



# Trikuta

A Quarterly Newsletter

## Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine Board

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### Lt. Governor chairs 76<sup>th</sup> Meeting of Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine Board

The Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine Board (SMVDSB) held its 76<sup>th</sup> Meeting on February 8, 2026 and had taken a series of high-impact decisions aimed at transforming the Shrine and its surrounding region into one of India's most vibrant and globally acclaimed spiritual destinations. The meeting was chaired by Lt. Governor, JK-UT, Shri Manoj Sinha, who also serves as Chairman of the SMVDSB.



Lt. Governor alongwith Board Members launching free Pouch Prasad



The Board approved three key initiatives, including the development of an international museum dedicated to Maa Shakti's spiritual heritage, a state-of-the-art sound-and-light spectacle inspired by leading global pilgrimage sites, and the production of a documentary on the Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine.

The Board also decided to fill vacant positions, with the recruitment process set to commence shortly. It also approved the establishment of coaching centres to provide free NEET preparation for youth from surrounding areas.

into a clean, vibrant and well-equipped urban centre.

The Board decided to promote sports development across the Jammu region. An emphasis was also laid on providing specialised training to the religious practitioners (Pujaris).

Reviewing its functioning, the Board ratified actions taken since the previous meeting and deliberated upon 25 key agenda items focused on strengthening institutional efficiency and enhancing pilgrim services.

With regard to pilgrim safety, the Board approved an increase in insurance coverage



Lt. Governor chairs the Board Meeting

In compliance with the directives of the National Green Tribunal, the Board approved the formulation and phased implementation of a rehabilitation plan for service providers on the yatra track, including ponywallas. A committee was constituted to explore strategies for increasing pilgrim footfall, enhancing the pilgrimage experience, and submitting recommendations to the Board.

To boost the regional economy, the Board resolved to prioritise procurement from self-help groups, women, and young local entrepreneurs. It further decided to source offerings for the Shrine locally, thereby directly supporting community development. Recognising the global prominence of Katra due to the Shrine, the Board resolved to contribute towards the city's transformation

from ₹5 lakh to ₹10 lakh per pilgrim. It also endorsed the preliminary concept for establishing an International Shakti Museum at Natali, Katra. The proposed museum is envisioned as first-of-its-kind religious, educational, and cultural centre. Additionally, plans for advanced light-and-sound shows were approved to present mythological narratives through a blend of tradition and modern technology, with a targeted completion timeline of two years.

Progress on major infrastructure projects was reviewed. The Board directed strict adherence to timelines while maintaining the highest standards of quality and safety.

Regarding the newly developed helipad at Village Hutt, the Board approved a one-time financial grant to the Shri Shiv Khori



Shrine Board for infrastructure development, following execution of a revised MoU. It was also decided that helicopter services for both shrines would operate from the same helipad for enhanced pilgrim convenience.

The Board appreciated the swift completion of renovation works in 15 schools across Reasi and Udhampur districts which were damaged during heavy rains in August–September 2025. It also lauded the establishment of a Sadhna Kaksh (Meditation Hall) at Bhawan, recognising it as a significant initiative for enhancing the spiritual experience of pilgrims.

Further approvals included grant-in-aid to institutions under the SMVD Charitable Society. The Board also endorsed a comprehensive Annual Green Plan for 2026-27, reaffirming its commitment to environmental sustainability and a cleaner, greener Katra and surrounding areas.

On the sidelines of the meeting, the LG laid foundation stones for several pilgrim-centric projects, including the construction of three new temples in Reasi district, restoration of two ancient temples in Jammu district, redevelopment of the Bhairon Ji Temple Complex, and construction of staff accommodation at Bhawan and Bhairon Ji. He also inaugurated newly constructed cottages at Katra and launched free Pouch Prasad containing dry fruits, an engraved coin depicting the Holy Pindies, and a sacred Mouli (Kalava) for free distribution among pilgrims.

### **Lt. Governor Announces Major Development Initiatives for Katra, Including Shankaracharya Temple and Devi Museum**

Lt. Governor, Shri Manoj Sinha on February 18 laid the foundation stone of the Adi Shankaracharya Temple and announced a series of major initiatives for the development of Katra.



LG laying foundation stone of Shankaracharya Temple

The foundation-laying ceremony took place nearly six decades after the temple project was first conceived in 1967. The temple was envisioned as a state-of-the-art spiritual landmark, alongside the proposed International Museum of Goddess, at Katra. Together, these would showcase replicas and representations of prominent pilgrimage sites from across India.

