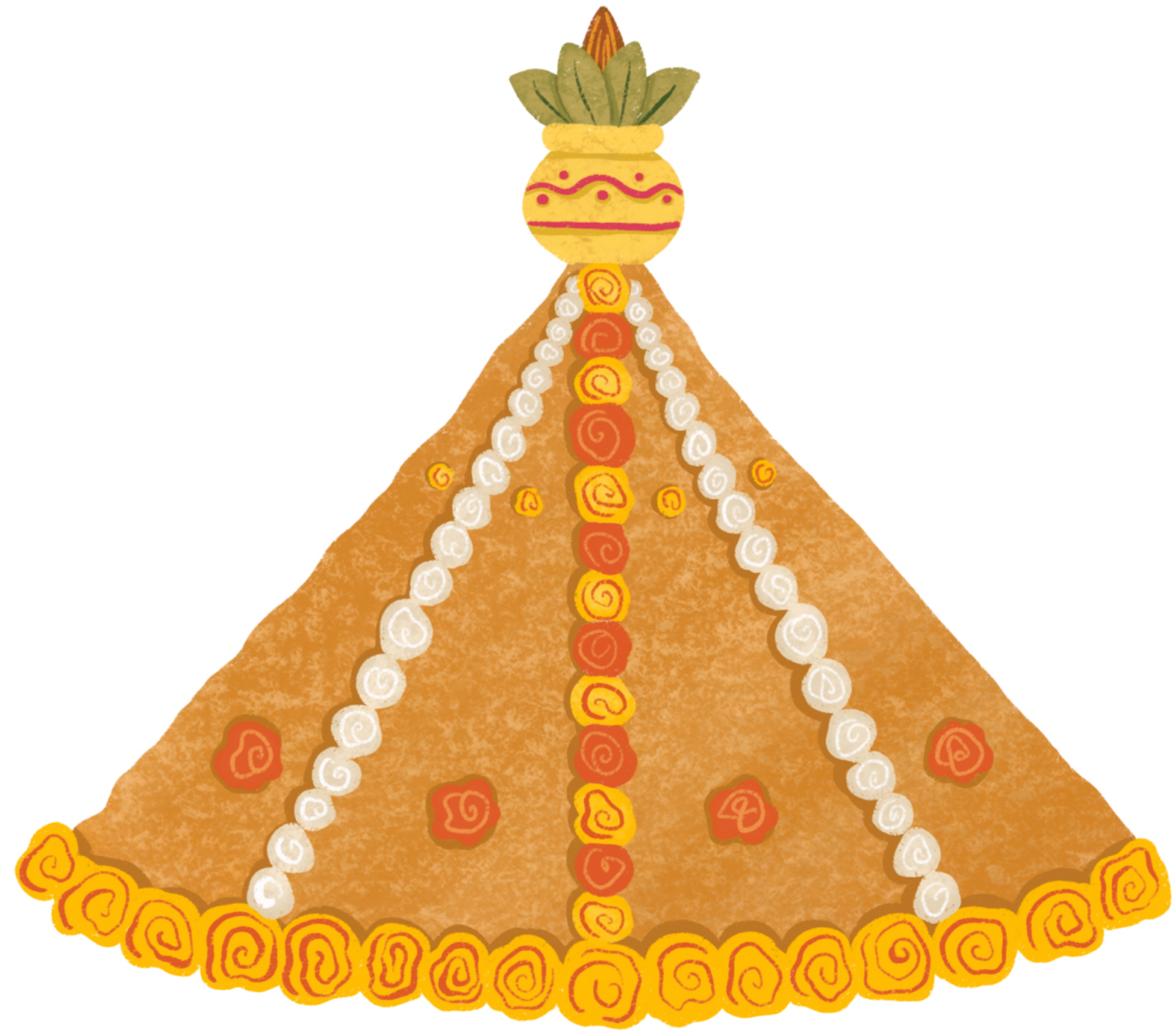
**AJJOI!**

**BIHU MARIBOLOI JAU!**

# SUGGI HABBA

Karnataka

Suggi Habba is a harvest festival celebrated in the Indian state of Karnataka, particularly in the rural regions. The festival is observed during the Hindu month of Pausha, which typically falls in January, and is dedicated to the worship of the land, the sun, and the cattle. During Suggi Habba, farmers offer their first harvest to the gods, thank them for their blessings, and pray for a bountiful harvest in the coming year. The festival is also marked by various cultural and social events, including singing, dancing, and traditional games.



