



Trikuta

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Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine Board

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Union Home Minister offers prayers at Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine

Union Home Minister, Amit Shah visited the Holy Cave Shrine of Shri Mata Vaishno Devi ji and offered prayers to the Goddess on 4th of October. He prayed for the progress and prosperity of the people of the country. His visit coincided with the auspicious occasion of Ramanavami and conclusion of nine days long 'Shat Chandi Maha Yagya' with Purna Ahuti organised by Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine Board at the Holy Shrine for universal peace, harmony and prosperity of humanity.

The Home Minister accompanied by Lieutenant Governor, Manoj Sinha, who is also the Chairman of Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine Board arrived at Panchhi Helipad and was received by Union MoS, Dr. Jitendra Singh; Chief Executive Officer, Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine Board, Anshul Garg, besides, senior officers of civil and police administration.

The Lieutenant Governor briefed the Home Minister about the continuing initiatives being taken by the Shrine Board for the upgradation and expansion of the infrastructure for facilitating the progressively increasing number of pilgrims to the Holy Shrine.



Union Home Minister received by CEO, SMVDSB



Chairman, SMVDSB presenting memento to Union Home Minister



LG chairs 70th meeting of Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine Board

Launches initiatives to provide diverse facilities to the pilgrims, devotees

Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha chaired 70th meeting of Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine Board (SMVDSB) on 12th of December, 2022 at Raj Bhavan, Jammu.

The meeting was attended by all members of SMVDSB – Mahamandleshwar Swami Vishveshvaranand Giriji Maharaj; Baleshwar Rai; Dr Ashok Bhan; Kul Bhushan Ahuja; Dr Neelam Sareen; K K Sharma; Suresh Kumar Sharma (Retd. Judge) and Raghu K. Mehta. Dr Arun Kumar Mehta, Chief Secretary and Sh. Anshul Garg, Chief Executive Officer of the Shrine Board were also present.

launched a Cottage Policy, Aarti Darshan Policy, 1st edition of 'Panchang Calendar-2023' of Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine Board.

He laid the foundation stone of accommodation facilities for Shrine Board's employees at Adhkuwari & Banganga and launched multiple donation facilities for the pilgrims.

Further, the Board discussed, ratified, gave in principle approvals for a total of 46 agenda items. The Board members were also presented with a compliance report on the directions passed for short term and long term measures initiated for yatra regulation and crowd management.

The CEO, SMVDSB apprised the actions initiated on diverse fronts for hassle



70th meeting of Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine Board held on 12th Dec. 2022.

The Lt Governor, who is the chairman of Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine Board, launched various initiatives to provide diverse facilities to the pilgrims and devotees.

He also ascertained progress of the work for ease of devotees and laid emphasis on timely completion of all projects. On the occasion, the Lt Governor

verification of RFID cards, effective crowd management, augmentation of holding areas, plans for decongestion of the entire track, separation of entry, exit routes at Bhawan and surveillance through dedicated CCTV network of over 500 cameras.

The Lt Governor directed the CEO to take all necessary measures for the safety and security of the pilgrims. Besides underscored that all aspects should be



taken into account for the construction of Passenger Ropeway between Tarakote Langar and Sanjichhat.

Safety, convenience and ease of the devotees visiting the shrine remains the top priority of the Shrine Board for which emphasis was given on 24x7 monitoring on pilgrimage through RFID and CCTV cameras.

To reform and enhance functions of various departments at the shrine, the Board approved implementation of Enterprises Resource Planning (ERP) software through TCS (Tata Consultancy Services) to provide an integrated digital solution.

The Board approved the establishment of New Registration Counter at Railway Station, Katra to decongest the existing registration counters and provide convenience and comfort to the pilgrims. The Lt Governor also issued directions for building a state-of-the-art Registration centre.

darshans at sanctum sanctorum during all upcoming Navratras.

The meeting also decided to invite doctors willing to serve the devotees at the Shrine on volunteer basis through advertisement and wide publicity.

