

Manipuri Pony

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About Manipuri Pony:

- It is also known as **Meitei Sagol** and is one of the seven recognised horse and pony breeds of India.
 - The others include the Marwari Horse, the Kathiawari Horse, the Zanskari Pony, the Spiti Pony, the Bhutia Pony and the Kachhi-Sindhi Horse.
- It is a small breed of 11 to 13 Hands, is known for its unique stamina, agility, **intelligence, speed, manoeuvrability** and great adaptability to harsh geoclimatic conditions.
- The breed is regarded as the original polo pony as modern polo is derived from the traditional Sagol Kangjei sport of Manipur.
- The ponies figure prominently in the Manipuri way of life. Besides traditional events like Lai haraoba and being used in sports like **polo and horseraces**,.

- They were also utilised as mounts by cavalry of the Manipur Kingdom which was feared throughout upper Burma during the 17th century.
 - **Status:** The Manipur government declared the Manipuri Pony as an **Endangered Breed** in 2013.
 - **Factors responsible for the decline**
 - **Shrinkage of wetlands**, the natural habitat of the Manipuri Pony due to rapid urbanisation and encroachment;
 - Lack of polo grounds/polo playing areas in rural Manipur;
 - Restriction of pony usage except in the game of polo;
 - Uncontrolled diseases; and the exodus of ponies to neighbouring states and countries.
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Q1: What is Lai haraoba?

Lai Haraoba is one of the most important indigenous ritual festivals celebrated by the Meitei community of Manipur. It is celebrated to propitiate and please the ancestral deities to get their blessings in return. It depicts the act of creating the universe and its objects, and unveils the endless journey of the universe through its ritualistic performances.

Source: Meitei Sagol: Manipur takes host of decisions to save its fabled equines from extinction

Source: <https://vajiramandravi.com/current-affairs/manipuri-pony/>

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