### ELLU GADUGE

It is temporary structure made of sugarcane sticks, bamboo, and other natural materials. It is believed to bring good luck and prosperity to the village, and is a significant part of the Suggi Habba celebration.



### KALASHA

Kalasha is an important element during Suggi Habba, which is a sacred pot made of brass, copper, or silver that is used in various Hindu rituals. The Kalasha is filled with water, mango leaves, and a coconut and is considered a symbol of prosperity and fertility.



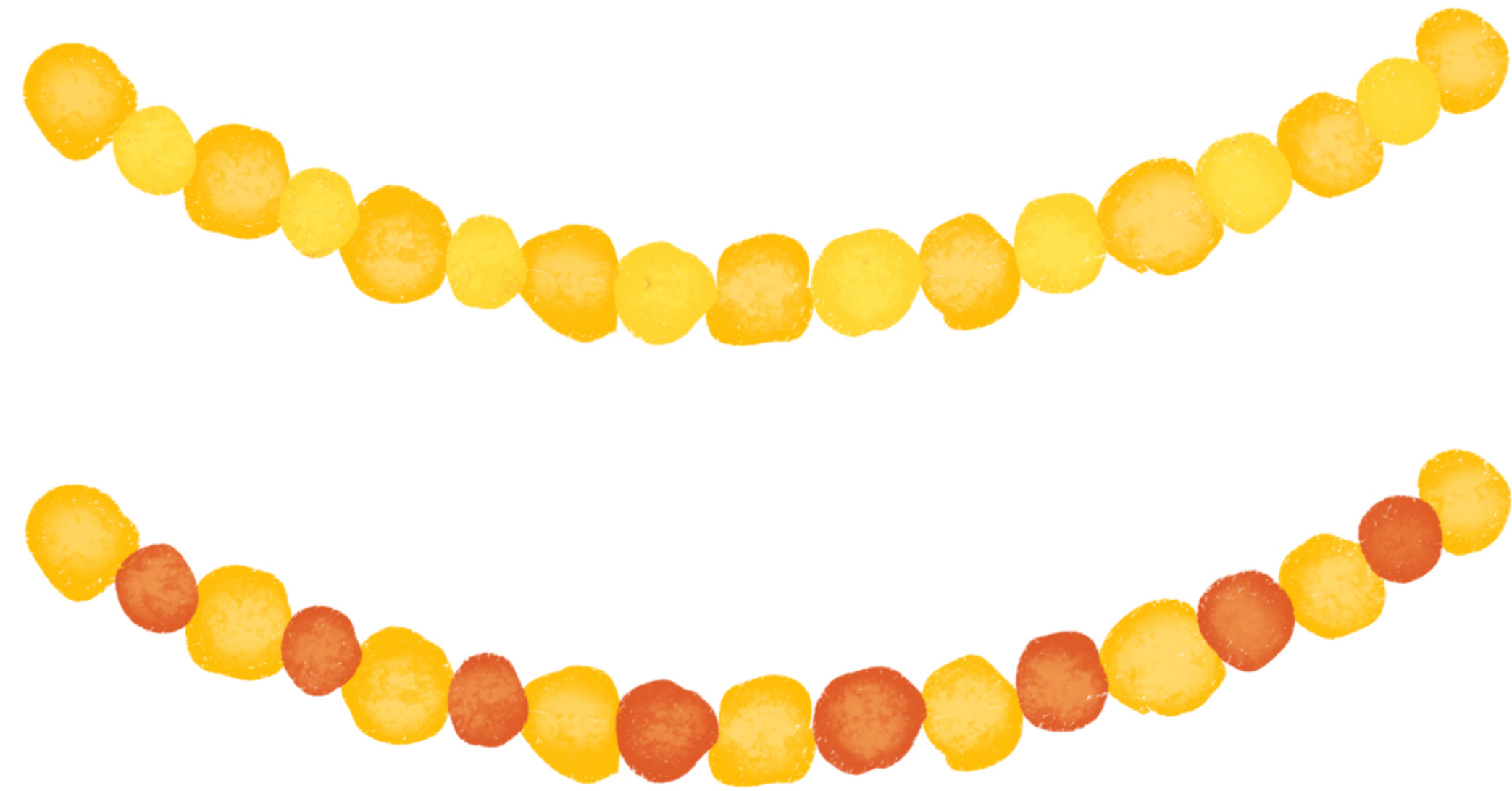
### POPULAR SWEETS DURING SUGGI HABBA

During Suggi Habba, people usually eat a Ellu bella (Mixture of sesame, ground nut, jaggery), Huggi (cooking rice and lentils together with a variety of spices such as cumin, pepper, and curry leaves) and Kabbu (Sugarcane)



### HOLY COW

The practice of covering cows with haldi (turmeric) during festivals like Suggi Habba is a traditional belief in Karnataka that is said to have medicinal properties and is believed to protect the cows from infections and diseases.



### THORANA

Flowers like marigold and jasmine, are used to create colourful garlands and flower arrangements. The main entrance of the house is adorned with a thorana (a decorative arch made of mango leaves and flowers) and the walls are decorated with floral strings & rangoli.

### PHRASES

ELLU BELLA THINDU  
OLLE MAATHADI

SUGGI, BELE, HOO, THINDIYA  
TINDIVAREGE MUNGARU MALE HOO

# UTRARAYAN

Gujarat

Uttarayan, also known as Makar Sankranti, is a Hindu festival that marks the beginning of the harvest season in India. It is celebrated on January 14th every year, and is associated with the movement of the sun into the zodiac sign of Capricorn (Makar) in the northern hemisphere.

During this festival, people fly kites, make traditional foods like til laddoos and khichdi, and decorate their houses with rangolis and flowers. It is also a time when people take dips in sacred rivers like the Ganges to wash away their sins and offer prayers to the sun god Surya. In some parts of India, like Gujarat, the festival is celebrated for two days with great enthusiasm and fervor.





### ELLU GADUGE

Kites are an integral part of the celebration of Utharayan, are flown across the sky in a display of skill and competition. The colorful kites are often handmade, with intricate designs and patterns, and the tradition of kite-flying symbolizes the victory of good over evil.