During the ceremony, the Lt. Governor highlighted the spiritual legacy of



Aerial view of Adi Shankaracharya Temple



Adi Shankaracharya, noting his extensive travel across the country including his visit to Jammu and Kashmir. He also referred to the existing Shankaracharya Temple in Srinagar, which continues to attract a large number of pilgrims.

It was stated that the Shrine Board; in collaboration with district administration and local residents, had collectively decided to construct the temple. Plans were also announced for the construction of a temple dedicated to the local deity.

The LG further stated that road infrastructure in the area would be strengthened, besides proposals had been made for renovation of the Bhoomika Temple to enhance facilities for devotees.

Highlighting key decisions taken in a recent Board meeting, the Lieutenant Governor announced that an International Museum of Goddess Devi would be established in Katra. Additionally, a light and sound show, on the lines of those at Somnath Temple and the Statue of Unity, was also proposed to enrich the spiritual and cultural experience of visitors.

Addressing connectivity concerns, he noted that many pilgrims faced difficulties in travelling to the Shiv Khori Shrine. To address this, it was decided that helicopter service shall be operationalised between Katra and Shiv Khori through joint initiative of the two Boards. The helipad at Katra is in the final stages of construction, while a similar



LG addressing the gathering at SGC after laying foundation stone of Shankaracharya Temple

The Shrine Board had proposed the construction of the temple along with an access road, public utilities, and 50 commercial shops for landowners at an estimated cost of ₹31.51 crore. The project was expected to boost pilgrim footfall in the region. It was also noted that an MoU had been executed in 2025 between the Shrine Board and the concerned landowners. The temple was planned on 41 kanals of land donated for the development of a motorable access track and essential pilgrim amenities, including toilets and water facilities.

facility at Shiv Khori was nearing completion.

He further informed that the Shrine Board had constructed five temples during the previous year, while five more were under construction. An additional five temples were planned in Diggar, to be completed and handed over to local residents.

### **SMVDSB Reopened Natural Cave for Devotees on Makar Sankranti**

On the auspicious occasion of Makar Sankranti on January 14, 2026, the SMVDSB

reopened the historic natural holy cave at the revered Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine. The reopening was marked by special rituals, prayers and Vedic chanting; symbolising spiritual renewal and new beginnings.



Senior Officers performing prayers on Makar Sankranti in front of Natural Cave

The natural cave, which remains closed for most of the year due to heavy pilgrim inflow, was opened to devotees during January and February, offering a rare opportunity to experience darshan in its original, pristine form. During the remaining months, pilgrims accessed the sanctum is only through the newly constructed caves.

**Shrine Board Reiterated Commitment to Pilgrim Services and Community Welfare on 77th Republic Day**



CEO taking salute from the contingent on the occasion of the 77th Republic Day

The 77th Republic Day was celebrated with patriotic fervour at the Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Sports Complex, Katra on January 26. On the occasion, Chief Executive Officer, Shri Sachin Kumar Vaishya unfurled the National Flag and reaffirmed the Board's commitment to enhancing pilgrim services and promoting community welfare.

The celebrations featured an impressive march past by contingents drawn from J&K Police, CRPF, NCC, Shrine Security and students, along with patriotic cultural performances rendered by various educational institutions.

Addressing the gathering, the CEO highlighted that under the guidance of Lt. Governor, Shri Manoj Sinha, the Board had consistently prioritised the safety and convenience of pilgrims. He recalled the Board's prompt humanitarian response during the 2025 natural calamities, assisting over 2,000 affected families besides, highlighted completion of renovation works in 15 government schools across Reasi and Udhampur districts.

He also outlined key infrastructure initiatives undertaken by the Shrine Board including the Sadhana Kaksh at Bhawan and projects nearing completion such as the New





Vaishnavi Bhawan and the new exit track at the Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine. Progress on helipad development for Shri Shiv Khori and the Shankaracharya Temple project at Katra was also highlighted.

The CEO commended Shrine Board athletes for their achievements at the national and international events. He also appreciated the effective implementation of various government schemes in District Reasi, particularly in health, rural development and public distribution systems.

On the occasion, cash prizes and commendations were awarded to outstanding employees and students. The CEO also hoisted the National Flag at the Central Office of the Shrine Board, at Katra.



CEO inspecting the Guard of Honor

Senior officers of SMVDSB, civil and police administration, security forces, representatives of various organisations, and a large number of citizens, pilgrims, and students attended the celebrations.

