

Bihu dance makes a Guinness World Record

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In news– Bihu, Assam's biggest cultural festival, made it to the coveted Guinness Book of World Records recently.

Key updates-

- More than 11,000 performers, including drummers and dancers, participated at the Sarusajai Stadium in Guwahati in the State Government's bid to register its world record in the Guinness Book.
- During the event, the performers included singers and those playing state's traditional instruments such as Dhol, Taal, Gogona, Toka, Pepa, and Xutuli, among others.
- They have made world records for both Bihu dance as well as Bihu dhols with 11,304 dancers and drummers.
- **It is the largest Bihu dance and Bihu dhol performance in a single venue.**

What is Bihu dance?

- It is an **indigenous folk dance from the Indian state of Assam** related to the Bihu festival and an important part of Assamese culture.
- **Performed in a group, the Bihu dancers are usually young men and women**, and the dancing style is characterized by brisk steps and rapid hand movements.
- Bihu dance has been an **integral part of the culture of various ethnic groups in Assam like the Deoris, Sonowal Kacharis, Moran, Borahis** and others.
- Out of the three Bihu festivals in the state namely **Rongali Bihu, Kongali Bihu and Bhogal Bihu**, the dance is performed by young men and women during Rongali Bihu to express their joy on the arrival of the spring.

- According to Assamese history, **the first ever Bihu dance performance was done in 1694 when the Ahom king Rudra Singha (1696-1714) invited Bihu dancers on the special occasion of Rongali Bihu.**
- The **dancers adorn the traditional mekhela chador during their performance.**
- While **mekhela is a cylindrically shaped outfit** worn on the lower half of the body, the chador is draped like a shawl to cover the upper half.
- The **attires are usually made from Muga silk**, which is exclusively produced in Assam.
- Women dancers also wear ethnic heavy jewellery and beautify their braids with colourful flowers. The dance form has gained immense popularity not only in India but also in different parts of the world.
- It was a proud moment for the state when professional Bihu dancers performed at the London Olympics in 2012.