

Bhogali Bihu celebration in Mumbai



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On the occasion of Magh Bihu, the Assam Association, Mumbai, organised a cultural program with much fanfare in Vashi on Sunday, 18th of January 2015 evening. Around three thousand Assamese people residing across Mumbai, Navi Mumbai and Thane gathered at the venue.

The program was started with a group dance by a few kids from Kharghar. It was followed by Bihu songs performed by some renowned artistes from the [community](#).

Members of Srimoyee Mohila Samitee, a ladies team from the satellite [city](#), mesmerised the audience with different folk dances and music.

Apart from cultural activities, games like pitcher breaking, musical chair were also organized at the event. Popular Assamese singer Dikshu Sharma and Sampriti Goshwami enthralled the audience with some popular Assamese modern as well as Bihu songs. A ladies' team from Panvel performed another Bihu dance. The programme was concluded with a 'Mukoli Bihu' by some renowned Assamese artists and a few members of the association.

Sumantra Barooah, joint secretary of the association said, "Magh Bihu is a harvest festival which marks the end of harvesting season in the month of Maagha. In Assam there is a practice of people erecting makeshift [huts](#) called 'Bhela Ghar' and preparing traditional dishes in those [huts](#) on the previous night of Bihu. They enjoy the whole night with Bihu songs and bonfire and then burn the [huts](#) next morning."

After the burning of the [huts](#), people sit down to enjoy their fill of traditional Assamese food. In the villages, people also witness bullfights and bird fights. Amid the enchanting notes of flutes and buffalo horns, the youths sing the Bihu songs with lyrics of a good harvest.

"In Mumbai, however, we cannot celebrate it like that, but we have left no stone unturned to make our people realize the flavour of our soil. We have been celebrating Bihu by organizing such cultural functions every year not only to mark the festival but also to create a better social understanding which is quite important in a multicultural, multilingual and multi-ethnic society like ours," Barooah added.

Pratap Chakrabarty, a member of the association said, “The Magh Bihu or Bhogali Bihu festival is an occasion when all differences are forgotten and people unite to celebrate the occasion in a pompous manner. The most important aspect of this year's programme was that a huge number of non Assamese people also came forward and joined us in the celebration.”

Assam Association, Mumbai, is a nongovernmental, nonprofit making, socio-cultural organization, which has been working for promoting the art, culture and literature of their state not only in Mumbai but in whole of Maharashtra. Apart from such cultural activities, the association has also been offering helping hand to the downtrodden and weaker sections of the society irrespective of caste, creed and religion.



Jutika Mahanta

Cultural reporter from Mumbai

BY JUTIKA MAHANTA

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