### **Shrine Board Accelerated Implementation of Board Decisions through Stakeholder Consultations**

The Shrine Board fast-tracked the implementation of key decisions taken during its 76th Board Meeting chaired by Lt Governor, Shri Manoj Sinha, initiating a series of stakeholder - consultations starting from February 11<sup>th</sup>, 2026 to enhance pilgrim

services, promote regional development and strengthen community engagement.



CEO presiding consultations with the stakeholders

Led by Chief Executive Officer, Shri Sachin Kumar Vaishya, the Board held interactions with representatives from the sports sector, hotel and restaurant associations, service providers and local stakeholders. Discussions with the sports fraternity focused on youth engagement, infrastructure development, and structured coaching programmes, alongside interaction sessions with young sportspersons to understand grassroots - challenges and shape a comprehensive sports development strategy.

Consultations with hotel and restaurant stakeholders emphasized promoting pilgrimage destinations in and around Katra through improved publicity, connectivity and visitor services, with a focus on encouraging longer pilgrim stays and diversifying pilgrimage circuits. Special emphasis was also laid on reviving traditional yatra routes.

In the detailed deliberations with ponywallas, pithus and palkiwallas, a structured and sustainable rehabilitation plan was discussed. The discussions focused on balancing environmental considerations with livelihood, security, exploring alternative income opportunities and addressing concerns related to registration mechanisms.



CEO presiding consultations with stakeholders

Further, consultations were also held with stakeholders from Banganga to Charanpaduka stretch to enhance pilgrim footfall and improve the yatra experience. Suggestions included promoting the spiritual and heritage significance of the route, upgrading basic amenities, improving safety and accessibility and ensuring environmental sustainable development.

The Shrine Board assured that all inputs would be carefully considered and implemented in a phased and coordinated manner.

### **Shrine Board began Free Prasad distribution from Mahashivratri**

The Shrine Board commenced free distribution of Prasad to devotees at the Holy Shrine on the auspicious occasion of Mahashivratri on February 16, following Vedic rituals and Kanya Poojan, with the aim of enhancing pilgrim facilities and spiritual experience.

The initiative had been formally launched by Shri Manoj Sinha, Chairman, SMVDSB, during the 76th Board Meeting held earlier in the month.

An improvised Pouch Prasad was introduced for distribution, containing dry fruits, a sacred Mouli (Kalava) and an

engraved commemorative coin depicting the Holy Pindies. The pouch was designed keeping in view hygiene, sanctity and ease of handling.

Shri Sachin Kumar Vaishya, CEO, SMVDSB stated that the distribution had been systematically organised along the exit route after darshan to ensure smooth and convenient availability to pilgrims. He reiterated that the initiative aimed to provide a sacred token of blessings to every devotee and affirmed the Board's continued commitment to enhancing pilgrim welfare.



Picture of free Prasad Pouch launched by Shrine Board

### **Shrine Board Invited Pilgrims' Suggestions; Launched Skill Programme for Pujaris**

The Shrine Board invited feedback and suggestions from devotees across the country and abroad to enhance pilgrim footfall and further improve facilities at the Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine. The initiative, undertaken under the guidance of Lt. Governor, Shri Manoj Sinha, aimed at making the yatra more seamless, convenient and spiritually enriching.

Pilgrims were encouraged to share inputs on infrastructure, cleanliness, accommodation, safety, transportation and crowd management through the official website and suggestion boxes placed along



the yatra track and at Katra. The feedback is systematically reviewed at regular intervals, for timely implementation.



Certificate distribution of skill enhancement programme to local Pujaris

Simultaneously, the Board launched a free skill enhancement programme for local Pujaris to strengthen traditional religious practices. The programme organized by SMVD Gurukul was initiated in the last week of February, focusing on improving the conduct of rituals, preserving traditional Karam Kand and promoting cultural values.

**Shat Chandi Maha Yagya organized by Shrine Board during Chaitra Navratra; Over 3 Lakh Pilgrims Pay Obeisance**



Commencement and conclusion of Shat Chandi Maha Yagya at Bhawan

The sacred Shat Chandi Maha Yagya, organised by the Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine Board, commenced at the Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine with the onset of Chaitra Navratra on March 19 and concluded with Purna Ahuti on the auspicious occasion of Ram Navami on March 27.