While taking the appraisal of ongoing Projects at Bhawan under Master Plan-Durga Bhawan & Skywalk, the Lt Governor directed to expedite the work.

The Lt Governor emphasized that every effort must be made to complete all the ongoing projects in an expedient manner. The Board impressed for making maximum use of green technologies, rain water harvesting and solar power harnessing.

Discussion was also held on slope stabilization and other upcoming projects including redevelopment of Parvati Bhawan and separate exit track from the Bhawan and remodeling of Manokamna area. The Board also ratified several initiatives for



Launch of 'Panchang Calendar-2023' of Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine Board

The Board appreciated and decided to continue initiatives undertaken on a pilot basis during the Shardiya Navratras for the benefit of Divyangjan. The facilities will include provision of complimentary pony and battery car services, special priority

welfare of Board's employees and creation of new posts for the operationalization of Durga Bhawan. Approval was also accorded to enhancement in financial assistance for the marriage of girls and grant of scholarship for meritorious students



of ex-Baridar families. The Board took appraisal of SMVD Charitable Society and approved grant in aids and financial assistance by the Board to educational institutions. During the meeting, the Board took note of numerous steps aimed at rejuvenation of the Banganga and asked the CEO to prioritize such initiatives.

The Board also desired to complete the construction of Shankaracharya Temple near Katra in an expedient manner by resolving all pending issues with the help of concerned stakeholders.

Shat Chandi Maha Yagya culminates at Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine

Shat Chandi Maha Yagya organised by Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine Board at the Holy Shrine of Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Ji during Navratras for universal peace, harmony, prosperity and health of humanity, concluded with Purna Ahuti, on the auspicious occasion of Ramanavami on October 4.

Anshul Garg, Chief Executive Officer, Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine Board; other officers and staff of the Shrine Board, besides pilgrims participated in Purna Ahuti and other religious ceremonies performed amidst Vedic Mantras on the occasion. During the Navratras 2.94 lakh pilgrims paid obeisance at the Holy Shrine.



Shat Chandi Maha Yagya culminates at Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine

CEO SMVDSB reviews Master plan projects in Bhawan Area and Underground Cabling Project

Chief Executive Officer, Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine Board on 19th November, 2022 chaired a meeting at Bhawan with the officials of executing agency and concerned engineers to review the pace of ongoing mega projects at Bhawan which include Durga Bhawan and Sky-Walk. The review meeting was held immediately after the visit of Chairman, SMVDSB (Hon'ble Lt. Governor, JK-UT) who visited Holy Shrine and conducted inspection of ongoing projects.



Reviews of Master Plan projects in Bhawan area by CEO

Durga Bhawan, which is likely to be commissioned shortly, has provisions to accommodate 2500 pilgrims on a daily basis, bound to give a new shape and structure to the comforts and convenience of the pilgrims visiting the Holy Shrine. The building once completed shall have provisions for providing locker facilities to keep valuables by the staying pilgrims coupled with bathing ghats, aimed at making the stay quite pleasant and congenial, besides, providing hygienic and wholesome food at nominal rates.

Construction of Durga Bhawan is part of the approved Master Plan of Bhawan area, prepared by the School of Planning and Architecture, New Delhi. The Master Plan seeks to achieve the target of ensuring maximum accommodation for pilgrims by 2031.



The CEO also reviewed the status of Sky-Walk, conceptualized by the Shrine Board to overcome the problem of multidirectional flow of yatra and a chaotic condition at Bhawan. It has been designed by the School of Planning and Architecture, New Delhi and is being executed by Central Public Works Department (CPWD) with technical vetting by Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Roorkee.

While reviewing the progress, the CEO stressed upon the executing agency and concerned engineers to work with an added dedication and ensure completion of ongoing mega projects within the stipulated time frame. He asked the executing agency to redouble their efforts in mobilizing men and machinery for completing the projects in stipulated time frame.

Chief Executive Officer also took a comprehensive review of the present status of the implementation of Underground Cabling Project enroute the Holy shrine at a meeting held at Kalika Dham, Jammu on 23rd November.



