



# BASANT KITE FESTIVAL

The Basant Kite Festival is an important cultural celebration in the Punjab region of Asia (eastern Pakistan and northern India). It celebrates the end of winter and the beginning of spring. Because the date is based on the phase of the moon (unlike Western calendars which are based on the sun), the timing of the celebration changes from year to year. It starts on the fifth day of the lunar month of Magha, which usually occurs between late January and early February.

Before the celebration begins, people decorate the outside of their houses with yellow balloons, streamers and lights. One special decoration is the yellow mustard flower. This flower blossoms in the Punjab region during the season of spring. During the Basant celebrations, people dress up in yellow to symbolise the mustard flower and the bright, shining sun. Men wear yellow scarves around their necks and women wear yellow dresses. People also wear special bangles, called gajras, made from the yellow mustard flower.

Just like the name suggests, one of the most important symbols of Basant is the kite. The kite represents the fun and freedom that comes with the warmer spring weather. During the celebration, the entire sky is filled with kites of all colours, shapes and sizes. Families will stand on their roofs and fly their kites, or they might join in a local kite-flying competition.

Kites are just one part of the Basant celebration. During the festival, communities will celebrate by performing traditional folkdances, listening to traditional music, watching puppet shows and eating traditional Punjabi foods. Special dishes such as saffron rice, kebabs and sweet puddings are prepared and these are often served free in shops along the sides of the roads.

A decorative border surrounds the page, featuring various colorful kites and flowers. The kites are in shades of yellow, blue, and red, with some having black outlines and others having white or pink accents. The flowers are in shades of red, blue, and pink. The background is a light blue sky with a green grassy field at the bottom.

# BASANT KITE FESTIVAL