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# TRIBAL TRADITIONAL FESTIVALS AND JATARAS IN TELANGANA: CULTURE, IDENTITY AND SOCIAL SIGNIFICANCE

**Dr. K. Ramesh** [1*]
[1] Ph.D, Department of History, UCA&SS, Osmania University, Hyderabad, India

## ABSTRACT

The research article illustrates the central idea and the role of festivals and jatara celebrations in tribal human life and how they reflect the connection between humans and the environment in the present globalization. Tribal festivals in India especially in Telangana are vibrant celebrations of indigenous cultures, often rooted in agriculture, nature, and spiritual beliefs. Some well-known tribal festivals and jataras include each offering a unique glimpse into the rich traditions of various tribal communities in Telangana such as Banjara, Koya, Yerukala, Chenchu, Konda reddi, Gond, Pardhan, Thoti etc. Tribal festivals are more than just religious observances, they are vital components of tribal cultural identity. These festivals and Jataras are such as Sammakka Sarakka Jatara, Nagoba Jatara, Teej, Sitala, Maisigandi Maisamma, Mutyalamma Jatara, Bhudevi festival, Mamidi kota festival, Gangamma festival, Vana deveudu Panduga, Bramaramba festival, Lingamayya jatara, Poleramma, Ankalamma, Kollapuramma, Sunkulaama, Yellamma, Bhog Bhandar, Harvesting festival of thanks giving after the completion of crops etc help to preserve traditional knowledge, reinforce social structures, and create a sense of belonging in Telangana. They offer a space for the older and younger generations to come together, sharing stories, songs, and rituals that have been passed down through the ages. Through these festivals, tribal people reaffirm their connection to their ancestors, their lands, their assets and their community traditions.

**Keywords:** Tribals, Festivals, Jataras, Culture, Traditions etc

## INTRODUCTION

In Indian, tribal festivals are colorful celebrations of native cultures that frequently have their roots in spirituality, agriculture, and the natural world. Several well-known tribal festivals, such as those held by the Banjara, Koya, Yerukala, Chenchu, Konda redid, Gond, Pardhan, Thoti, and other tribal people of Telangana, each provide a distinctive window into their rich customs. Tribal festivals are essential elements of tribal cultural identity and go beyond simple religious celebrations. Sammakka Sarakka Jatara, Nagoba Jatara, Teej, SItala, Maisigandi Miasamma, Mutyalamma Jatara, Bhudeve festival, Mamidi Kota festival, Ganamma festivals, Vna deveudu Panduga, Bramaramba festivals, Lingamayya jatara, poleramma, Ankalamma, Kollapuramma, Sunkulaama, Yellamma, Bhog Bhandar and the Harvesting festivals of thanksgiving flowing the completion of crops are just a few examples of the festivals and Jataras that support social structures, preserve traditional knowledge, and foster a sense of community. They provide an environment where the younger and older generations can interact while exchanging songs, stories, and customs that have been handed down through the decades. Tribal people use these celebrations to reaffirm their ties to their community, their land, and their ancestors.

[*]**Corresponding Author:**
**Email address:** Dr. K. Ramesh (Krameshnzb@gmail.com)

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## THE BROADER CULTURAL IMPORTANCE OF TRIBAL FESTIVALS AND JATARAS

Jataras and tribal festivals are profound manifestations of culture, identity, and a balanced relationship with environment that go well beyond simple festivities.They festivals and jataras of tribal societies like the Banjara, Koya, Yerukala, Chenchu, Konda redid, Gond, Pardhan, Thoti, and other are closely linked to social cohesion, religious beliefs, and agricultural cycles By uniting generations via customs, music, dance, and food, these festivals serve as a living tribute to the tribal people's values, history, and way of life.We will examine some of the most important tribal celebrations in this piece,emphasizing how they strengthen ties with the community, demonstrate respect for the natural world, and uphold ancestors' customs.

Sammakka Sarakka Jatara, Nagoba Jaara, Teej, Sitala, Maisigandi Maisamma,Mutyalamma Jatara, Bhudevi festivals, Mamidi kota festival, Gngamma festival, Vana deveudu Panduga, Bramaramba festival,Lingamayya jatara, Poleramma, Ankalamma, Kollapuramma, Sunkulaama, Yellma, Bhog Bhandar, Harvesting festival of thanksgiving following crop completion, and other highlight the importance of celebrations in tribal life and how they reflect the relationship between people and the environment.