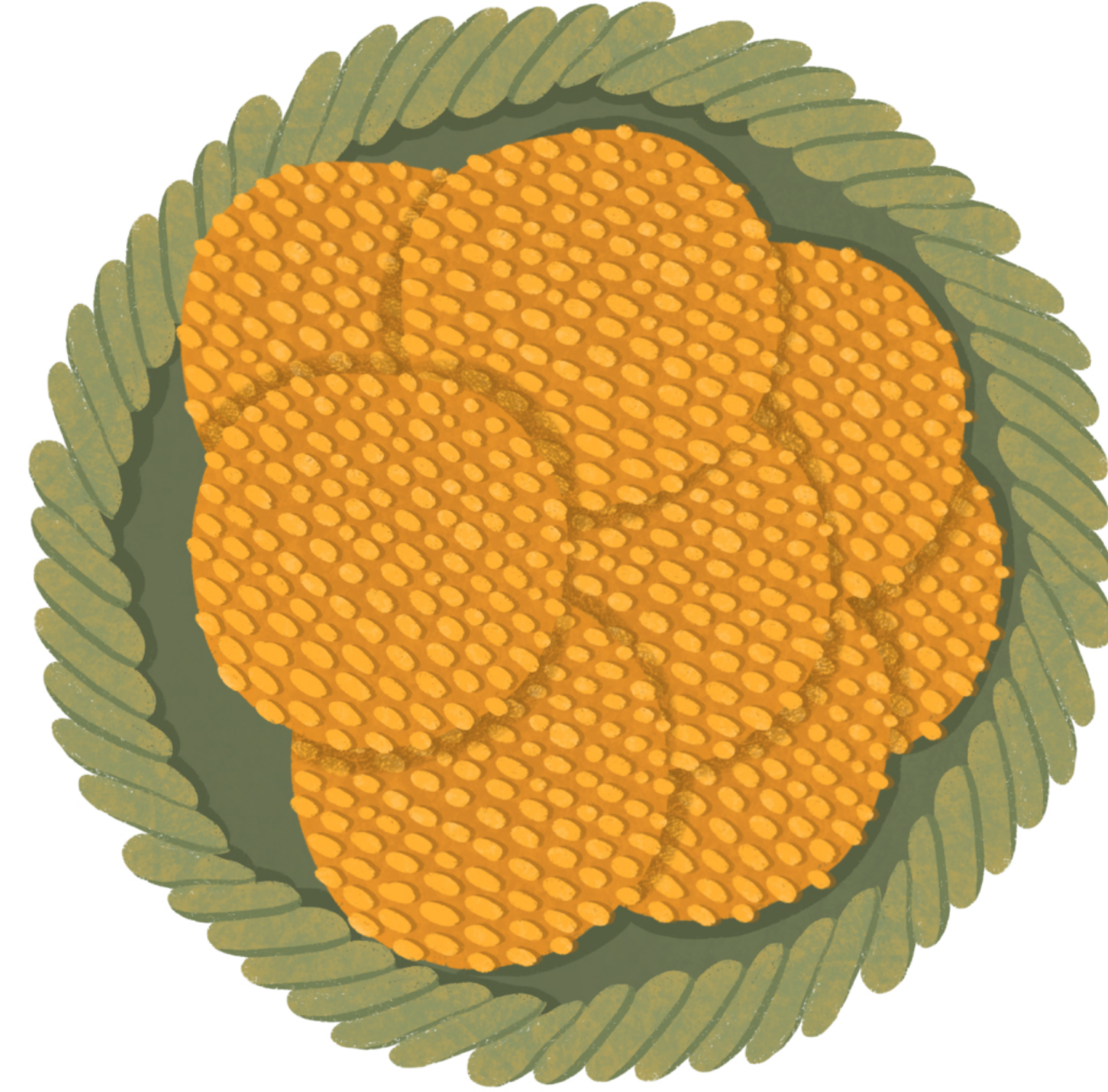
### MANJA

Manja is a special thread coated with a mixture of glue and powdered glass that is used to cut the strings of other kites in kite flying competitions during Utharayan. It is known for its sharpness and is a controversial aspect of the festival due to safety concerns.



## UNDHIYU

Undhiyu is a popular traditional dish that is prepared during the festival of Uttarayan in Gujarat, India. It is a mixed vegetable dish that is cooked in a clay pot with spices and is traditionally served with puri or roti.



## TILGUL

Tilgul is made from sesame seeds and jaggery, which are believed to have warming properties and provide energy during the cold winter months. Tilgul is often exchanged between friends and family as a symbol of love and goodwill.

