



# Trikuta

A Quarterly Newsletter

## Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine Board

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### Vice President of India Pays Obeisance at Vaishno Devi Shrine

Hon'ble Vice President Shri Jagdeep Dhankhar who was on a day-long visit to preside as Chief Guest at the 10<sup>th</sup> convocation function of Shri Mata Vaishno Devi University paid obeisance at the Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine on February 15, 2025. The Vice President was accompanied by Lt. Governor Shri Manoj Sinha (Chairman, SMVDSB). On arrival at the Panchhi Helipad, the Vice President was received by Sh. Anshul Garg, Chief Executive Officer, Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine Board.

The Lt. Governor apprised the Vice President about the initiatives being taken by the Shrine Board for upgrading and expansion of the infrastructure to facilitate pilgrims to the Holy Shrine.



Vice President Shri Jagdeep Dhankhar paying obeisance at the Shrine





## **Lt. Governor chairs 74<sup>th</sup> Meeting of Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine Board**

Lt. Governor Shri Manoj Sinha chaired the 74<sup>th</sup> Meeting of Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine Board at Raj Bhawan on March 6, 2025.

The Board reviewed past decisions, ratified actions, and took new decisions on 20 key agenda items to improve pilgrim services. Key decisions included redeveloping Bhairon Ji Temple Complex, constructing an exit track at Bhawan and remodeling of Manokamana area.



LG launching silver coins of 50gm & 100gm

On the sidelines of the meeting, the Lieutenant Governor inaugurated several pilgrim-centric facilities including the Queue Complex at Darshani Deodi, Banganga and the Holding Area at Adhkuwari. He also launched the 50gm and 100gm silver coins of the Board; expanding the range of facilities available to pilgrims.

The Board also approved an amnesty scheme for shop licensees and reviewed the Annual Green Plan. The LG directed the CEO to evaluate adequacy & other aspects of STPs and explore renewable energy sources. He emphasized implementing a robust feedback mechanism for service improvement and lauded the contribution of Board Members.



Shri Manoj Sinha chairs 74<sup>th</sup> Meeting of SMVDSB





The Board took appraisal of peripheral institutions under the SMVD Charitable Society, including SMVD Gurukul, SMVD Narayana Superspeciality Hospital, Shrine Board's Sports Complex, SMVD College of Nursing and SMVDIME-Medical College and approved grants-in-aid and financial assistance to support their functioning.

The Board observed that Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine has seen a consistent surge in devotees, with the annual pilgrimage exceeding 90 lakh for the third consecutive year, reaching an impressive 95 lakh last year. The significant growth is attributed to the dedication of major projects in the Bhawan area and the expansion of facilities and amenities in Katra and other sectors.

The meeting also reviewed the implementation of the Annual Green Plan of the Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine Board for the current year and approved the Annual Green Plan for the year 2025-26.

### **Union Minister JP Nadda offers prayers at Vaishno Devi Shrine**

Shri JP Nadda, Hon'ble Union Minister for Health, Chemicals and Fertilizers, Government of India visited the Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine and paid obeisance at the sanctum sanctorum on March 1, 2025.

He was accompanied by Dr. Jitendra Singh, Hon'ble Minister of State for S & T and Earth Sciences. Upon their arrival at Katra, the dignitaries were received by Shri Anshul Garg, CEO, SMVDSB.

The CEO briefed the Union Ministers about the various initiatives undertaken by the SMVDSB, under the chairmanship of Hon'ble Lieutenant Governor, JK-UT, Shri Manoj Sinha, including the upcoming Medical College being set up at Kakryal.

Shri JP Nadda deeply appreciated SMVDSB's aimed at facilitating the journey and holy Darshans of the pilgrims.



Union Minister JP Nadda visited at Vaishno Devi Shrine



## **Dedicated Helicopter Quota for Senior Citizens and Specially-abled Pilgrims at Vaishno Devi Shrine**

Shri Anshul Garg, Chief Executive Officer on January 31, 2025 held a press conference at SGC, Katra and made announcements regarding new initiatives by the Board to enhance pilgrim services. These include a dedicated online helicopter quota for senior citizens and specially-abled pilgrims, available on the board's website from February 1, 2025. He informed that the Board has also introduced Langar Sewa counters at the Yatra Facilitation Centre in Katra Railway Station and added local cuisine, Kadhi-Chawal, to the existing menu of free Langars at Adhkuwari and Bhairon Ji.