## THE SIGNIFICANCE OF TRIBAL FESTIVALS AND JATARAS

Tribal cultures celebrate festivals including Banjara, Koya, Yerukala, Chenchu, Konda redid, Gonda, Pardhan, Thoti, and others for a variety of reasons. They serve to revitalize and strengthen the tribal identity and sense of community in additions to commemorating the changing of the seasons and the passage of time. These festivities, which frequently center on the cycles of nature, agriculture, and the beliefs that support them, are fundamentally spiritual and environment. According to tribal philosophy, holidays serve as times for introspection, thankfulness, and reaffirmation of the close connection between life and the natural world.They give people a chance to show their appreciation for the land, animals and ancestors while also making a positive impact on the well-being of their community. Tribal festivals differ from more contemporary festivities in that they are deeply ingrained in the community. Tribal celebrations frequently include an emphasis on communal delight, community involvement, and spiritual rejuvenation, whereas many festivals nowadays concentrate on personal enjoyment or the exhibition of wealth. On whereas many festivals nowadays concentrate on personal enjoyment of the exhibitions of wealth. They promote an attitude of unity and collaboration in which every individuals is seen as a vital component of the total.In order to better understand these elements, let us now examine some important tribal festivals and jataras, including sammakka Sarakka Jatara, Nogoba Jatara, Teej, Sitala, Maisigandi Maisamma, Mutyalamma Jatara, Bhudevi festival, Mamidi Kota Festival, Gangamma festival, Vna deveudu Panduga, Bramaramba festival, Lingamayya Jatara, Poleramma, Analamma, Kollapuramma, Sunkulaama, Yellamma, Bhog Bhandar, Harvesting festival of thanksgiving following crop completion, etc, Tribal celebration are also crucial for preserving harmony with the natural world.They place a strong emphasis on natural cycles, sustainable living, and environment stewardship. The tribal way of honoring and living with nature can be a priceless example for the rest of civilizations in an era where environmental destruction is becoming a constant worry. Briggs (1819)

## BRIEF HISTORY OF TELANGANA

On June 2,2014, the 29th and youngest state in India, Telangana, split out from Andhra Pradesh. On June 2,2014, Telangana was established as the 29th State of India. 3,50,03,674 people live in the state, which has a size of 1,12,077 square kilometers (2011 Census). Before merging with Andhra State to become Andhra Pradesh, the Telangana region was a part of Hyderabad State from September 17,1948, until November 1,1956. The AP State Reorganization Bill was passed by both chambers of Parliament, creating Telangana following decades of campaigning for its independence. Karantaka to the west, Andhra Pradesh to the south and east, and Maharashra and Chhattisgarh to the north encircle Telangana. Hyderabad, Warangal, Adilabad, Nizamabad, Nalgonda, Khammam, Mahabubnagar, Ranga Reddy, Medak, and Karimnagar are some of the state's major cities and districts..

**Districts:** 33 districts make up the state, which has a total area of 1,12,077 square kilometers (44,273 square miles). Hyderabad is the smallest district, whereas Bjadradri Kothagudem is the largest.

There are 32.87 lakh tribal people in Telangana, including Banjara, Koya, Yerukala, Chenchu, Konda Reddig, Gond, Pardhan, Thoti, and others. Of these four are primate tribes, including Konda Reddi, Chenchu, Kolam, and Thotti. These tribes make up approzimately 9.34% of the state's 32.87 lakh people, with a literary rate of49.51%. They maintain a rich tapestry of festivals and rituals that reflect their spirituality, ancestral traditions, and close ties to the natural world.Banjaras hole the top spot among the tribal people, followed by Koya, Gond, and so on.An outline of some of Telangana's most well-known tribal rites may be found here.Chenchus stays in Pentas, Koyas stays in Gudems, Banjaras stays in Thandas, and so on. Mood and Dhananjay (2020)

Tribal communities are recognized under Articles 366, clause 25 of the Indian Constitutions. (2011 census)




**Methodology:** This research study is based on primary data collected through fieldwork in 33 Telangana districts and secondary data gathered from published journals and references books, both of which are necessary for this topic.

**Telangana Culture**

Languages and cultures from all over the world have long met in Telangana. It is without a doubt the best illustrations of India's inclusiveness, plurality, and, composite culture. Telangana, which is situated on the Deccan plateau's uplands, serves as abridge connecting the ``South of North of India" and the ``North of South of India". Thus, it should come as no surprise that the entire region became known as a ``miniature India" due to the Ganga-Jamuna Tehzeeb and the capital, Hyderabad. Chaturvedi (2012)

**Festivals and Jataras**

Renowned temples and Jataras, including Sammakka Sarakka Jatara, Nagoba Jatara, Teej, Sitala, Maisigandi Maisamma, Mutyalamma Jatara, Bhudevi festival, Mamidi kota Festival, Gangamma festival, vana deveude Panduga, Bramarmba festival, Lingamayya jatara, Poleramma, Ankalamma, Kollapuramma, Sunkulaama, Yellama, Bhog Bhandar, Harvesting festival of thanksgiving following the completion of crops, etc., are all celebrated with fantare, joy, and devotion.

**MAJOR TRIBAL FESTIVALS AND JATARAS IN TELANGANA**

Tribal communities including Banjara, Koya, Yerukala, Chenchu, Konda redid, Gond, Pardhan,, Thoti, and others celebrate the following important festivals and jataras.