Held throughout the nine-day Navratra period for world peace and well-being, the Yagya witnessed participation of Chief Executive Officer, Shri Sachin Kumar Vaishya with officers, staff and a large number of devotees. The rituals were performed with traditional fervour amidst Vedic chanting by a team of scholars led by Vishwamurti Shastri. The entire proceedings were also telecast live, enabling devotees across the country and abroad to witness the ceremonies.

The Shrine Board made elaborate arrangements to facilitate the heavy influx of pilgrims. The Shrine area, including the Bhawan and adjoining locations, was beautifully adorned with floral decorations, reception gates and vibrant illumination, creating a spiritually uplifting atmosphere.

During the Navratras, over 3 lakh pilgrims paid obeisance at the Holy Shrine, with an average daily footfall of around 37,000 devotees. The Yatra also to the Shrine recorded a steady upward trend in 2026, with



Decoration at Bhawan during Chaitra Navratra

approximately 18.76 lakh pilgrims visiting up to March 26, as compared to 16.72 lakh during the corresponding period in 2025.

To ensure smooth and seamless pilgrimage experience, the Board ensured round-the-clock availability of essential services, including water and power supply, sanitation, medical care, and fast-related food at Langars and Bhojanalayas. Special facilities such as accommodation, battery-operated vehicles, ropeway, and helicopter services operated efficiently throughout the period. Dedicated help desks, Sadhna Kaksh at Bhawan, and complimentary pony and battery car services for differently-abled pilgrims further enhanced pilgrim convenience.

In addition, the Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine Board strengthened enforcement measures against unauthorized activities by constituting joint teams with Police and CRPF for regular inspections and monitoring at various strategic points on the Yatra route.

Devotional performances during morning and evening Atka Aarti by renowned artists, along with presentations by students of Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Gurukul, added to the festive and spiritual fervour throughout the Navratra period.

### Shrine Board began Second Phase of Seed Dispersal in Trikuta Hills

Continuing its environmental conservation initiatives, the Shrine Board commenced the winter plantation drive along with the second phase of aerial seed dispersal in the Trikuta Hills on January 29. A demonstration exercise was conducted at SMVD Narayana Superspeciality Hospital, Kakryal and the activity was carried out over a week.



CEO planting tree during seed dispersal programme

The current phase targeted approximately 83 hectares across identified locations, with seeds of species such as Amla, Anaar, Siris, Karangal, Thuja, Gulmohar and Bamboo dispersed to support



ecological restoration. The Shrine Board had significantly enhanced green cover, planting over 19 lakh saplings in recent years through its Annual Greening Plans.

A plantation drive was also organised on the occasion, reinforcing the Board's commitment to environmental sustainability.

### Shrine Board Unveils Dedicated Portal for International Museum of Goddess; Invites Expert Suggestions

historical dimensions of the Divine Feminine and the revered Shakti tradition.

The Board invited suggestions and expert inputs from scholars, historians, architects, museologists, spiritual practitioners and other domain specialists to help shape the vision, design and content of the upcoming museum. Envisioned as a centre of international standards, the proposed museum is being established to present the timeless heritage of Maa Vaishno Devi Ji

← → ↻ suggestions.smvdsbimog.org/#/



## Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine Board International Museum of Goddess

#### Construction of Museum of Maa Vaishno Devi at Katra

Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine Board intends to construct the International Museum (with light & sound show) dedicated to Maa Bhagwati at Katra with the objective to create a sacred, educational and cultural space that preserves & presents the spiritual heritage associated with the divine feminine power (Maa Shakti) in an organized and accessible manner.

To give your suggestions in English

Click Here

#### कटरा में माँ वैष्णो देवी के संग्रहालय का निर्माण

श्री माता वैष्णो देवी श्राद्धन बोर्ड द्वारा एक अंतर्राष्ट्रीय संग्रहालय (प्रकाश और ध्वनि प्रदर्शन के साथ) बनाने का प्रस्ताव है। यह संग्रहालय कटरा में स्थित होगा जो माँ भगवती को समर्पित होगा। इस संग्रहालय का उद्देश्य आध्यात्मिक शिक्षा के साथ साथ माँ शक्ति की आध्यात्मिक विरासत को सुनियोजित तरीके से संरक्षित करना है।

अपने सुझाव हिंदी में देने के लिए

यहाँ क्लिक करें

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Dedicated Portal for International Goddess Museum

The Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine Board (SMVDSB) took a significant step towards establishing the upcoming International Goddess Museum by unveiling a dedicated official online portal <https://smvdsbimog.org> on February 23, in pursuance of the approval accorded during the 76th Meeting of the Board held under the chairmanship of Shri Manoj Sinha, Hon'ble Chairman, SMVDSB (Lt. Governor, JK-UT).

