

JAMMU & KASHMIR

Maha Shivratri celebrated with religious fervour across Ramban

HIMALAYAN MAIL NEWS
JAMMU, FEB 15

The holy festival of Maha Shivratri was celebrated with religious enthusiasm and traditional gaiety across the Ramban district.

Maha Shivratri, known as the "Great Night of Shiva," holds immense significance in Hindu tradition and is observed on the new moon day in the month of Maagha as per the Hindu calendar.

On this auspicious occasion, temples across the district were beautifully decorated and witnessed a large influx of devotees from early morning.

A grand Shiv Shobha Yatra was also taken out with participation from members of the Maha Shivratri Celebration Committee Ramban, along with religious leaders, public representatives and prominent citizens.

The Yatra commenced from Pracheen Shiv Mandir Maitra, passed through Govindpura Maitra, Boli Bazaar, Main Bazaar and culminated at Raghunath Mandir Ramban.



The district and police administration has made elaborate security and logistical arrangements to ensure smooth and peaceful celebrations. Senior civil and police officers were present on the occasion, while people from all walks of life lined the procession route and welcomed the Yatra with devotion.

To mark the occasion, langars were organised at Maitra, Ramban, and Konsi Temple by the Sanatan

Dharm Sabha and locals, offering prasad to devotees. The festival witnessed widespread participation, reflecting the spirit of unity, harmony and devotion among the people of the district.

Mahashivratri celebrated with devotion, spiritual fervor in Poonch

POONCH, FEBRUARY 15: Mahashivratri was celebrated with devotion and spiritual fervor across district Poonch.

Thousands of devotees thronged the Shiv Khori Temple to pay obeisance amid a spiritually vibrant atmosphere. Men, women and children dressed in colorful attire, participated enthusiastically in the celebrations, while local food stalls set up along the route to the shrine added to the festive spirit of the occasion.

On the auspicious occasion, the Deputy Commissioner, Ashok Kumar Sharma also paid obeisance at the revered Shiv Khori Temple and sought the blessings of Lord Shiva for sustained peace, prosperity and communal harmony.

Deputy Commissioner, Brigade Commander 93in-



fantry Brigade, Sachindra Joshi, Commanding Officer 12 Bihar, Vipan, Additional SP Mohan Lal, Dy. SP Hqrs Neeraj Sharma and other officers from the district ad-

ministration, Army and Police performed Havan and participated in special prayers on the holy occasion. Senior Superintendent of Police, Shafket Hussain Bhat, officers from district administration and Army extended Mahashivratri greetings to devotees.

The Management Committee of the Mandir accorded a warm welcome to the officers of the District Administration, Army and Police.

Interacting with the pilgrims, the Deputy Commissioner conveyed heartfelt Mahashivratri greetings and emphasized that such sacred occasions reflect the rich composite culture of the region and further strengthen the bonds of brotherhood, harmony and mutual respect among all sections of society.

Farmer collectives need to be strengthened as engines of rural growth: VC SKUAST-K

HIMALAYAN MAIL NEWS
JAMMU, FEB 15

An FPO Conclave was organized on the second day of GON'GUL 2026—the 11th AgriTech Mela of the Sher-e-Kashmir University of Agricultural Sciences and Technology of Kashmir (SKUAST-K) at the Main Campus, Shalimar.

The programme featured an engaging panel discussion comprising senior officials and experts including representatives from National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD), SKUAST-K, Jammu and Kashmir Rural Livelihoods Mission (JKRLM), Department of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare, Jammu and Kashmir, and Directorate of Horticulture Kashmir. The panel deliberated on financial convergence, institutional strengthening, market access, capacity building, and policy support required for scaling up FPO activities in the region.

An interactive session with Chairpersons and CEOs of FPOs provided a platform for grassroots-level feedback, enabling direct dialogue between policymakers and financial



institutions, and farmer collectives. The interaction highlighted key challenges including access to credit, infrastructure gaps, branding, and value addition.

Vice-Chancellor, SKUAST-K, Prof Nazir Ahmad Ganai, underscored the importance of strengthening farmer collectives as engines of rural transformation. He stressed the need for institutional handholding, technology integration, and robust marketing frameworks to ensure sustainable growth of FPOs in Jammu & Kashmir.

The programme commenced with registration of

FPO Development Officers followed by a welcome address by Prof. Raihana Habib Kanth, Director Extension on Upscaling Collectivization under JKCI. In her remarks, she emphasized the critical role of collective farming models and market linkages in enhancing farmers' income and resilience.

Newly formed FPOs were felicitated during the programme in recognition of their efforts toward promoting collective farming and entrepreneurship.

The second day of GON'GUL 2026 also saw heavy footfall at various technology stalls, live demonstrations, seed and planting material counters, agri-startup exhibits, and farmer advisory desks, reflecting the growing enthusiasm for innovation-driven agriculture in the region.