**1) Sammakka Saralamma Jatara (Medaram Jatara)**

The Indian state of Telangana celebrates this festival in honor of the Hindu Tribal goddesses.One of the biggest people gatherings in history was observed at this jatara.Bellam(jiggery), known locally as Bangaram, is offered to the gods by people.Medaram in the Mulugu district's Tadvai Mandal is where the jatara state.According to Koya customs and traditions, the priests of the Koya Tribe perform all of the Goddesses' rites.Medaram is a secluded locations within the Etunagaram Wildlife Sanctuary, which is a portion of Dandakaranya, the Deccan's largest remaining forest belt.The jatara may be eligible for UNESCO's intangible cultural heritage of humanity" designation when it is proclaimed a national festival.The tribals think that their deities, Sammakka and Saralamma, pay them a visit during the Jatara celebrations.The Sammakka Saralamma Jatara is thought to draw the greatest number of devotees in india, second only to the Kumbha Mela. Rathod (n.d.)

**2) Historical movement of the Sammakka Sarakka**

Sammakka's amazing abilities are the subjects of numerous legends. A 13th century tribal tale states that while hunting, there tribal leaders discovered a baby girl (Sammakka) playing among tigers while encased in light. She was brought to the tribal chief, who took her iln and brought her up to be a leader. Later on, she turned out to be the local tribes people's savior. The koyas tribal chief, Pagididda Raju, was her husband. Between 1000 and 1323 AD, the Kakagtiyas, who had their capital in Warangal city, ruled over Medaram. Sammakka had two daughters, Jampanna, Nagulamma, and Srakka, also known as Saralama, and one son. The koya tribe was unable to pay the taxes levied by King Prataprudra of the Kakatiyas. King Prataprudra thereupon launched was on the Koya

Tribe.After Pagididda Raju was murdered in the enduring battle, Sammakka, who was devastated, had to continue the struggle with her son Jampanna, daughter Saralamma, and son-in-law Govinda Raju. When saralamma lost the fight, Sammakka had come very close to victory.After being mortally wounded, Jampanna fell into Sampangin vaggu (stream) bledding. According to legend, the blood caused the stream to turn crimson, and in remembrance of Jampanna's sacrifice, the stream was christened``jampanna Vaggu".

Sammakka, distraught, withdrew to a hill known as Chilakala Gutta and transformed into a jar containing kumkuma powder (kumkuma bharani). Following the battle, Saralamma and Sammakka were deified, and every two years a festival is held in her honor.The koya tribe and its followers stil hole the belief that Samakka and Saralamma are Adi Parashakti's incarnations sent to keep them safe. To honor this sacrifice, the jatara is a festival.In Medaram, the Kumkuma jar is brought, and after washing themselves in Jampanna Vaggu, Sammakka and Saralamma are offered jiggery. This four day Jatara is held every two years, or biannually.It begins when the goddesses arrive in Gaddelu, Medaram, and concludes when they vanapravesham, or enter the forest. Singh (2010)



**Day 1:** Wednesday- sarakkas idol is carried from kannepalli to medaram.pagididda Rajus idol is carried from poonugondla to medaram.

**Day 2:** Thursday - sammakkas idol and the kumkum casket are carried to medaram (usually by midnight) after long secret pujas by the koya tribes on chilakala gutta (the hill where the kumkum casket is kept). govinda rajus idol is carried from kondai to medaram.

**Day 3:** Friday – Peak day of the Jatara, believe to be the day Adi Parashakti is worshipped). Samakka and Sarakka along with their respective spouses Pagididda Raju and Govinda Raju, are worshiped. Devotees bathe in Jampanna Vaggu ad offer their weight in jiggery to samakka and Sarakka.

**Day 4:** Saturday – The Jatara ends with the `` Tallula Vanapravesham" (goddesses' entry into the forest) on Magha Shuddha Poornami. The Kumkum casket is carried back to Chilakala gutta and kept there until the next jatara.

**JAMPANNA VAGU**

Originally called ``Sampangi Vagu," Jampana Vagu is a tributary of the Godavari River.History claims that Jampanna was the son of the tribal goddess Samakka and a warrior from the tribe.He lost his life in combat with the Kakatiyan Army in that stream, hence his moniker, the Jampanna Vagu.According to tribal beliefs, bathing in the sacred water of Jampanna Vagu honors and remilnds them to the sacrifice made by their gods to save them, and it also gives them courage.The Jampanna Vagu Bridge is a bridge that has been built over Jampanna Vagu.

Offering Gold/Jagri: Jagri is referred to as gold in this ceremony. In exchanges for their wishes- such as marriage, children, employment, business, etc.- the majority of people present gold in the form of jagri.The gold's weight is determined by the weight of the individuals.The Telangana chief minister offered 65kg of gold in 2024. Historians claims that because jagri is a good dehydrator and is unavailable to indigenous people, people used to carry it whenjourneying to medaram. For them, it was extremely valuable.