Reviews of progress on Underground Cabling Project

The underground cabling work from Katra to Bhawan and in the surrounding areas has been allotted to the M/s JSP Projects P. Ltd. by JPDCL (Project Wing) on the basis of tendering process, partially funded under the PMDP and by the Shrine Board at an estimated cost of 85.99 cr. This high utility project will have a SCADA compliance based monitoring system of the electric network.

Taking an extensive review and cognizance of inordinate delays in completion of project, the Chief Executive Officer stressed for expeditious completion of the pending foundations inter-alia of Package Sub-Station (PSS), Ring Main Units (RMUs), Feeder Pillars, Chemical earthing, Street Poles vis-a-vis synchronization of SCADA station on complete track, besides, ensuring all the remaining supplies. The Chief Engineer (Project Wing), JPDCL and State Coordinator, RECPDCL were asked for close monitoring of works on daily basis, while ensuring adequacy of manpower, machinery, material and all other wherewithal for completion of the entire work before ending of December.

Chief Executive Officer, SMVDSB asked the Project Director, executing agency to achieve results on the ground and ensure its entire completion expeditiously and strictly as per the revised timelines. Besides, directed the officials to work in close synergy to remove any bottlenecks coming in the way of progress of works.

‘Constitution Day’ observed at SMVDSB

Chief Secretary, Dr. Arun Kumar Mehta, Divisional Commissioner, Jammu, Chief Executive Officer, SMVDSB along with Sr. Officers of SMVDSB and District Administration, besides, officers and officials Shrine Board and JKUT on 26th November, read out ‘Preamble’ of the constitution of India at Spiritual Growth Centre, Katra to mark the anniversary of the adoption of the Constitution of India on 26th November, 1949.

As part of the 125th birth Anniversary of Dr. B R Ambedkar celebrations, ‘Constitution Day’ was celebrated on 26th November, 2015 for the first time. Since then, 26th November is being celebrated as



'Constitution Day' every year. Dr. Ambedkar played a seminal role in the framing of the Indian Constitution as the Chairman of the Drafting Committee of the Constituent Assembly.



Pledge taken on 'Constitution Day' observed at SMVDSB

The main aim of celebrating this day is to create awareness among the citizens about the Constitution and its values.

Anshul Garg, CEO, Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine Board while welcoming the eminent dignitaries invited the whole gathering in the auditorium to read the Preamble.

Chief Minister of Haryana pays obeisance at Vaishno Devi

Chief Minister of Haryana Manohar Lal Khattar visited the holy cave shrine of Shri Mata Vaishno Devi on 27th November and paid obeisance at the sanctum sanctorum.



Anshul Garg, CEO, SMVDSB presenting a memento to Sh. Manohar Lal Khattar, Chief Minister of Haryana.

At Mata Vaishno Devi Bhawan, Anshul Garg, Chief Executive Officer, Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine Board received

the Chief Minister of Haryana. The CEO mentioned about various infrastructure development initiatives taken and further arrangements being put in place by the Shrine Board for continuously improving the facilities for the visiting pilgrims.

Insurance assistance to SMVDSB Staff as a welfare measure

To mitigate the financial impact and help employees with insurance coverage as a staff welfare measure, Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine Board under the chairmanship of Hon'ble Lt. Governor, JK UT has left no stone unturned to cover all its employees under the Group Personal Accident policy to protect them against the medical expenses incurred due to injury or death resulting from an accident during service.



Insurance assistance to employee of SMVDSB Staff as a staff welfare measure.

Under the ambit of the provisions of this policy of SMVDSB insured through J&K Bank in association with IFFCO Tokio General Insurance Company Limited, a financial assistance of Rs. 30 Lakh has been provided to the family members of the deceased employee Lt. Kuldeep Chand who lost his life in the current year while in active service of SMVDSB.