Dedicated Helicopter Quota for Senior Citizens and Specially-Abled Pilgrims at Vaishno Devi Shrine

Infrastructure upgrades include the traditional Banganga track with a queue complex at Darshani Deodi accommodating 1,500 pilgrims at a time and a covered holding area at Adhkuwari.

The Shrine Board has also announced Priority Darshan for local residents based on Aadhar cards. These initiatives aim to make the pilgrimage experience smoother and more inclusive, reflecting the Shrine Board's commitment to continuously enhancing pilgrim services.

## **Chaitra Navratra commences at Vaishno Devi Shrine with Sacred Shatchandi Yagya**

The Board has introduced various initiatives to enhance the pilgrimage experience of devotees visiting the Shrine during Chaitra the Navratra. These include smart lockers, free public call booths and complimentary slots for divyang devotees to participate in Garbjoon Arti and Atka Arti.



Chaitra Navratra commences at Vaishno Devi Shrine with Sacred Shatchandi Yagya and enhanced facilities

The Board has also set up resting and holding areas at Banganga and Adhkuwari, expanded the Inderprasth Bhojanalaya and extended the Langar facility for pilgrims by way of introduction of new Langar at Shubhra Bhawan. Dedicated quotas for helicopter bookings and complimentary battery car services have also been provided for divyang pilgrims. A special food options for catering to the devotees observing fasts during the pilgrimage were made available by the Shrine Board at its Langars as also at its and Catering outlets.

The Shrine Board has made comprehensive arrangements, including round-the-clock water and power supply, sanitation facilities and medical care along the tracks. Additionally, captivating Bhajan and Bhaint performances were held at Bhawan and Adhkuwari during morning and evening Atka arti; enriching the pilgrims' experience.

The Bhawan, Atka and surrounding areas were beautifully transformed into a spiritual oasis with grand decorations and stunning facade lights, creating a mesmerizing ambiance for devotees.





Chaitra Navratra commences at Vaishno Devi Shrine

### High-Level Committee holds meetings with Sangarsh Samiti over Ropeway Project

The High-Level Committee (HLC) framed by the Hon'ble Chairman, SMVDSB (Lt. Governor, JK-UT) comprising Dr. Ashok Bhan and Shri Suresh Kumar Sharma, Member of SMVDSB, Shri Ramesh Kumar, Divisional Commissioner, Jammu and Shri Anshul Garg, Chief Executive Officer, SMVDSB, held five crucial meetings with Sangarsh Samiti members and stakeholders on January 16 & 28 and March 15, 2025.

The Committee aimed to address concerns and alleviate apprehensions regarding the Ropeway Project with stakeholders raising issues about preserving the traditional track's sanctity and protecting local businesses. Samiti had expressed worries about the Delhi-Amritsar-Katra expressway's impact on Katra town, urging its termination at the Inter Modal Station (IMS), Katra.



HLC holding various consultations meet with stakeholders





The HLC emphasized the project's potential benefits (such as enhanced pilgrim experience, increased numbers and higher spending in Katra town due to reduced turnaround times). HLC assured the stakeholders that the consultation processes shall remain ongoing and final decisions shall be taken in mutual consultation mode.

Later, Dr. Bhan expressed satisfaction with the meeting's outcome stating that it concluded on a positive note with stakeholders committing for collaborative efforts for the region's overall development. He also mentioned that the HLC shall remain open to further discussions and consultations, ensuring that all stakeholders are duly heard before any final decisions are made.

### **CEO Shrine Board Reiterates Commitment to Pilgrim Welfare on 76<sup>th</sup> R-Day Celebrations at Katra**

The 76<sup>th</sup> Republic Day was celebrated with great enthusiasm at the Shrine Board's Sports Complex in Katra. Shri Anshul Garg, Chief Executive Officer, Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine Board, unfurled the national flag and took salute of impressive march-past.

The event featured contingents from J&K Police, CRPF, NCC, Shrine Enforcement & Security and students from various educational institutions.

In his address, CEO reiterated the Shrine Board's commitment to the welfare and facilitation of pilgrims visiting the Holy Shrine. He highlighted the steady influx of devotees, with the annual pilgrimage exceeding 90 lakh for the third consecutive year, and touching 95 lakh last year.

