

!! Continuations from Page 1 !! Ram Lalla consecrated...

Article 370 that gave special status to Jammu and Kashmir, building a grand Ram temple in Ayodhya and the implementation of a Uniform Civil Code(UCC) have been BJP's poll plank for decades.

Hymns and songs about Lord Ram reverberated in temples and special prayers and bhandara events were held as the country soaked in religious fervour on the occasion.

Army helicopters showered flower petals on the new-age architectural marvel as the consecration ceremony was underway. And celebrations broke out in this Uttar Pradesh temple town resonating with a blend of spirituality and revelry with people singing and dancing.

'Ramdhun' played in the streets in this town from early morning, as security personnel kept a tight vigil across Ayodhya district.

While the Ram temple was decorated with "rich stocks" of flowers and special lights, streetlights on flyovers were decorated with artwork depicting Lord Ram as well as cutouts of bow and arrow, and ornamental lampposts had designs themed on the traditional "Ramanandi tilak".

The consecration rituals began from the Saryu river banks on January 16 and were completed Monday afternoon. The first phase of the temple built by a trust has so far cost Rs 1,100 crore. The temple complex is expected to open for public on Tuesday.

The prime minister walked inside the temple premises with a silver 'chhatra' (umbrella) placed on a red folded dupatta.

Dressed in a golden kurta teamed up with a cream dhoti and patka, he took sankalp' for the ceremony and later moved to the sanctum sanctorum for the rituals.

"January 22, 2024 is not merely a date in the calendar but heralds the advent of a new era," Modi said shortly after he performed a series of rituals in the garbhagriha' the sanctum sanctorum -- with the consecration taking place during the 84-second 'Abhisek muhurt' starting 12.29 pm. He prostrated himself before the 51-inch idol that depicts the child Ram. A vedic priest was also present.

"Today, our Ram has arrived. After a long wait for ages, our Ram has arrived. Our Ram Lalla will no longer live in a tent. Our Ram Lalla will stay in a magnificent temple," Modi said in his address to a large number of invitees, including seers, leaders from different fields and those part of the decades-long Ram Jannabhoomi movement for building the temple.

With the temple being built and divine powers "witnessing" the occasion, he asked people to take a pledge in the current time of immense "positive energy" to build a strong and capable India of the next 1,000 years after the temple has been built.

"Ayodhya is asking us all, every devotee of Ram, every Indian as to the next course of action as the grand temple of Shri Ram has been built. What next? We have to from today, from this sacred moment lay the foundation of India of the next 1,000 years. Going beyond the temple's construction, we all Indians take a pledge to build a strong, capable, grand and divine India."

In remarks aimed at critics, Modi said some people used to say that the Ram temple's construction would set off a fire in the country and asked them to reconsider their views.

"I would urge those people to rethink. Ram is not fire but energy. Ram is not dispute but solution, Ram is not merely ours but of everyone and Ram is not only the present but also eternal, he said, adding the temple is also a symbol of peace, patience, harmony and amity in Indian society."

Modi also said the "extraordinary and emotional moment" is not merely about triumph but also humility and underscores Indian society's maturity in resolving historical disputes.

The ceremony took place in the presence of UP Governor Anandiben Patel, Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath and RSS chief Mohan Bhagwat.

Bhagwat said Ram Rajya is coming and everyone in the country should shun disputes and stay united.

The new idol depicts Ram at the age of five, and was carved from black stone by Mysuru-based sculptor Arun Yogiraj. It was draped in a yellow dhoti, and adorned with stone-studded jewellery and flowers in shades of red, yellow and purple.

Fifty traditional musical instruments from across the country were part of a devotional "mangal dihwani" that resonated during the ceremony. Orchestrated by Ayodhya's celebrated poet Yatindra Mishra, the rendition was supported by New Delhi's Sangeet Natak Akademi

Devotees arrived from several parts of the country to the temple town to be part of the occasion, though the main ceremony was only for the invitees. "Jai Shri Ram" slogans also rent the air.

A temple-mosque dispute had simmered over the spot where the 16th century Babri mosque stood.