The launch of the portal marked a major milestone in the conceptualization and development of a proposed world-class museum devoted to the spiritual, cultural and

through modern and immersive technologies, including digital installations, interactive galleries, light and sound shows and thoughtfully curated thematic exhibitions.

The museum was envisaged to comprehensively document and showcase the history of the Holy Shrine, the evolution of the Yatra, the philosophy of Shakti worship and the broader spiritual traditions associated with Sanatan Dharma, thereby offering visitors an enriching blend of devotion, knowledge and cultural insight.

Reiterating the Board's vision, the CEO stated that the project was being developed as a knowledge and experiential centre of



global repute that would serve pilgrims, researchers and visitors from across the world. He appealed to experts, academic institutions and stakeholders to actively participate in this collective endeavour by visiting the dedicated portal and submitting their valuable suggestions.

### **Shrine Board distributed Sports Equipment to Government Schools in Reasi**

The Shrine Board distributed sports equipment to nine government schools in Reasi district on February 5, reinforcing its commitment to promoting physical fitness and nurturing a sports culture among students.

The equipment provided included footballs, volleyballs, basketballs, badminton rackets, shuttlecocks, table tennis kits and indoor games.

Chief Executive Officer on the occasion highlighted the efforts of Board towards youth empowerment and promotion of sports in the region.



Shrine Board distributing sports equipment to Govt. School

The benefitting schools widely appreciated the support, stating that the initiative would strengthen physical education programmes and encourage greater student participation in sports and extracurricular activities.

### **SMVD College of Nursing Held 45th Governing Body Meeting**

The 45th Governing Body meeting of Shri Mata Vaishno Devi College of Nursing (SMVDCoN) was held on March 11, 2026 at its campus in Kakryal under the chairmanship of Shri Suresh Kumar Sharma.



45<sup>th</sup> Meeting of Governing Body of SMVDCoN

The meeting was attended by Chief Executive Officer, Shri Sachin Kumar Vaishya along with senior functionaries and academic representatives. The Governing Body reviewed progress of the earlier decisions and deliberated on key proposals aimed at strengthening academic standards and institutional development.

The Body approved the celebration of a “Decade of Excellence” to mark 10 years of the College, with year-long activities including academic programmes, community outreach, and NSS initiatives, culminating in a grand finale. It also approved the organization of the 4th Nursing Fest “TARANG-2026” to promote academic excellence, creativity and holistic development among students.

The members appreciated the College’s initiative to apply for Autonomous Status on the UGC portal and took several faculty- and student-centric decisions to enhance skill development and academic growth. Efforts to establish academic collaborations with SMVD University and



SMVD Institute of Medical Excellence along with outreach initiatives involving local Gram Panchayats, were also acknowledged.

### **SMVDNSH Governing Body Held 71st Meeting**

The 71st Governing Body meeting of SMVD Narayana Superspeciality Hospital (SMVDNSH), Kakryal, was held on March 26, 2026 under the chairmanship of Dr. K.K. Talwar.



71<sup>st</sup> Meeting of Governing Body of SMVDNSH

The meeting was attended by senior members including Dr. Ashok Bhan and Chief Executive Officer, Shri Sachin Kumar Vaishya along with officials from the Shrine Board and Narayana Health. The Governing Body reviewed the hospital's performance and expressed satisfaction over its steady growth in patient footfall, bed occupancy, revenue and clinical capabilities.

A comprehensive three-year investment plan was deliberated, focusing on strengthening infrastructure, augmenting medical equipment and expanding specialty services such as Oncology, Nephrology and

Cardiology along with modernization of emergency and critical care units.

The Governing Body also noted the launch of the "Do Dil Ek Bill" initiative, aimed at providing affordable maternal cum paedetric healthcare through economical health package.

Key decisions were taken to enhance patient care quality and ensure financial sustainability, including continued efforts towards rationalization of rates under Ayushman Bharat. The meeting also

reviewed progress on the Business Transition Agreement between the SMVD Charitable Society and Narayana Health, aimed at improving operational efficiency and expanding healthcare services.

The Chairman emphasised the need for financial prudence while pursuing expansion plans and reiterated the institution's commitment to accessible, affordable, and patient-centric healthcare.

The meeting concluded with a review of patient feedback and directions for corrective measures to further improve service delivery and patient satisfaction.

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