**Nagoba Jaatara:**

For ten days, the mesaram clan of the Gond tribes celebrates the second- largest tribal carnival. Inderavelly Mandal Adilabad district, Telangana, India's Keslapur village hosts the tribal celebrations known as Nagoba Jatara. The Mesaram clan of the Gond tries celebrates the second-largest tribal festivals for ten days.At the celebration, tribal members of the Mesram clan from Maharastra, Chhattisgarh, Orissa, and Madhya Pradesh given Prayers.At the festival of Nagoba, thousands of tribal members from the Mesaram clan in Mandal, 70 kilometers from the hamlet. To perfrom abhishekam to the Nagoba idol at the temple in Keslapur, the 10 day celebration officially began



**Nagoba Jatara Celebrations:** Before competing its puja, the Mesaram elders will set the ancient ``jhari," a 1,400-year- old water container, as part of the morning rituals as Keslapur Nagoba Jatara.Under the ancient banyan tree, the gourp of Gond and Pradhan elders who had used pots to draw holy water from Hastin a Madugu of the Godavari River in Jannaram Mandal were traditionally welcomed.

The Gonds continue to ``purify" the temple before the pujas begin by drawing Ganga Jal, or water from the Godavari, at a location known as ``Hastina Madugu," where it is said that Nagoba slaked his thrist after consumilng the ``naivedyam." A rite known as ``bheting,``which accepts new wives into the clan, is also a aprt of the occasion. New daughters-in-law are formally brought to the clan by the Raj Gond Adivasis of Adilabad through a complex ceremony known as Bheting, one of their many regalistic customs.To gain access to the deity's temple, all individuals who were married into the clan within the past year must ``meet" the clan deities through Bheting. The women in white saris are the daughters-in-law, or Bheti Koriad, who are introduced to the goddess Jangubai. They are members of the eight clan where Jangubai is the clan deity. Freshly harvested food grains are used to make the natividyam that is transported in bamboo baskets.The natividyam offering is an expression of gratitude for the crop that was harvested, while the bamboo symbolizes the Gonds' relationship with the jungles. Adivasis celebrate with about 15 different dances and music. One of the event's main highlights is the Gusadi Dance performance by Gond tribe dancers.At the entrance to the Jangubai crave temple, which is situated in the steep jungles of KotaParandoli gram panchayat in Kerameri Revenue Mandal, Gond pilgrims and priests will perform traditional folk music.Later, Gond women continue to grind grain and go about their everyday lives with a smile on their faces.With a small shack set aside specifically for this purposes, the ladies in the designated party travelling to the Jangubai caverns make food on the spot.The annual tribal festival officially began with the Gonds performing the Mahapuja of Nagoba, also called Persa Pen or big deity, in the might.

**Teej Festival:**

Unmarried women from the Banjara and Mathura communities celebrate Teej. In their respective thanda, the Lambada and Mathura communities celebrate teej with religious fervor and joy. The Hindu calendar month of Sravana is when the nine-day Teej festivals is observed.

In the Gregorian calendar, this often fails during the month of August.The day of the full moon in the month of Sravan, which coincides with the celebration of Rakhi or Raksha Bandhan, marks the start of the Teej festivalWith the assistance of the ales, the women carry out a number of ceremonies and rituals during the Teej festival.But the festivals centerpiece is the sowing of seeds in baskets made especially for the occasions. At the beginning of the Teej festival, wheat is sown in weaving bowls and quickly grows into wheatgrass. Women from these two communities take part in the nine-day Teej festival's customary traditions. On the final day, the women submerge the sprout bowls in nearby ponds or lakes.In teej, women worship jagadamba and ask Goddess for help finding a good spouse. Married women also pray for their husbands' health. The women circle the Teej, or the ornate clay temple-like building, while playing and dancing to the rhythm of traditional melodies. With the use of 21 sticks and clay (black soil) they gather from their agricultural fields, the women of Mathura (Mathura Labana) construct a temple-like edifice that they adorn with decorations. Telangana's Banjara (Lambada) community celebrates the important "Banjara Merama Yadi" festival, also called Teej. In August, during the nine-day Sravan festival, unmarried girls pray for abountiful crop and form fortunate relationships.



**KEY ASPECTS OF THE FESTIVAL**

- **Prayer for a good monsoon and harvest:** The festival is a prayer to the goddess for a bountiful harvest.
- **Wheat sowing in baskets:** Unmarried girls grow wheat seedings in woven baskets and display them on an elevated platform.
- **Seeking good alliance:** Girls pray for good life partners.
- **Rituals and celebrations:** The festivals involves various rites and rituals, including the immersions of baskets with wheat seedlings in rivers or streams after sacrificing lambs.
- **Sweet "prasadam" distributions:** Sweet "Pradasam" is prepared with rice and jiggery and distributed after prayers.
- **Community elders' permission:** The girls seek permission from villages elders before immersing the baskets in rivers or streams. The festival is rooted in the Banjara community's traditions beliefs and customs. It's a time for religious fervor, community gatherings, and prayers for a prosperous future.