Many Hindus believe that the mosque was constructed after the demolition of a temple that existed on the site of Lord Ram's birthplace. Kar sevaks demolished it on December 6, 1992 triggering communal riots that left hundreds dead.

After a long legal battle, the top court in 2019 ruled in favour of the construction of the temple. It also ordered allotment of a five-acre plot for building a mosque.

The Ram Jannabhoomi Mandir has been constructed in the traditional Nagara style. Its east-west length is 380 feet, width 250 feet and height 161 feet. It is supported by 392 pillars and has 44 doors.

The pillars and walls showcase intricately sculpted depictions of Hindu deities.

Outside, Ayodhya resident Anil Singh called it a "priceless moment" that he would treasure forever. "As a resident of Ayodhya, I feel proud that I live in this spiritual city," he said.

Mysuru-based sculptor Arun Yogiraj, who chiselled the 'Ram Lalla' idol, said he considers himself the luckiest person on the earth and believes that it is Lord Ram who chose him for the task.

As soon as Modi left the temple premises, the temple was thrown open to invitees. Hundreds rushed in, creating complete chaos in the chamber before the garbhagriha'.

The prime minister also visited Kubera Tila shrine, unveiled a statue of Ramayana figure Jatayu and showered petals on workers who built the temple.

Senior BJP leaders including party chief J P Nadda and Union Home Minister

Amit Shah watched the live streaming of the consecration ceremony. The 96-year-old Advani, who was invited for the ceremony, was not present.

Top opposition leaders skipped the temple inauguration, calling it an RSS-BJP event.

J&K's final electoral...

was started with publication of Draft Electoral Roll on 17th October, 2023.

For involving stakeholders including recognized State and National Parties, the District Election Officers (DEOs) held meetings with them, briefed them about the total process to be followed and appealed them to participate in the process by way of appointing Booth Level Agents, so that they can assist the Booth Level Officers in addition/deletion/correction/transposition of eligible voters.

The CEO, J&K has also specifically written DO letters to the State Level functionaries of recognized State and National Political Parties, highlighting the major stages of the revision and solicited their active support in the total process.

In order to make the general public aware about the Revision of Electoral Rolls, necessary press releases/advertisements were given in the leading news papers through the Information Department. Apart from advertisement/news in print media, awareness was also created through the electronic media, social media, hoardings etc.

The general public was made aware with respect to fact that how to apply, where to apply for addition, deletion, correction, transposition in the Electoral Roll. The toll free number and voter helpline app usage was also prominently highlighted while carrying out public awareness campaign. The period for filing claims and objections was up to 30th November, 2023, during this period 4 special camps were held on 4th, 5th, 18th and 19th November, 2023.

The EROs as per the detailed directions of the Election Commission of India accepted claims and objections and following due process decided on them by 12th January, 2024. They also dealt with Demographically Similar Entries and Photo Similar Entries at the Part and AC level.

In order to supervise and closely monitor the total process, 4 Special Roll Observers were appointed in addition to two Divisional Commissioners. The Roll Observers visited the offices of EROs, Polling Booth and also attended the Special Camps. During their field visit and table top exercise, they conveyed the necessary directions so as to make the process complying with the directions of the Commission.

In order to cover the eligible voters of Kashmir migrants, 4 Special AEROs held camps in their areas and the process was supervised by Relief and Rehabilitation Commissioner (Migrant). The endeavor was made to cover the specially abled persons, elders above the age of 80 years so as to mark them on Electoral Rolls. The weaker and vulnerable sections such as nomads, women and third gender besides others were given sufficient attention.

The weekly status of disposal of claims and objections was put in public domain. The effort was made to make the Electoral Roll healthy. Despite holding special meeting, writing DO letters, few Booth Level Agents were appointed by the parties. However, pro-active involvement of members of Panchayat Raj Institutions and other Village Level functionaries was received.

Viksit Bharat Sankalp Yatra facilitates effective execution of Govt Schemes in Rajouri District

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

RAJOURI: The Viksit Bharat Sankalp Yatra (VBSY) continues its odyssey across Rajouri District ensuring effective execution of government programs and enhancing the quality of life for its residents.