## PHRASES

KAI PO CHE

DHEEL DE

LAPET

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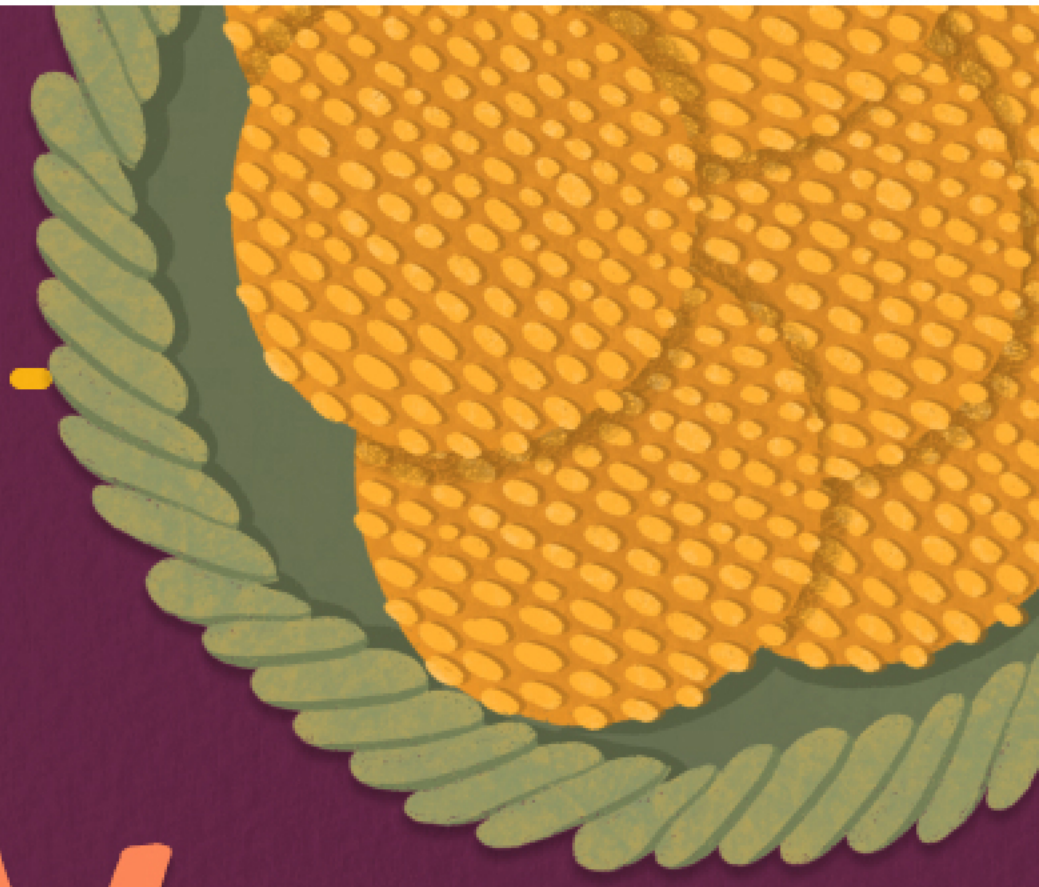
# EXPLORATIONS

I used the graphics I created about to have people make posters and greetings, and the following examples were the result.

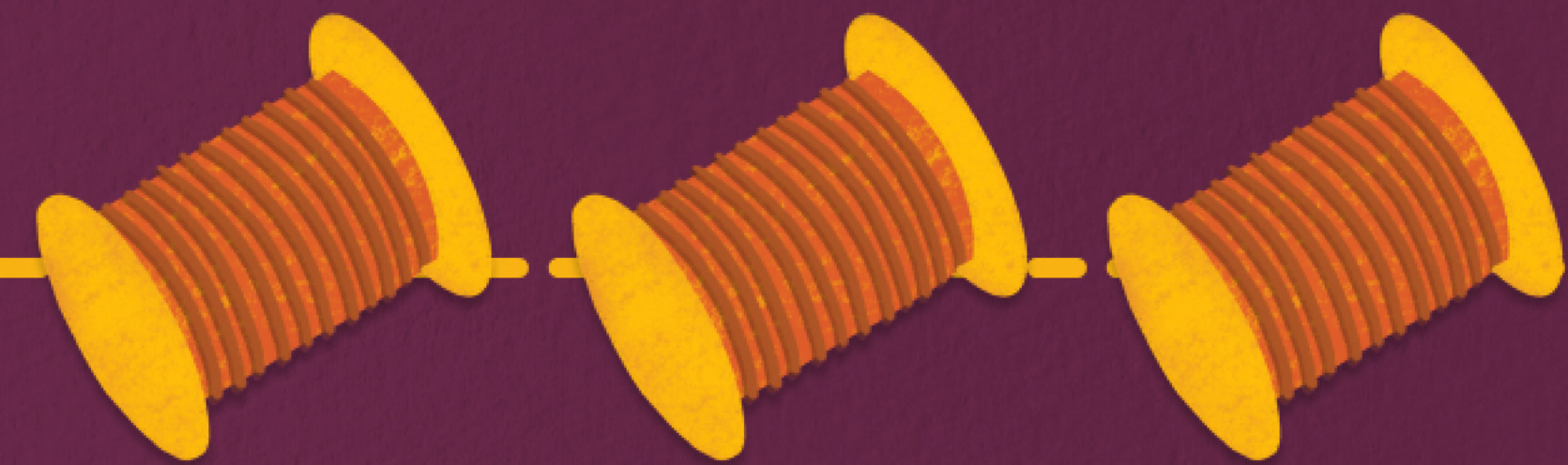




**HAPPY  
PONGAL!**



**HAPPY  
UTTHARAYAN**





**LOHRI DI,  
LAKH LAKH VADHAYI!**

**THE END**