**Sitala Mata Festival:** A distinctive Banjara community event. The Banjara people of Telangana, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, and Maharastra celebrate the Sitala Mata Festival at Ashadham in July. The Sitala Mata festival is one among the various festivals held in culturally a diverse Bharat. Observed durng the month of Ashadam (July) by the Banjara community. The Banjara people tended cattle and farmer a land while residing in wooded places in the past. They used cow's milk to make ghee, which they frequently exchanged. When the communitys animals started to contract diseases, it was difficult and they lost a lot of money. The community's elders, the Nayak, had a fantastic dream one night in which seven goddesses materialized in front of him. Sitala Bhavani, a minor divinity among them, told him that they would protect the cattle and remove the sicknesses provided they placed sculptures of the seven goddesses under a specific tree, worshipped them, sacrificed animals, and kept their promises



One of the major Banjara animal festivals, Seethala, is held during the month of Asada, which is often June and occasionally July. The sole purpose of seetla prayers is to keep cattle safe. The seven sister-deities of the Mathrukas, Seetla Bhavani, Marama (merama) Bhavani, Tulja Bhavani, Hingla Bhavani, Kenkhali Bhavani, Manthrali/Masuri Bhavani, and Dwalangar Bhavani, are considered malignant by the Banjaras. These goddesses are thought to safeguard livestock by controlling pandemic illnesses and pustules.Seven stones, symbolically representing these seven goddesses, are house beneath a Jeenzero Jahd (Bauhinia tree). They thought that this tree's soothing shade was where seetla was born. On the edges of the Thanda, people celebrate this event. A male deity known as

``Lunkadiya," who resembles Potaraju, is also worshipped at a distance of roughly thirty feet directly across from the other deities. A goat is first presented to the gods as a sacrifice, and its intestinces are pulled out to the abdomen, stretched across the pit to the idol of Lunkadiya, and bound there. After that, men raise Adin by frightening the cattle with drums and sand vessels, running halter-skateboards, and crossing the pitted, stretched intestines of the sacrificial Seethala festivals.Black pepper and onion, which stands for purifications and defences against evil, are among the offerings. With great reverence, these sacrifices are offered in hopes of receiving divine benefits for the prosperity, well-being and harmony of the community. Lambadi ladies dress colorfully for the occasions and congregate to dance merrily to the drum beats. Their songs recite legends of custom and adorations for Seethalama, a goddess revered for her nurturing and protective attributes. A sheep is sacrificed after the music and dances. Leading the sheep, goats and cows over a sacred line is thought to bestow upon them seethlamata's disease preventive blessings. The animals are sprinkled with special offerings called guggis, which represent the community's prayers for the health and success of their livestock. As night falls, family, friends and siblings gather in joyous celebrations as the tribal tandas resound with festive gladness. As everyone assembles to celebrate their customs and the gifts granted by Seethlamata, the air is filled with music, laughing and the smells of communal feasts, promoting brotherhood and solidarity. This intricate and profoundly symbolic celebrations of heritage and spirituality strengthens ties within the community and highlights the enduring relationship between people and the holy forces that influences and enrich their lives.

**Muthayalamma Jatara:**

The mountainous and wooded areas along the Godavari River in the districts of Khammam and Bhadrachalam, Telangana, are home to the Konda Reddi tribe, which is classified as a particularly Vulnerable Tribal Group (PVTG). Their rituals demonstrate a harmonious fusion of ecological practices and spirituals beliefs, and their rich cultural tapestry is intricately woven with nature. Native to the hills and wooded areas around the Godavari River in Telangana's districts of Khammam and Bhadrachalam, the Konda Reddi clan follows a distinctive fusion of Hindu customs with animistic beliefs. Worshiping Muthayalamma, the village deity who is thought to gurad and bless the people, is essential to their spiritual existence. Muthayalamma is regarded as the village's guardian sprit. Muthayalamma's presence is represented by a modest shrine, frequently found in fields or forests, in contrast to deities kept in ornate temples, representing the tribe's close ties to the natural world.

The worship of Muthayalamma is marked by simplicity and sincerity:

- **Ugadi and Kotha Amavasya Celebrations:** On these auspicious days, the village priest, known as the Pedda Kpau, observes fasting and offers cooked rice, bananas, coconuts, turmeric,and vermilion to Muthayalamma.
- **Community Sacrifice:** Following the priest's offering,s te villagers collectively purchase a goat, which is sacrificed in a communal feast. The meat is distributed among all household,s fostering unity and shared blessings.

**Bhumi Devi Festivals:**

The Earth Goddess, who represents agricultural success and fertility. Native to the hillds and wooded areas around the Godavari Rivers in Telangana's districts of Khammam and Bhadrachalam, the Konda Reedi clan follows a distinctive fusion of Hindu customs with animistic beliefs.Worshiping Bhumi Devi, the Earth Goddess who represents fertility and agricultural wealth, is essential to their spiritual lives. In the spiritual beliefs of the Konda Reddi, Bhumi Devi is highly revered.She is regarded as the Earth Goddess, representing fertility and the food that the land provides.According to the Konda Reddies, her blessings are the reason for the good agricultural harvest.Offerings and rituals are performed for her in order to thank the earth for its abundance and to guarantee a plentiful harvest.

