

Mission Shakti: U.P. govt's mega push to women empowerment

This Navratri, temples engaged as platforms to spread awareness on education, outreach, gender equality, safety and opportunities for women

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LUCKNOW: The UP government is organising a slew of events across 18 temples in the state as part of a major push for Mission Shakti, with renewed focus on women's empowerment this Navratri.

In sync with chief minister Yogi Adityanath's vision, the department of culture is spearheading programmes not only at Shakti Peeths, but also at other key temples aiming to promote

KEY TEMPLES HOSTING THESE EVENTS

- Maa Pateshwari Temple, Devipatan, Balrampur
- Shitla Mata Temple, Mainpuri
- Vaishno Devi Temple, Firozabad
- Kali Mata Temple, Jhansi
- Katyayani Shaktipeeth Temple, Vrindavan, Mathura
- Alopi Devi Temple, Prayagraj
- Vindhyavasini Shaktipeeth Temple, Mirzapur
- Naimisharanya, Sitapur
- Gorakhpur Temple, Gorakhpur
- Chandrika Devi Temple, Lucknow
- Kali Bari Temple, Lucknow
- Other major temples in Ayodhya, Varanasi, and Chitrakoot

social and economic uplift of women and blending cultural traditions with the government's efforts in this regard.

As part of the initiative, temples are engaged as platforms to spread awareness about empowerment, educational outreach, gender equality, safety, and opportunities for women.

From the government's perspective, it also serves as a strategic outreach towards women voters, particularly in the light of upcoming elections.

Engaging temples reflects a move to blend cultural and religious sentiments with the broader political goal of securing support from women, while simultaneously promoting their role in society.

Renu Rang Bharti, assistant director, department of culture, said: "On the occasion of Shar-

adiya Navratri, a series of cultural programmes, including Devi Gayan, Durga Saptashati Paath, Akhand Ramayan Paath, and tableaux, are being organized at various Devi temples and Shakti Peeths across UP. These events are part of the larger Shakti Mahotsav celebration, which will feature devotional songs and folk dances centered around the tradition of Devi worship at 18 prominent Shakti Peeth sites in the state."

Minister of culture Jaiveer Singh said broader cultural activities are also taking place. In Mission Shakti 5.0, six divisions of the state will host exhibitions, showcasing ancient statues of Goddess Durga and other deities.

A booklet based on these exhibits will be published. The State Archives will also organize exhibition focused on women's laws and empowerment.

Eight workshops across will be held across the state to pro-

mote artistic skills among women and girls, covering activities like folk singing, rangoli, sculpture making, and painting from October 15 to December 31, he added.

Efforts will be made to document traditional folk songs, folk dramas, and tribal arts, with focus on women's empowerment.

These will be archived and published. Five seminars will be held in collaboration with the higher education department, focusing on women's safety and empowerment, from ancient to modern times.

A three-day conference honouring 151 women from across the country will be held in Prayagraj and Noida, besides seminars and literature on women's empowerment in other parts of state.

Ten divisions of the state will host cultural programmes, where women artistes will perform, highlighting issues related to women and girls.