The cheque worth Rs. 30 Lakh was handed over to the family of the deceased by Anshul Garg, CEO, SMVDSB, in the presence of Mahesh Sharma, FA/ Chief Accounts Officer, SMVDSB; Rajesh Gupta (Zonal Head, JK Bank); Pavwaan Shaah



(State Head, ITGI) and Faheem Fayaz Zargar (SBU Head, ITGI).

Speaking on the occasion, CEO, SMVDSB said that there are clear directions of Hon'ble Chairman (Hon'ble Lt. Governor, JKUT) to initiate immediate proactive measures for providing relief to the deceased's family in the need of hour due to untimely death of the employee. Besides, the CEO also extended gratitude to the J&K Bank for the multitude of facilities provided to the employees of the Shrine Board in a concessional and hassle free manner under the preferred customer MOU.

Chairman, SMVDSB grants appointment to next of kin on compassionate grounds

To enable families of two deceased employees to tide over severe crisis arising due to untimely death of bread earners, Chairman, Shrine Board, (Lt. Governor, JK-UT) approved the appointment of their widows namely Smt. Savita Rajput W/o of Late Surjeevan Singh and Smt. Anita Devi W/o Late Kuldeep Chand in the Board invoking relaxation provision of Board's Compassionate Appointment Policy.

In this connection, CEO, SMVDSB, handed over the appointment orders to next of kin of the deceased employees on 20th October at Central Office, Katra. The CEO while encouraging the newly appointees, exhorted them to serve the devotees with utmost dedication and honesty. CEO while enlisting the host of initiatives taken for the staff welfare informed that as many as 37 candidates have been appointed on compassionate grounds as per policy in place. In addition, hardship allowance for 1450 employees posted at Higher Altitudes has already been enhanced by a record 45% after 8 years. As regards career progression of the staff, Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine Board has recently issued

orders for promotion of 131 employees which includes 5 nos. from Group-A, 9 nos. from Group-B and 117 nos. from Group-C as per recommendations of Departmental Promotion Committees whose meetings are being conducted regularly on the direction of Hon'ble Chairman.



CEO, SMVDSB handing over the appointment letter to next of kin on compassionate grounds measure

Further, as a significant measure for the welfare of employees Chairman, SMVDSB has also approved enhancement of Special Diwali incentive by 25% for employees of Shrine Board on the eve of Diwali for their total dedication to service of pilgrims, ensuring best possible arrangements for their comfort and well being and conduct of smooth and hassle free yatra especially the 3.50 lakh pilgrims during the preceding Navartaras.

Meanwhile, CEO also issued 'Letters of Appreciation' to Sh. Sham Lal and Shri Omker Singh, Jr. Sahayaks, posted at Passenger Ropeway Bhawan for dedication, devotion and honesty upholding the high traditions of the Board aimed at facilitation of the pilgrims visiting the Holy Shrine of Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Ji.

CEO Shrine Board Extends Diwali Greetings

On behalf of Chairman, SMVDSB (Lt. Governor, JK-UT) Anshul Garg, Chief



Executive Officer, SMVDSB extended his greetings to the staff of Shrine Board on the eve of Dhanteras and Diwali in a get together organized on 22 October at Spiritual Growth Centre, Katra.

Speaking on the occasion, the Chief Executive Officer extended his gratitude to the Chairman of Shrine Board for his continuous support and guidance under which a plethora of initiatives for facilitation of pilgrims and welfare of staff are being undertaken by the Board. Besides, developmental initiatives in the form of additional accommodation for pilgrims as well as employees, he also enumerated various significant measures for the general welfare of the Shrine Board employees, which include enhancement of hardship allowance, restructuring of various cadres for latter promotional avenues, one time relaxation in qualification for transition to MR to Term Employee & Term Employee to Graded structure, compassionate appointments and revision of scales.