**MAMIDI KOTHA FESTIVALS**

This celebration, which is observed during the mango season, signifies the start of the agricultural cycle. The Konda Reddi tribe in Telangana celebrates the Mamidi Kotha festivals, which signals the start of the agricultural cycle and the srart of the mango season. The tribe's farming methods and their respects for environment are interwined in these celebrations, which a has great cultural and spiritual value. The Ugadi celebrations which usually takes place in March or April, is when Mamidi Kotha, sometime called the Mango celebrations, is celebrated.

As the Telugu New Year, Ugadi is celebrated with a range of religious and cultural events. Mamidi Kotha signifies the start of the new agricultural year and the first mango consumption of the season for the Konda Reddi.

**GANGAMMA PANDUGA**

- Honors Gangamma Devi with an emphasis on river worship and water protection. The Konds Reddi tribe of Telangana, especially in the mountainous and wooded areas near the Godavari River in the districts of Khammam and Bhadrachalam, celebrate the Gangamma panduga, a major celebration. In additions to celebrating the river deity Gangamma Devi, this celebrations symbolizes the tribes strong ties to waterways and their reliance on them for agricultural success.
- **Offering to the Goddess:** Villages present offerings such as cooked rice, fruits, and other food items to Gangamma Devi. These offerings are made at riverbanks or near sacred water sources symbolizing gratitude and seeking blessings.

- **Animals Sacrifices:** To appease the goddess and ensure her favor, animal sacrifices, a including goats or fowls, are performed. The meat from these sacrifices is shared among the community, reinforcing social bonds.
- **Purifications Rituals:** During the festivals, individuals cleanse themselves in river water, which are believed to purify them and remove any impurities. This practice underscores the sacredness of water in their beliefs systems.

**Vana Devudu Panduga:** Honors Gangamma Devi with an emphasis on river worship and water protections.The Konda Reddis tribe of Telangana, especially in the mountainous and wooded areas near the Godhavari River in the districts of Khammam and Bhadrachalam, celebrate the Gangamma Panduga, a major celebrations.In additions to celebrating the river deity Gangamma Devi, this celebration symbolizes the tribes strong ties to water ways and their reliance on them for agricultural success.

**Bhramaramba Festoval**

Despite his apparent conversions to deity worship, Chnechu, who is legally recognized as an animist, has maintained his ancient pagan beliefs.The most recent additions is the lingam, which is symbolized by a piece of wood or stone, along with Akasa Amma(sky) , Bhoomi Amma (Earth), and Amma Talli (Smallpox Goddess).In telangana Nallamal forests, specifically in Bourapur, Lingala Mandal, and Nagarkurnool district he Chenchu tribe celebrates the important yearly Bhramaramba Jatara festival.Since 2015, when Telangana state was formed, this ceremony has been observed during Maha Shivaratri.The event, which has its roots in the spiritual and cultural customs of the Chenchu community, honors Goddess Bhramaramba, a manifestations of Goddess Paravati.



**Lingamayya Jatar**a: The Shiva Manifestation: Lingamayya is seen as a manifestation of Lord Shiva among the Chenchus.Alongside Maisamma (also called Peddamma), a goddess who symbolizes shakti, this deity is adored. During the month of Sravan (July to August), rituals like as prayers and offerings are performed in honor of both male and female deities.

The Chenchus' longstanding ties to Shiva worship are highlighted their affiliation with Srisailam, a well-known pilgrimage center devote to lord Shiva and Devi Brahmaramba. The Chencus believe they re descended from Lord Mallikarjuna, and avatar of Lord Shiva, who married a young Chenchu woman named Chenchu Laxmi, As a result, they have a special place in temple records and chronicles.

**Poleramma, Ankamma, Kollapuramma, Sunkulamma, and Ellamma**

Hindu holidays such as Sankranthi, Sivarathri, Sreeramanavami, Dasara, and Ugadi (Telugu New Year's Day) are observed by the Yerukalas.They perform a variety of rites to worship both good and evil deities during these celebrations.For instanc,e a sheep or small buffalo is tethrered to the leg of a cot that sick person is lying on during Poleramma devotion.

This animal is offered to the goddess, and it is sacrificed as token of appreciation once the person well recovers.Sathupadi, Kavadi, Manupati, and Mendraguthi are the four phraties into which each subdivisions is divided.It is believed that the first two phratiries – Viz, Sathupadi, and Kavadi—are better than the others. Several exogamous intiperlu (surname) are futher subdivided into each phratry..Kumbha, mogili, Katta, Devara, Sreerma, Palaparthi, Meda, and others are examples of intiperlu. Exogamy and endogamy are present at the phratry and intiperlu levels, respectively.With a focus on pacifying spirits and ancestral ghosts, yerukala ceremonies combine Hindu customs, folk beliefs, and traditional practices.They appease evil gods like Ankamma, Kollapuramma, and others, as well as worship goods gods from the Hindu pantheon. Goats, pigs, and poultry are frequently sacrificed in order to wards off bad luck and guarantee good fortunate.