Central to this endeavor is an Information, Education, and Communication (IEC) van, a dynamic mobile platform designed to effectively communicate and create awareness about the diverse initiatives undertaken as part of the Yatra. The van plays a pivotal role in engaging with local communities, imparting crucial knowledge, and empowering residents to avail themselves of the bene-



People participating in Viksit Bharat Sankalp Yatra at Rajouri.

fits offered by government schemes.

Today, the VBSY IEC vans traversed through the panchayats of Godhar, Dhangri Lower, Baljarallan, Argi, Kakora Upper, Kakora Lower, Pallulian and Tunditrar of blocks Dhangri and Pangrain of Rajouri district.

This strategic journey highlights the Yatra's commitment to reaching every corner of the district and ensuring that the benefits of government initiatives are felt at the grassroots level.

The impact of the Yatra is evident in enhanced access to healthcare, education, and

basic amenities, contributing to the overall progress of Rajouri District. Meticulously planned and executed, this initiative aligns with the core objective of holistic development, leaving a lasting and positive impact on the community.

The VBSY has recorded notable success in the implementation of various government schemes in Rajouri District. These schemes, crafted to elevate living standards and provide essential services, have been executed with exceptional efficiency on the ground. Consequently, the community has experienced tangible improvements and witnessed positive changes in their daily lives.

Udhampur commences training under PM Vishwakarma scheme

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

UDHAMPUR: National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC) organized a five day long training program on cutting, tailoring and barberry skills here today marking the commencement of the first batch of training under the PM Vishwakarma scheme in Jammu division.

Deputy Commissioner Udhampur, Saloni Rai, graced the event as the chief guest and formally inaugurated the training program. The ceremony was attended by Senior Superintendent of Police Joginder Singh, Additional Deputy Commissioner Joginder Singh Jasrotia,



Deputy Commissioner Udhampur, Saloni Rai speaking during an event.

Joint Director MSME G. Velladurai, GM DIC Pankaj Anand, Chairman, GK Educational trust, Gourav Khajuria and other notable officers, besides representatives of GK Trust. In her address, the DC congratulated GK Educational Trust for initiating this

training program under the Vishwakarma scheme. She engaged with the trainees, emphasizing the scheme's objectives and encouraging them to actively participate in the program. DC assured full cooperation from the administration for the socio-economic uplift of

the participants, urging them to seize the opportunity.

DC highlighted the significance of the PM Vishwakarma scheme, noting it as a pivotal step towards improving the lives of traditional artisans and craftspeople.

Youth Convention held at Bandipora

Youth have to take a lead role in the fight against drug addiction: Shakeel Ul Rehman

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

BANDIPORA: The Deputy Commissioner (DC) Bandipora, Shakeel Ul Rehman Rather on Monday emphasized that the youth have to take a lead role in the fight against drug addiction and assured every possible step to all such initiatives aiming to ensure a drug-free society.

He was speaking at a Youth Convention organised by Youth Federation Bandipora in collaboration with District Administration, Bandipora, at Conference Hall, Mini-Secretariat, Bandipora.

The DC said that the menace of drug addiction has shaken the foundations of the society, and it is the



DC Shakeel Ul Rehman Rather and others taking pledge.

responsibility of every single individual to stand up against this menace. He further said the youth have to take a leading role as they are the real targets of this menace, and only they can take this fight heads on.

He also discussed various

issues related to menace of drug addiction, areas of concern, age group of addicts, hot spots of drug peddling, abuse, besides, cultivation of illicit poppy and cannabis in the district.

The DC highlighted the need for coordinated efforts

between Government agencies, healthcare providers, civil society organizations and community leaders to effectively address the drug problem.

He appreciated the Youth Federation for organising the program and assured every possible help from the government to eradicate the menace. He urged the youths to work at a localised level to deal with the menace.

The program was also attended by ACR Shabir Ahmad Wani and Tehsildar Bandipora.