Satish participates in Maha Shivratri celebrations, prays for peace, prosperity

HIMALAYAN MAIL NEWS
JAMMU, FEB 15

Minister for FCS&CA, Transport, Youth Services and Sports, IT, Science and Technology, Satish Sharma today participated in Maha Shivratri celebrations at various places across Jammu district, with the main function held at Batal village in the Chhamb constituency.

The Minister joined devotees in offering prayers on the auspicious occasion and interacted warmly with members of the local community. He extended his heartfelt greetings to all those celebrating the festival and prayed for peace, harmony and prosperity across Jammu and Kashmir.

Speaking on the occasion, the Minister highlighted the spiritual and cultural signif-



icance of Maha Shivratri, describing it as a festival that strengthens faith, promotes unity and reinforces the values of devotion and compassion.

He said such sacred occasions serve as a reminder of the region's rich cultural heritage and

shared traditions.

Satish Sharma also ap-

preciated the enthusiasm

and devotion of the people

participating in the celebra-

tions.

The Minister reiterated his commitment to the welfare and development of all sections of society and

prayed for lasting peace, progress and prosperity in Jammu and Kashmir.

Lolab Winter Festival concludes with spectacular success at Kariwan

HIMALAYAN MAIL NEWS
JAMMU, FEB 15

The much-anticipated Lolab Winter Festival, staged at Kariwan in Devar Lolab, concluded with remarkable success today, attracting thousands of visitors and leaving an enduring impression on both residents and tourists alike.

The event celebrated the winter season, showcased the scenic splendor of Lolab Valley, highlighted local culture, and reinforced the region's emerging reputation as a premier winter tourism destination.

The festival was inaugurated by Deputy Commissioner Kupwara, Shrikant Suse in presence of SSP Kupwara, Syed Al-Tahir Gilani, SDM Lolab, Dr. Muaddass Ahmad Mir, District Officers, Officers from Army & Police and a huge gathering of people.

The event also witnessed the participation of Chairman DDC Kupwara, Irfan Sultan Panditpori; Vice Chairman DDC, Haji Farooq Ahmad Mir; Brigade Commander 8 Sector, Kunal Sharma; ADDC Kupwara, Mufi Fareed ud Din, ADC Kupwara, Gulzar Ahmad Khan and DDC Members.

Set against the backdrop of snow-clad vistas and pristine natural beauty, the Lolab Winter Festival featured mix of cultural, recreational, and adventure-oriented programmes designed to engage visitors of all ages. The event successfully blended traditional heritage with modern entertainment in an atmosphere of camaraderie and festivity.

Speaking at the event, the DC expressed his satisfaction with the turnout and community participation. He said, "The enthusiastic response and high turnout reflect the immense potential that Lolab Valley holds as a year-round tourism destination. This festival not only celebrates our culture and heritage but also promotes local talent and economic development."

The event witnessed the performance of famous singer, Shafi Sopori, enthralling folk music and dance shows brought to life the diverse traditions of Lolab and surrounding regions, resonating with both local and visiting audiences. The show also included singing performance by Khushnaseeb Bukhari who sang Pahari



and Punjabi songs with

remixes.

The event also witnessed

thrilling snow volleyball

championships and Tug of

War contests showcasing

winter sports spirit amidst

breathtaking landscapes.

Local craftsmen and arti-

sans displayed a vibrant as-

sortment of handmade

goods, handicrafts, and art-

works, underscoring the re-

gion's rich creative her-

itage.

The Lolab Winter Festi-

val has emerged as a key

milestone in the district's

tourism calendar, drawing

visitors from across the

region and generating eco-

nomic activity for local

businesses, vendors, and

hospitality services. Locals

expressed hope that such

large-scale events will

continue to unlock new op-

portunities for youth, artisans,

and small enterprises.

Meanwhile, the DC in-

spected the stalls, estab-

lished by various line de-

partments showcasing

their products and

schemes. He enquired

about the progress and

achievements of the de-

partments in covering the

schemes.

Meanwhile, the DC in-

spected the stalls, estab-

lished by various line de-

partments showcasing

their products and

schemes. He enquired

about the progress and

achievements of the de-

partments in covering the

schemes.

Meanwhile, the DC in-

spected the stalls, estab-

lished by various line de-

partments showcasing

their products and

schemes. He enquired

about the progress and

achievements of the de-

partments in covering the

schemes.

Meanwhile, the DC in-

spected the stalls, estab-

lished by various line de-

partments showcasing

their products and

schemes. He enquired

about the progress and

achievements of the de-

partments in covering the

schemes.

Meanwhile, the DC in-

spected the stalls, estab-

lished by various line de-

partments showcasing

their products and

schemes. He enquired

about the progress and

achievements of the de-

partments in covering the

schemes.

Meanwhile, the DC in-

spected the stalls, estab-

lished by various line de-

partments showcasing

their products and

schemes. He enquired

about the progress and

achievements of the de-

partments in covering the

schemes.

Meanwhile, the DC in-

spected the stalls, estab-

lished by various line de-