The Yerukalas are deeply spiritual, venerating both benevolent and malevolent deities:

- **Benevolent Deities:** They worship Hindu gods such as Lord Venkateswara, Narsimhaswamy, Narayanaswamy, and Rama.

- **Malevolent Spirits:** To ward off misfortunes and illnesses, they appease sprits like Ankamma, Kollapuramma, Sunkalamma, Poleramma, and Ellama. Rituals often involve sacrifices of goats, pigs, and fowls.

The Yerukalas engage in various traditional crafts and livelihoods:

- **Basket and Mat Weaving:** Utilizing materials like bamboo and wild date leaves.
- **Pig Rearing:** An essential part of their subsistence and ritual practice.
- **Rope and Broom Making:** Crafting essential household items.

**Bhog Bhandar:** Bhog is a methodical approach to making sacrifices to the gods, which is done both during festivals and to the gods themselves. Bog involves making kichadi or lapsi. To do this, they first dig a rectangular pit and light it with fire till it turns into coal. Next, they mix the created kichadi or lapsi with ghee and light it three times while singing a chat song.Bhogs says things like`` saijes yadi shapni, sevabhaya, dandi yadi, gavidi godha, ghar, dodi, haro bharo rakadesh, kutumbamena dhoko ayenji ju rakadesh, ramena hamena dhai karaseh, kheth ey ma bharkath rakadesh, and sai jesh yadi.

**Maisigandi Maisamma Temple Kadthal**

Maisamma Maisigandi Manmdiram Kadthal is situated in Maisigandi village's Kadthal Mandal. Maisigandi is a small village on the highway between Srisailam and Hyderabad.On the outskirts of Maisigandi village sits the temple dedicated to maisamma, the local name for the goodess Mahakali. It is a significant and quickly growing Mahakali temple in Telangana.It expresses the Banjara people's cultural and mythological feelings The temple's founder and trustee, panthu Naik, was a prominent Banjara leader who dedicated his life to the temples development and sacrifice. The temple is being maintained by his family members since his passing.Maisigandi Maisamma's idol stands around 20 feet tall, and the Gopuram is enormous and unique among South Indian temples in that it is open at the top. According to legend the temple's presiding deity requires that the top of the temple remain open.



The Banjara or Lambada castes comprise the priests of this shrineTourists and devotees fill the temple grounds on weekends, especially during Bonalu and ''Jatara" (fair), giving the area a llively appearance. The temples is 66 kilometers from Hyderabad in the directions of Srisailam.The villagers believe that Mahakali is a strong goddess who grants the desires of her followers.Devotees and visitors from all over the world, particularly from Hyderabad, are increasingly drawn to the Maisigandi Maisamma temple.After their desires are granted, people present ``bonam" (food offerings to the goddess) at the weekend celebrations held in the temples grounds.

**HOLI**

For the Banjara people, Holi is a significant holiday. The Banjara people light and observe Holi on the morning of the second day of the month of Falgun's full moon. Holi is holiday celebrated by the Banjara people that fosters fraternity and love wilth the group. The inhabitants of Banjara wait anxiously for Holi after Diwali. According to some. Holika Dhanis is a part of the Holi festivals. Dhunda is another name for it. It used to harm people, so one evening they tried to keep it our. They did this by setting a fire on the villages boundaries, and ever since then, people have been free of the demon. Today, the disparaging remarks that were used to push this monster way have evolved into atrocities. Giving the newborn a taste of Holi after birth is seen as essential in this community, and ``searching ceremonies" are held for the same reason. The men and women of Tanda are known to congregate in the courtyard of the house where the search ritual is scheduled to take place as soon as the Holi festival draws near. There, they dance in a unique manner and sing sons until midnight. Songs like this, filled with jokes and laughter, continue to satirize one another til midnight.Heroism is evident in the songs during this Holi festival, along with religious social exhortations and, depending on the

situations, obscene lyrics. According to this civilization, children should go to holi. A kid's birth serves as a pretext to celebrate the festival of Holi, which is performed specifically after the instant is born. Holi lacks that level of fervor and zeal if there is no "searching" (Dhund) ritual.They congregate in the concerned party's courtyard for the search (Dhund) ceremony, where they dance and sing song till midnight.

