FOLK DANCES & DANCE DRAMAS OF INDIA

Folk dance is a traditional dance form that reflects the life, culture, customs, and beliefs of a particular community or region. It is often performed during festivals, celebrations, harvests, and other social occasions.

Explore the vibrant world of folk dances and discover the rich culture and traditions of India through each dance form.

BIHU NRITYA (DANCE)
ASSAM

ORIGIN

Bihu is a vibrant folk dance of Assam in northeastern India. It is closely connected with the agricultural traditions of the Assamese people and celebrates the arrival of spring and the harvest season. It is mainly performed by young men and women during the Bihu Festival, which marks the Assamese New Year and the beginning of the farming cycle.



COSTUME & JEWELLERY

Women: Wear the traditional Mekhela Chador, usually made of silk such as Muga silk. The costume is decorated with beautiful traditional motifs. Women wear traditional Assamese jewellery made mostly of gold, such as:

- **Junbiri** (moon-shaped necklace)
- **Gamkharu** (thick bracelet)
- **Dholbiri** and other traditional ornaments

Men: Wear dhoti, kurta, a red-white scarf called Gamosa tied around the head or neck. These ornaments enhance the beauty of the dance and reflect Assamese culture.



TYPES OF BIHU DANCE

There are three main types of Bihu festivals:

- **Rongali Bihu** – Celebrated in April; marks the Assamese New Year and spring season. This is the most joyful Bihu and includes the famous Bihu dance.
- **Bhogali Bihu** – Celebrated in January; associated with the harvest and feasting.
- **Kongali Bihu** – Celebrated in October; a more serious and prayerful festival for agricultural prosperity.

MUSIC & INSTURMENTS

Bihu dance is performed with lively folk music using traditional instruments such as:

- **Dhol**
- **Pepa** (horn made from buffalo horn)
- **Gogona**
- **Taal** (cymbals) The music is energetic and encourages fast and joyful dance movements.

IMPORTANCE

Bihu dance is an important cultural symbol of Assam. It reflects youth, happiness, fertility, and community celebration. The dance expresses the joy of spring, agricultural prosperity, and social harmony, and plays a vital role in preserving the traditions, music, and cultural identity of the Assamese people.