On the occasion President Youth Federation Bandipora and Brand Ambassador Nasha Mukht Bharat Faisal Ali Dar unveiled the activity

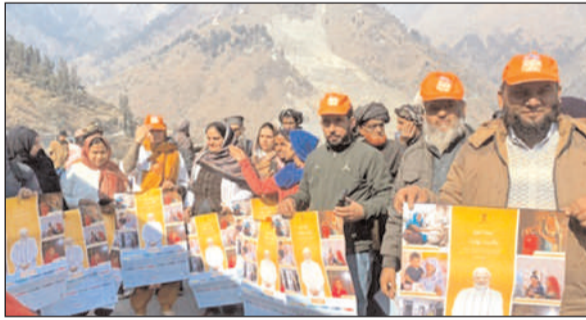
calendar of the year 2024 and said that the year will be celebrated as "Drug Free Bandipora". He said different activities will be taken up under the banner, including sports activities, seminars, counseling sessions, and awareness programs besides other activities to engage the youth in productive activities.

He said the main thrust will be on Sports, culture, and tourism to engage the youth and sensitize them about the ill effects of drug abuse. On the occasion, the participants also undertook a pledge resolving their efforts against drug menace and to make Bandipora a drug free district.

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

RAMBAN: Viksit Bharat Sankalp Yatra, led by Deputy Commissioner Baseer-Ul-Haq Chaudhary in Ramban, is gaining momentum. With a remarkable 98,000 participants, including 37,500 women, this 54-day journey aims to boost the implementation of beneficiary-oriented schemes in the district by year-end.

Today, the Yatra reached Panchayats in Sumbur Upper, A, Dheeda, and Ward No-03 Nagbal in Banihal town, highlighting its commitment to inclusivity. Covering the entire district over the past 54 days, the Yatra has become a powerful platform to inform people about various government schemes. 'Meri Kahani Meri Zubani' allowed beneficiaries to share heart-touching stories of positive change in their lives after benefiting from different Centrally Sponsored Schemes.



People participating in Viksit Bharat Sankalp Yatra at Banihal.

Under the Deputy Commissioner's guidance, all departments are actively promoting and extending the benefits of their respective schemes. The Yatra also celebrated Ramban District's diverse heritage through cultural programs, enriching its cultural tapestry. The collective Viksit Bharat Sankalp Pledge-taking ceremony at the heart of the Yatra unified the community, symbolizing shared aspirations.

Initiatives like PMAY-G, PMAY-U, PM-JAY

Ayushman Card, Poshan ICDS, PM Garib Kalyan Anna Yojana, MUDRA Yojana, KCC, and PM Kisan Nidhi are being widely recognized. Special emphasis is placed on healthcare accessibility, with over 3500 PM-JAY Ayushman Cards issued and regular health check-ups, including TB monitoring.

The Yatra's success lies in its broad outreach, ensuring the Prime Minister's message reaches every corner of the district.

DC Pulwama chairs District Level Road Safety Meeting

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

PULWAMA: In a proactive move towards enhancing road safety, Deputy Commissioner (DC) Pulwama, Dr. Basharat Qayoom Monday chaired a comprehensive District Level Road Safety Meeting at Administrative Complex Pulwama. The meeting gathered insights from various stakeholders, emphasizing the critical importance of road safety in the region.

During the meeting, Executive Engineer, R&B provided a detailed overview of 15 identified black spots in the district, along with the progress made in their rectification. DC directed the concerned to expedite the rectification process and urged them to identify additional black spots, submitting prompt action reports.

Addressing the issue of emergency response, Chief Medical Officer Pulwama informed the chair about the presence of 8 critical care ambulances in the district, with

plans to add more. DC directed the CMO to prioritize handling accident victims during the Golden hour, ensuring swift and comprehensive care.

Dr. Basharat during the meeting stressed the collaborative need for public safety on roads. He highlighted issues such as traffic congestion, inadequate signage, speeding, and non-compliance with regulations. Directing authorities to rectify these concerns, especially in accident-prone areas, he urged stakeholders to pool resources for safer road infrastructure and sustainable transportation.

In his closing remarks, DC reiterated the commitment to creating safer road environments, urging collective action from all involved parties.

The meeting was attended by ACR Pulwama, CPO Pulwama, CMO Pulwama, ASP Pulwama, Executive Engineers, Principals of Degree Colleges and others.