

Holi - The Festival of Colours

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Why in News?

Recently, Holi, the festival of colours, was celebrated across India and globally.

- **Observed in** - Holi celebrated on the Purnima (full moon) of the Hindu month of Phalguna (February-March).
- **Belief** - The festival represents or symbolizes the victory of good over evil, love, forgiveness, unity, and new beginnings.
- Marks the seasonal transition from winter to spring and the beginning of a new harvest cycle.
- **Origin** - The legend of Prahlad and Holika, which forms the basis of the Holika Dahan ritual during Holi, is found in the Bhagavata Purana and the Vishnu Purana.
- **Mythology** - Demon king Hiranyakashipu, empowered by a boon from Brahma, demanded worship from all. But his son Prahlad continued to worship Vishnu despite threats.
- Hiranyakashipu asked his sister Holika, who was immune to fire, to kill Prahlad.
- Holika's fire immunity failed and burnt her as it was used for evil, saving Prahlad, symbolising the triumph of good over evil.
- Holi also celebrates the divine love of Krishna and Radha, especially in cities of Mathura-Vrindavan, which are associated with Krishna's birth and childhood.
- **History** - One of the oldest festivals in India.
- Mentioned in ancient texts such as
 - Jaimini's Purva Mimamsa Sutras,
 - Kathaka-Grhya-Sutras,
 - Narada Purana,
 - Bhavishya Purana and
 - Dasakumara Charita.

- Also referenced in the 7th-century Sanskrit drama Ratnavali.
- **Rituals - Holika Dahan** - Bonfire lit on the eve of Holi symbolising the destruction of evil and negativity.
- **Rangwali Holi** - Smearing gulal (fine coloured powder), throwing coloured water, music, dance and celebrations.
- **Regional Variations** -
 - **Lathmar Holi** - Barsana and Nandgaon (Uttar Pradesh).
 - **Dol Jatra/Dol Purnima** - West Bengal and Odisha.
 - **Shigmo** - Goa.

References

1. [BCC | Holi](#)
2. [India Today | Holi 2026](#)