The CEO emphasized the significance of upcoming Delhi-Srinagar train connectivity, which will establish Katra as a crucial transit station and boost pilgrimage to the Holy Shrine.

He added that to further enrich the experience of pilgrims, the Shrine Board has operationalized a Yatri Facilitation Centre at Katra Railway Station, allowing pilgrims to complete their registration conveniently. He also highlighted crucial importance of major projects of Shrine Board underway such as Darshani Deodi Queue Complex, Shubhra Bhawan, proposed Laser Light and Sound projects rejuvenation of the Banganga rivulet and new exit track at Bhawan.



CEO Shrine Board Reiterates Commitment to Pilgrim Welfare on 76<sup>th</sup> R-Day Celebrations at Katra



Additionally, the CEO announced new upcoming facilities including Battery Car Parking, Adhkuwari holding area, AI-based CCTV cameras and establishing of a Command Control Centre.

The CEO shared that plans to establish Katra as a regional hub are underway, with projects such as development of four temples along the Trikuta Hills Parikrama Marg and an additional helipad at Katra to improve connectivity to the Shiv Khori Shrine.

The Shrine Board's social support initiatives were also highlighted including scholarships for Baridar families and the upcoming Medical College, which promises to deliver high-quality healthcare services to the region.

A cultural program featuring theme-based presentations, patriotic songs, and dance was presented by students, showcasing several diverse aspects such as national integration, unity in diversity, and harmony. The CEO gave away cash prizes and appreciation to outstanding staff and students.

## **SMVDCoN hosts 2-Day National Conference on Recent Advances in Healthcare**

A 2-day National Conference on "Recent Advances and Future Trends in Nursing and Healthcare Sciences" organized and hosted by Shri Mata Vaishno Devi College of Nursing (SMVDCoN) commenced on February 13, 2025 at the Spiritual Growth Centre in Katra.

This landmark event brought together experts, healthcare professionals, and nursing educators to share knowledge and best practices.

Shri Anshul Garg, Chief Executive Officer, Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine Board welcomed dignitaries and participants, highlighting the Board's framework guiding the college's endeavors. He expressed his sincere gratitude to the Hon'ble Chairman, SMVDSB (Lt. Governor, JK-UT) for his visionary guidance and constant support under which such events are being organized to promote excellence in healthcare education.



SMVDCoN commences 2-Day National Conference on Recent Advances in Healthcare





He also extended his gratitude to Padma Bhushan Dr. K.K. Talwar, former Chairman of the Medical Council of India and former Director of PGIMER, Chandigarh and other dignitaries for accepting invitation and gracing the occasion with their presence. The CEO mentioned that the Board aims to elevate its healthcare ecosystem with a new Medical College (SMVD Institute of Excellence), which already has the required infrastructure and faculty in place.

Dr. Talwar emphasized the importance innovation of nursing education, particularly in J&K and the need for introducing postgraduate programs in Nursing. He stressed empathy and caring attitude in nursing care, noting Indian nurses' significant global contributions.

The conference featured over 35 resource persons discussing topics like AI in healthcare, hospital management, and digital healthcare strategies.

The dignitaries released a book, "Novennial," chronicling the nine-year journey of Shri Mata Vaishno Devi College of Nursing.

### **Arjuna Award to Shrine's Para-Archer Rakesh Kumar**

Shrine Board's Para-Archer Rakesh Kumar was honoured with the prestigious Arjuna Award for 2024 by President Droupadi Murmu at Rashtrapati Bhavan on January 17, 2025 in recognition of his outstanding contributions to the sport.

Rakesh Kumar becoming the second athlete from the Sport's complex and JK-UT to achieve this honor after Sheetal Devi.



President confers Arjuna Award to Para-Archer Rakesh Kumar

### **Placement for SMVD Gurukul's Students in the Board**

In line with the decision of the Board, 17 students who have passed out from SMVD Gurukul have been appointed in the Pujari Wing of the Board. The new recruits have been rendering Bhajan in the Atka Aarti telecast live from Bhawan. Such initiatives have led to more prospective candidates seeking admission to the Gurukul.



Recruits performing bhajans in the live Atka Aarti

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