Diwali Milan 2022

CEO also lauded the efforts made by the officers and staff of the Board at all levels in ensuring smooth facilitation of pilgrims visiting the Holy Cave shrine besides, appreciating their instrumental role in helping the Shrine. He underscored that with the determined efforts of employees and blessings of the Divine, yatra to the Holy Shrine has tremendously increased as compared to the previous two years which

has been possible due to the all round efforts. He stressed all employees to ensure greater facilitation of pilgrims visiting the Holy Cave Shrine, which have been widely acclaimed, adding that all of us need to redouble our efforts and no stone should be left unturned to provide best possible services to the pilgrims to make the pilgrimage a memorable experience for them.

Pertinently, 5-storey Durga Bhawan to cater to 2000 pilgrims per day and Sky Walk to overcome the problem of multidirectional flow of yatra are being executed at a brisk pace under the guidance of Chairman, SMVDSB.

Earlier, Dr. Sunil Sharma, Joint Chief Executive Officer enlisted the initiatives by the Shrine Board for the welfare of the staff in a very short span with wishes to the staff on the auspicious occasion of Diwali.

SMVDSB conducted review of security and operational preparedness ahead of New-year

To assess security and operational preparedness of Shrine area for hassle-free pilgrimage prior to onset of New Year-2023, Anshul Garg, Chief Executive Officer, presided over a joint meeting with security agencies to review security and operational preparedness on 9th & 23rd of December at Spiritual Growth Centre, Katra.

The meetings were attended by Suresh Kumar Sharma (Retd. Judge), Member, SMVDSB, P. S. Ranpise, IG, CRPF, Mohd Suleman Choudhary DIG Udhampur-Reasi Range, Navneet Singh, Addl. Chief Executive Officer, SMVDSB, Amit Gupta SSP Reasi, Chander Parkash, Jt. CEO, Sudhir Bali SDM Bhawan, Vishwajeet Singh, Dy. Chief Executive Officer, SMVDSB, Commandant CRPF, SDPO Katra, Dy. SP Bhawan and officers



from Army, IB, CID, SMVDSB and other intelligence agencies.

CEO underscored that with the determined efforts of the Shrine Board and blessings of the Divine, yatra to the holy shrine has tremendously increased as compared to the previous two years which has been possible due to the all round efforts of all the stakeholders. He said that we expect a good turnout of pilgrims during upcoming winter vacations and onset of New Year–2023 and laid emphasis for operational preparedness with full proof security of the visiting pilgrims.



Reviews meeting for security and operational preparedness ahead of New-year

CEO urged for simulating exercises jointly to deal with crowd management well for effective Yatra management on ground on the eve of New Year. To review each and every security aspect of the Shrine area enroute besides, safety and security of pilgrims expected to visit in huge volume on New Year, he emphasized to conduct joint drills well in advance and plug any gaps. A slew of directives were issued to the Sub-Divisional Magistrate, Bhawan for physical and systematic improvements wherever required at Bhawan and allied areas after critical examination.

CEO also deliberated on various measures in place and proactive steps taken for smooth regulation of expected influx of pilgrims likely to visit in large number from various parts of the country and abroad to abode of Shri Mata Vaishno

Devi ji on the onset of New Year which includes issuance of RFID cards, effective crowd management, working out plans for decongestion of the entire track, particularly the Bhawan area, separation of entry, exit routes at Bhawan and all time surveillance through dedicated CCTV dedicated network of over 500 cameras.

CEO said that yatris are being regularly informed through announcement to register under RFID based Registration Card through Shrine Board Registration Counters only before start of their pilgrimage and if any pilgrim found without RFID cards, he will not be allowed for the pilgrimage. He also underscored that those pilgrims registered under RFID not returning their card after completion of Yatra shall be charged a fine of Rs 100/- as deterrence.



SMVDSB held 2nd review of Yatra preparedness ahead of New-year

CEO, SMVDSB also discussed the concern about surge in COVID cases and informed that all the stakeholders have been advised to wear masks while dealing with the yatris. He also informed that the Shrine Board has made wearing of face masks mandatory for every pilgrim attending the Atka Arti and in the darshan queue.

