

Festivals of Manipur 2026, Famous Fairs and Festivals List

August 1, 2026 • vajiramandravi.com



Manipur's festivals reflect the cultural diversity of its valley and hill communities. They are closely linked to indigenous religious traditions, agriculture, seasonal cycles, community life and the state's unique biodiversity.

List of Major Festivals of Manipur

The major festivals of Manipur, along with their community, cultural, agricultural and ecological associations, are given below.

Festivals of the Meitei Community

These festivals reflect the indigenous traditions, religious practices and social customs of the Meitei community, which is predominantly associated with the Manipur Valley.

Lai Haraoba

- Lai Haraoba is an important traditional festival of the Meitei community.
- It is associated with the worship of **Umang Lai**, the traditional sylvan or forest deities.
- **Maibis**, the priestesses, perform ritual dances representing aspects of the creation of the world and the traditional way of life of the Meitei people.
- The festival is closely associated with the indigenous religious traditions of Manipur, including **Sanamahism**.

Yaoshang

- Yaoshang is one of the most important festivals of Manipur and is celebrated for five days from the full-moon day of Phalguna.
- The festival is particularly known for **Thabal Chongba**, a traditional circular dance in which participants hold hands and dance to folk music.
- It is also associated with community celebrations, sports and cultural activities.

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Cheiraoba

- Sajibu Cheiraoba is the traditional **Manipuri New Year**.
- It is celebrated in April, during the month of **Sajibu**.
- People clean and decorate their houses and prepare special food offerings for deities.
- A distinctive tradition is hill climbing, which symbolises the aspiration for progress and higher achievements in life.

Ningol Chak-kouba

- Ningol Chak-kouba is an important social festival that strengthens family bonds.
- Married daughters, known as **Ningols**, are invited to their parental homes for a family feast and are traditionally given gifts.
- It reflects the importance of family and kinship networks in Manipuri society.

Kang Chingba

- Kang Chingba is the Manipuri form of Ratha Yatra.
- It is celebrated for about ten days, generally during June-July.
- Lord Jagannath is taken out in a chariot known locally as Kang, which is pulled by devotees.

Heikru Hitongba

- Heikru Hitongba is a traditional boat race held annually in September.
- It is conducted at the moat near the Sri Bijoy Govindajee Temple in Imphal.
- The boat race is accompanied by traditional religious rituals.

Festivals of Naga and Other Hill Communities

These festivals are closely linked to agriculture, harvest, tribal identity and community traditions in the hill regions of Manipur.

Gaan-Ngai

- Gaan-Ngai is an important **post-harvest festival** of the Zeliangrong/Kabui Naga community.
- It is celebrated during December-January.
- The festival includes community feasts, traditional dances and ceremonies associated with the community's cultural traditions.

Lui-Ngai-Ni

- Lui-Ngai-Ni is a collective festival of the Naga communities of Manipur.
- It is observed annually on 15 February.
- It is a **seed-sowing festival** that marks the beginning of the agricultural season for several Naga communities.
- The festival also promotes social and cultural solidarity among the Naga tribes.

Chavang Kut

- Chavang Kut is an important harvest festival of the Kuki-Chin-Mizo tribal communities.
- It is celebrated as a **thanksgiving festival** after the completion of agricultural activities.
- The festival showcases the traditional dances, music and cultural heritage of the participating communities.

Paoki Festival

- Paoki Festival is a traditional **paddy-transplantation festival** celebrated at Purul village in Senapati district.
- It reflects the close relationship between agricultural activities and community traditions in the hill regions of Manipur.

Festivals Promoting Inter-Community and Cultural Unity

Mera Hou Chongba

- Mera Hou Chongba is an important festival that symbolises cultural interaction between the hill and valley communities of Manipur.
- It is held during the month of Mera.
- The festival promotes social interaction and cultural exchange between different communities of the state.

Festivals Linked to Manipur's Biodiversity and Tourism

Sangai Festival

- The Sangai Festival is a **state-promoted cultural and tourism festival**.
- It is named after the Sangai, the endangered brow-antlered deer and state animal of Manipur.

- The Sangai is associated with **Keibul Lamjao National Park**, the world’s only floating national park, located on Loktak Lake.
- The festival showcases Manipur’s cultural diversity, indigenous traditions, handicrafts, cuisine and tourism potential.

Shirui Lily Festival

- The Shirui Lily Festival is held in Ukhrul district to celebrate the state flower, the endangered **Shirui Lily** (*Lilium mackliniae*).
- The flower is endemic to the **Shirui Hills**.
- The festival combines cultural activities with awareness about the conservation of the rare flower and promotes sustainable tourism in the region.
- It also highlights the cultural heritage of the **Tangkhul Naga community**.

Significance of Festivals of Manipur

The festivals of Manipur are important for understanding the state’s cultural diversity and regional traditions.

- **Cultural significance:** Festivals such as Lai Haraoba, Yaoshang and Cheiraoba preserve the traditional culture of the Meitei community.
- **Agricultural significance:** Lui-Ngai-Ni, Gaan-Ngai, Chavang Kut and Paoki are closely associated with sowing, harvest and agricultural activities.
- **Tribal significance:** Festivals such as Gaan-Ngai, Lui-Ngai-Ni and Chavang Kut reflect the distinct traditions of the Naga and Kuki-Chin-Mizo communities.
- **Social significance:** Mera Hou Chongba promotes cultural interaction between the hill and valley communities.
- **Ecological significance:** The Sangai and Shirui Lily festivals link cultural celebrations with awareness about Manipur’s unique biodiversity.
- **Tourism significance:** Festivals such as the Sangai Festival and Shirui Lily Festival promote Manipur’s cultural heritage, local communities and tourism potential.

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