**THE HARVEST FESTIVAL OF THANKS GIVING**

The indigenous communities commemorate this important harvest event.It is a moment to honor the laborious effort of the farming season and to give thanks to the soil for its riches. It is distinguished by ceremonies that pay homage to the land's spirits, with the worship of the earth goddess serving as the main event. The tribal people give prayers for the upcoming year's prosperity nd adorn their homes with customary themes. Songs, dancing and the cooking of unique delicacies using the just gathered crops are all part of the celebrations. This is an opportunity for the community to unite, show appreciation, and reestablish their ties to the land that provides for them. Similar to other tribal celebrations, Sankranti emphasizes the mutually beneficial link between people and the natural world. The community respects and takes care of the soil since it is viewed as a good entity that gives life. One of the primary customs of Sankranti is the painting of animals and natural landscape on household walls.In additions to being a means of artistic expression, these murals serve as a symbol of respect for the animals and the environment that go into the harvest. Animals are frequently killed as a part of the rites, and then everyone in the village gathers for a feast to celebrate the abundance of the land.Food sharing represents the festival's communal character, in which al participants participate equally in the celebration of life, harvest, and thankfulness.



**Bonalu Festival**

Bonalu is a Hindu Festival, celebratd during the Telugu month of Ashadam (translate to June/July of Gregorian calendar) wherein Goddess Mahakali is worshiped. The festivals is also considered a thanksgiving to the Goddess for fulfilling the desires of devotees

1) **Bonam:** As a part of the festival, Bojanam or Meal is offered to the presiding Mother Goddess. Women prepare rice cooked with Milk, Jaggery in a Brass or Earthen Pot adorned with Neem Leaves, Turmeric, Vermilion putting a lighted Diya on top of the Ghatam.
2) **Rangam (prophecy);** An important part of th e fesgtival is Rangam (Prophecy). Women standing atop of an earthen pot` invokes' goddess Mahankali onto her and turns an Oracle.
3) **Ghattam:** Next is Ghattam. A copper pot is decorated in the form of Mother Goddess. The Ghattam is carried by a priest and is taken in procession accompanied by `Pothurajus' and musical instruments like trumpets and drums for the immersions.
4) **Pothraju:** Pothrajus are considered the brother of Mother Goddess and are represented by well-built, bare-bodied men, wearing a small tightly draped red dhoti and bells on ankles with turmeric on bodies and vermilion on the foreheads with musical instruments like trumpets and drums for the immersion.

**BATHUKAMMA FESTIVAL**

The Bathukamma festival is a singular celebration of life and a symbol of vivid traditions in Telangana's rich cultural history. Bathukamma" means ``Mother Goddess come alive, "and the celebrations is dedicated to Goddess Gauri, a manifestation of Parvati who represents life and endless vitality. The monsoon and the abundance of nature are inextricably linked to the event.I n telengana, wildflowers bloom in a riot of color throughout the lush terrain as monsoon showers slake the thirsty regions. The Bathukamma, a conical floral arrangement that serves as the focal point of the celebrations, is made from these flowers, which are thought to have therapeutic and purifying qualities. Atukula Bathukamma, Muddapappu Bathukamma, Nane Biyyam Bathukamma, Atla

Bathukamma, Aligina Bathukumma, Vepakalyala Bathukamma, Vennamuddala Bathukamma, and Saddula Bathukamma are the nine- day celebrations of Bathukamma. The first day of the celebrations is known as Engili Pula Bathukamma.

**Dussehra:** In Telangana, Dussehra, also referred to as ``Vijayadashami" locally, takes on a deeper and more unique significance despite being a shining example of India's diverse festival landscape. Dussehra commemorates the victory of right over wrong. It honors Lord Rama's triumph over the demon king Ravan and has its roots in the epic Ramayana. Although everyone is familiar with this story, Telengana Dussehra is complex, honoring Goddess Durga's victory over the buffalo monster Mahishasura. In the ten days preceding Vijayadashami, Goddess Durga is worshipped in all of her manifestations, each of which stands for a certain virtue or facet of existence.

**Diwali:** For the Banjara community, Diwali is the most significant holiday. With a few minor adjustments, it is what other communities do. Diwali is as joyful and delightful as Banjaras' clothes and way of life.F: or the Banjaras, who stil reside in some Thandas, the festival of lights is a special two-day celebration where tradition, ancestry, and camaraderie are crucial. Diwali is a festival unlike any other. Everyone woman in the village knocks on people doors.This traditions is what unites the Banjaras, despite the fact that it requires workl, and they wish to preserve it for future generations.Before sunrise, all of the community's bachelors and spinsters gather flowers from the fields and decorate the cow dung in front of their homes for Godhan Puja, also known as cow dung puja. The, the puja is performed at every home for wealth and good health. Girls walk door to door that same evening to offer prayers for the happiness and well being of the affected family. As a sign of affection, they receive so rupees in exchange.The girls watch quickly on the second day. After giving her brother a bath, the sister prays for his health and success. In exchange, the brother giver the sister a special gift for the occasion.Following this bathing custom, village girls congregate at a specific location and march to bring flowers and special grass for the Godhan puja (a cow dung puja is a representation of joy and tranquility). At the sun's setting, the girls end the Godhan puja.

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