Suresh Kumar Sharma, Member, Shrine Board while reviewing the various mitigation measures in place emphasized coordinated efforts amongst all stakeholders for working on strategies for



risk aversion and identifies the congestion and crowd holding spots for better crowd management before the onset of New Year.

P. S. Ranpise, IG, CRPF highlighted major challenges for the deployed security forces in coming days for managing the expected influx of pilgrims on New Year. Besides, DIG, J&K Police informed that additional forces as per request shall be deployed in and around Katra and on the track enroute Bhawan in coordination with other security agencies to ensure fool-proof security and effective Yatra management.

SSP Reasi presented a detailed security grid in place and discussed various security measures going to be placed on the eve of New Year.

SMVD Gurukul participates in 'Rashtriya Gurukul Sanghoshti'

To commensurate changes by assessing the needs to inculcate significant insight into the awareness about various developments required for the pernicious modernization of the pristine education framework in Gurukul and for an educational exposure, ten students with three faculty members along with Chief Executive officer, Anshul Garg, Jt. Chief Executive Officer, Dr. JC Mehra and other concerned officers of SMVDSB attended the "National Gurukul Symposium" being organised from 04th to 06th of November at Veda Vijnana Gurukulam, Bengaluru (Karnatka).

Eminent dignitaries and progressive specialists Suresh Soni, Akhil Bharteeya Karyakarini Sadasya, RSS; Padamshree Prof. H.R. Nagendra Vice Chancellor, SVYASA University, Bengaluru Tippeswami, Chairman Janaseva Vishwastha Mandali; Prof. Shrinivasa Varkhedi Vice Chancellor, Central Sanskrit University, New Delhi and Anshul Garg,

CEO graced the inaugural session/day of the symposium besides students, faculty and other distinguished persons.

Students and faculty of more than 250 Gurukuls not only from India but across the world from countries like Ireland, Kuwait, Indonesia, Vietnam and Nepal attended the symposium aimed at exchanging of ideas and enter into dialogues regarding Gurukul education in the modern era, its relevance, public perception and the current challenges being faced by it.



SMVD Gurukul participates in Rashtriya Gurukul Sanghoshti

The speakers during the inaugural session mainly emphasized on defining elements of the educational context and proactive planning in terms of providing a systematic way of education at 'Gurukuls' by integrating them with the rapid innovation in education techniques, overview of the current system with the proposed betterments. Besides, reiterated that Gurukuls, if combined with current technology and requirements, should also include various courses and subjects relating to information technology as we transcend from physical to virtual and the next generation of students needs to be well equipped with these subjects.

Addressing the gathering after the presentation of short documentary on SMVD Gurukul, the Chief Executive Officer



said that from the last 12 years the Gurukul is paving the way to develop the students with high moral values well accustomed with the Modern, Traditional, and Spiritual Education for the strong spiritual-cultural foundation of J&K and the affiliation of Gurukul with Central Sanskrit University, New Delhi are some of the important step towards revival of Sanskrit in J&K and connecting students with science and spirituality. Under the constant guidance and directions of Chairman, SMVDSB (Lt. Governor, JKUT Sh. Manoj Sinha) and close monitoring of Mahamandleshwar Shri Swami Vishveshvaranand Giriji Maharaj, Member, SMVDSB and Chairman of the Governing Council, the Gurukul has earned a name not only at regional level but has proved its metal at National level as well by showing its excellence in imparting quality education and exuded confidence that very soon it will emerge as a centre of excellence. Appreciating the role of organisers of National Gurukul Symposium at Bengaluru, the CEO said such platforms are vital to exchange the experiences of functioning of different Gurukuls and provide an opportunity to exhibit talent of students. He called upon the organisers to plan out such more events in near future for the better understanding and chalking out pragmatic approach for the smooth running of Gurukuls. For this purpose, SMVD Gurukul is always ready to extend any cooperation, he assured. He also said that we must not only strive to nurture but also seek to preserve the country's rich cultural heritage and legacy based on Sanskrit and vedic education in a well-coordinated manner in tandem to become Vishwa Guru once again in next 25 years which is being recognised as Amrit Kaal.

