SANKRANTI

Every month the Sun moves from one zodiac constellation to another and the day on which Sun changes the constellation is called Sankranti. Makara Sankranti, the Sun’s movement into Makara (Capricorn) constellation, is considered very important because it is the beginning of a six-month period of the auspicious time of Sun’s northern course called Uttaraayana Punya Kaalamu (Uttaraayana =northern course, Punya=divine, Kaalamu=time). Bhogi is the day preceding Sankranti and Kanumu is the day after Sankranti. One month preceding Makara Sankranti is known as Dhanurmasamu.

During the entire Dhanurmasamu girls decorate the mungili or vaakili (the entrance to the house) with huge muggulu (designs with lime sand or rice flour, turmeric and kumkuma) with Gobbemmalu (globes made of cow dung and decorated with flowers, turmeric and kumkuma, and incense) in the center, and worship Gobbenma (Goddess, Mother Gobbi) while singing and dancing around the muggu (design).

On the Bhogi day in the early morning, a bon fire is lit up with waste, before the traditional special bath. In the evening Bommala Koluvu (arrangement of images of Gods, toys, and dolls) and Bhogi palla (Zyziphus fruits, floral petals, and coins) showers for children, perantamu (gift giving that includes clothes, lentils, betel leaves, betel nuts, flowers, turmeric, and kumkuma) for women are given. Pulagamu with fresh rice from the harvest and a kalagalupu koora (mixed vegetable curry) with chikkudu (beans), vankaya (eggplant/brinjal) and other vegetables are prepared. Pongali (rice pudding with milk) is an important item during this festival. That is why this festival is also

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known as *Pongal* in Tamil. Special dishes like *karapupusa* & *chakkilalu* (brittle salted and peppered lentil pretzels), *palakayalu* (hard fried rice globules), *ariselu* (sweet rice cakes) etc., are also prepared. On the *Kanumu* day animals are decorated and races are held, sometimes the banned cockfights, bullfights, and ramfights are included. Sun, Mahabali (a mythological Asura king) and Godadevi (Goddess Goda) are worshiped during this harvest festival.

“ధనురూసమంత్యుల పర్యవేక్షణతో పాటు నిలిచి, రామకథ సిద్ధాంతాల కీర్తన లో నిద్రలేచి, సమాసాన్ని నిష్టాపద్ధత వచ్చుకోండి. చాలా పొగ్గులు పీటితో ముగ్గులను తీరిస్తాడు. ఇంటియింది శుభాంచింతాన్ని కళ్ళాపిచ్చి లభిస్తుంది. అనంతరం వాటిని గ్గముడి, బీర, చామంతి, బంటి పూల్తో అల్ంకరించి నమస్కరించాలి. అంటే రామాన్ని ఆలంపాలి, కోయలుగా పూల్తో నామప్రాంచింది. కానీ కోయలు సమాసాన్ని అంతక్షగా విశ్రామపరుస్తాం. దేవాంశం నిర్మాణం మాత్రమే కలిగి ఉంచాలి. కానీ విధంగా పర్యవేక్షించాలి.”
YOGA PANTS, THE EMPEROR’S NEW CLOTHES

Once upon a time there lived an emperor who loved his beautiful new clothes. These new clothes were made of the finest cloth imaginable and the most comfortable ever. The finest cloth imaginable and the most comfortable material had an amazing property that it reveals by hugging the body as to be invisible to anyone who was incompetent or stupid. All emperor’s advisers praised the clothes as magnificent, most comfortable and spectacular. What a pattern! What colors! Such comfortable clothes!

Moms with strollers, undergrads on campus, girlfriends meeting up for coffee dates or errands, and women dressed this way for cocktails. Athleisure is the name given to this class of street clothes that adopt the look and comfort of the emperor’s clothes. Some people say what we wear sends a message to the world. Yoga pants make a statement too: I am comfortable in my emperor’s clothes and I love my first amendment rights of freedom of expression.

It’s been a trend on the runways and in retail over the past few years, with forecasters predicting it to be one of the biggest sellers this holiday season. Tight yoga pants must be the best women’s outfit ever created and if you have doubts then go to any health club or school in the US. Praise the genius who invented yoga pants.
NOTES AND REFERENCES


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In addition to the primary sources cited above, additional references include: New York Times, Washington Post, Mercury News, Bayarea.com, Deccan Chronicle, the Hindu, Hindustan Times, Times of India, AP, Reuters, AFP, The Guardian, Pravda, Spiegel, Connexion, etc.

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"Where the mind is without fear and the head is held high, Where knowledge is free, Where the world has not been broken up into fragments, By narrow domestic walls." -- Rabindranath Tagore (1861-1941), Gitanjali, 1912.

One World One Family
AUM! SWASTI!
Om! Asatoma Sadgamaya, Tamasoma Jyotirgamaya, Mrityorma Amritargamaya, Om Shanthi, Shanthi, Shanthi!
(Aum! Lead the world from wrong path to the right path, from ignorance to knowledge, from mortality to immortality, and peace!)

SWASTI! AUM!