*Usual rush missing at Canal Road Mela*

# Baisakhi celebrated with religious fervour, gaiety across J&K

*Excelsior Correspondent*

JAMMU, Apr 13: Baisakhi marking the begining of Hindu and Sikh new year and also celebrated as Foundation Day of Khalsa Panth as well as harvesting of crop has remained a low key affair in the Jammu region today due to COVID pandemic as usual rush and festivity was missing.

However the **Gurudwaras across the Jammu region** were fully decorated and illuminated by the members of Sikh community and there was a good rush of devotees to pay the obeisance and participate in the celebrations.

There was no usual hustle and bustle at **Rajinder Parak Canal Road** where a Baisakhi mela is held every year and huge rush of participants was witnessed. The authorities did not allow the installation of stalls in the morning and the hawkers who had come near Rajinder Park were not allowed to install their stalls in view of COVID restrictions and observance of SOPS.

The police men deployed in the area asked these hawkers to leave the area in view of the COVID restrictions.

However, a handful of hawkers selling balloons and toys later managed reach the venue of mela where there was no usual rush. It was for the second consecutive time this year when no hustle and bustle was seen at **Rajinder Park where the Baisakhi mela** is held every year for decades together.

Some youth and children had visited the Rajinder Park to take a dip in the cold water of Ranbir canal and beat the heat while a number of people with their families were seen busy in purchasing toys and balloons for their children. There were no food and tea stalls in the area as usual. It may be recalled that last year too no mela was observed at Canal near Rajinder Park due to lockdown and COVID restrictions.

The day was celebrated by **Sikh Community** with full religious fervour and gaiety across J&K. The Gurudwaras were illuminated befitting the occasion and Ragi Jathas recited Shabad Kirtan. The main programme was held in **Gurdwara Yaadgar Guru Nanak Dev Ji, Chand Nagar** here in which after Shri Akhand Path the Ragi Jathas performed Shabad Kirtan.

The functions were held in **Gurudwara Singh Sabha Nanak Nagar,** Gurudwara Baba Fateh Singh, Gandhi Nagar, Gurudwara Digiana Ashram, Gurudwara Shri Guru Kalgidar Rehari, Gurudwara Tali Sahib Talab Tillo and other Gurudwaras of Jammu. The Guru Ka Langer was also held in these Gurudwara on the occasion. The Ragi Jathas including Bhai Jagseer, Sarabjit Singh Noorpuri, Amrit Krishanpal Singh Patiala wale, Surinder Pal Singh, Ranjit Singh, Jagtar Singh, Tarvinder Singh recited Gurbani and made the atmosphere serene and religious.

*A view of Mela at Canal Road on Baisakhi.*

*- Excelsior/Rakesh*

In Kashmir the main programme was held at **Chhati Padshahi, Srinagar.** The programmes were held in Gurdwaras of Baramulla, Tral, Mattan and Anantnag where large number of devotees came for paying obeisance.

** Watch video on www.excelsiornews.com*

People held special prayers on the occasion to rid the country of the COVID pandemic and peace and prosperity.

The annual congregation of Baisakhi was held at historic **Dera Nangali Sahib Poonch** following strict COVID guidelines. A religious gathering was held at the Dera premises with a limited number of people due to ongoing pandemic scenario. Strict protocols were followed and people maintained Social distancing as instructed by administration in advance so as to avoid further outspread of COVID. However traditional 'Baisakhi Mela' was not organised this year due to Pandemic threat looming around.

**Spankh, (Ek Rachnatmak Udan) today celebrated Baisakhi and Navratra festival at Janipur Colony, Jammu**. Dr Rajni Kumari, Assistant Professor, Hindi, Government Degree College, Billawar was the chief guest and Dr Arvinder Singh Amn, Additional Secretary, J&K Academy of Art, Culture and Languages presided over the function.

Despite second wave of COVID hundreds of Nag devotees converged at ancient **Nagni Mata temple** on the occasion of Baisakhi today following the SOPS and COVID guidelines. special prayers were also held to get rid of COVID on the occasion.

**District administration Reasi** in collaboration with Tourism Department Jammu organized Baisakhi Festival at Dera Baba Banda Bahadur Shrine.

The Festival was celebrated with great fervour amid strict adherence to COVID-19 protocol and guidelines. Hundreds of devotees paid obeisance at the revered **Shrine of Dera Baba**-situated at approximately 30 km from the Katra town.

The devotees from across the UT and also from neighboring states of Punjab and Haryana visited the **Dera Baba Banda Bahadur Shrine** on the occasion of Baisakhi Festival.

# LG pays obeisance at Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine

*Excelsior Correspondent*

KATRA, Apr 13: Lieutenant Governor, Manoj Sinha, who is also the Chairman of Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine Board, visited the Holy Shrine of Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Ji today on the auspicious occasion of the commencement of Navratras and paid obeisance at the sanctum sanctorum.

***Lieutenant Governor, Manoj Sinha paying obeisance at the Holy Shrine of Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Ji on the commencement of Navratras.***

He prayed for sustained peace, progress and prosperity in Jammu & Kashmir and welfare of its people.

During his visit, the Lieutenant Governor was accompanied by BVR Subrahmanyam, Chief Secretary and Ramesh Kumar, Chief Executive Officer, Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine Board.

While reviewing the ongoing infrastructural development projects in the Shrine area, the Lieutenant Governor directed the CEO Shrine Board for ensuring expeditious completion of all the development works for further augmentation of the facilities for the visiting pilgrims.

The CEO briefed the Lt Governor in regard to the special arrangements which have been made by the Shrine Board for the pilgrims visiting the holy Shrine during the ongoing Navratras.

## Sinha extends greetings on Ambedkar Jayanti

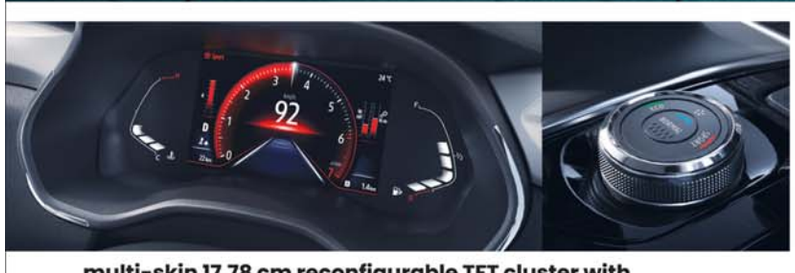
*Excelsior Correspondent*

JAMMU, Apr 13: Lieutenant Governor, Manoj Sinha has extended his greetings to the people on the eve of birth anniversary of Bharat Ratna Dr. Bhimrao Ramji Ambedkar.

In his message, the Lt Governor observed that Dr. Ambedkar is the epitome of selfless service who dedicated his entire life for upholding the values of social justice and equality, and securing rights of the deprived sections of the society.

Remembering the immense contribution of the father of Indian constitution, the Lt Governor said that the virtues of liberty, equality and fraternity were held supreme by Dr. Bhimrao Ramji Ambedkar and his values still guide us.

"I urge the people, especially the younger generation, to take inspiration from the life of Baba Saheb Bhimrao and dedicate themselves towards the service of humanity. Let us all take a pledge to perform our fundamental duties with greater responsibility and work together in creating an ideal society which is fair, just, and without discrimination, where balanced representation of all the sections lead to holistic development", said the Lt Governor.



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