SMVD Gurukul also put up an exhibition stall depicting the genesis and

achievement of Gurukul, since its inception. At the exhibition stall, photo exhibition, video, pictorial presentation of Gurukul, Panchmeva Parsad, book on evolution of Gurukul alongwith silver coins of different denominations are displayed. Dignitaries and a number of participants from different states visited the stall and appreciated the efforts of the Shrine Board for running Gurukul in an efficient manner. An impressive musical presentation including Sarswati Vandna and Bhajans in Sanskrit by the students of SMVD Gurukul received huge appreciation and repeated cheers from the audience present on the occasion.

CEO SMVDSB inaugurates North Regional Rupak Mahotsav

Chief Executive Officer, Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine Board Anshul Garg on 28 December 2022 inaugurated the North Regional Rupak Mahotsav being organized under the aegis of Central Sanskrit University, Shri Ranvir Campus, Jammu at Police Auditorium, Gulshan Ground, Jammu.

The program was inaugurated by Vedic invocation by Ved Department of Chudamani Sanskrit Sansthan, Basohli wherein students and faculty of Central Sanskrit University campuses and Adarsh Mahavidyalaya from four states – J&K, Himachal Pradesh, Haryana and Uttarakhand of North zone participated. Speaking on the occasion, chief guest Anshul Garg said that North Regional Rupak Mahotsav being organized by the Central Sanskrit University is a commendable initiative and an inspiration to the new incumbents. He said that theatre is an important medium to spread joy, promote awareness and protect our rich heritage and culture. Besides, it has an important role in showing us how we should



be as a nation and society, he added. CEO also quoted great Sanskrit scholar and art critic Abhinav Gupt to whom Abhinav Theatre of Jammu owes its name. He underscored that a visitor to any major city in a European country not miss their traditional theaters as these are not only places of sophisticated entertainment but also the storehouse of culture and heritage of those people. In line, he recalled the intangible cultural heritage of India where during festivals like Navratras and showcasing of Ramlila, the audience was invited to take part in the narration, playing roles in a variety of related activities has been reduced with the emergence of Internet based entertainment & OTT platforms.



CEO SMVDSB inaugurates North Regional Rupak Mahotsav

CEO further added that the Shrine Board under the chairmanship of Hon'ble LG is committed towards promotion of Sanskrit language through institutes like SMVD Gurukul and extended an invitation to Central Sanskrit University for organizing the proposed North Regional zonal festival in Feb-March, 2023 at Katra which shall be fully supported by Shri Mata Vaishno Devi

Shrine Board. He urged the participants to perform with spirit of sportsmanship with humility and simplicity quoting Bharat Ratna Atal Bihari Vajpayee favourite poem "Na Haarmein, Na Jeetmein".

Dr. Jagdish Mehra, Joint Chief Executive Officer, Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine Board also graced the inauguration ceremony as Guest of honour and Prof. Madan Mohan Jha, Campus Director, Kot Bhalwal, Jammu presided over the programme. Besides, Prof. Satish Kumar Kapoor was the coordinator of the program. Dr Jagdish Mehra, Jt. CEO, Administrator, SMVD Gurukul besides congratulating the organisers urged to also include SMVD Gurukul for future participation of North zone events.

While director of the campus, Prof. Madan Mohan Jha besides highlighting the outline of the Rupak Mahotsav welcomed the guests and rendered special thanks to Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine Board for providing comfortable stay to the participants with complimentary food at Kalika Dham, Jammu.

An impressive presentation of Bhajan by the students of SMVD Gurukul was among the main highlights of the event.

Record 91.25 lakh pilgrims paid obeisance at Vaishno Devi Shrine in 2022

During 2022, 91,24,970 devotees paid obeisance at Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine, thereby registering an increase of 35,36,796 pilgrims over the previous year figure of 55,88,174 yatris. 19,14,831 pilgrims paid obeisance at the Sanctum Santorum during the last quarter of the year.

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