

RUN-UP TO RAM TEMPLE INAUGURAL

Preparations for Ayodhya a blessing for religious goods

ARCHIS MOHAN
New Delhi, 9 January

The Sangh Parivar and dozens of its affiliates are devoting themselves to urging Hindus across India to celebrate January 22, the day Prime Minister Narendra Modi will consecrate the Ram temple in Ayodhya, as a "national festival". They are exhorting people to watch the live telecast of the ceremony on television, visit nearby temples to light lamps, and take part in "shobha yatras" or processions planned for the day in their localities. On Tuesday, the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP)-ruled Uttar Pradesh became the first state in the country to declare January 22 a holiday for schools and colleges. UP and some other BJP state governments have announced that the sale of alcohol and meat will not be permitted on the day. The Vishva Hindu Parishad (VHP) has asked Hindus living abroad to visit temples on the day.

The event is set to have economic spinoffs, with the sale of religious merchandise reporting an increase. Manufacturers of brass artefacts in Uttar Pradesh's Moradabad, called the "brass city", have reported receiving demands for statues of Ram and Sita. In Delhi's Sadar Bazar, the national capital's wholesale hub, traders say models of the Ram temple, saffron flags depicting the shrine and related "gift items" were the flavour of the season and competing with tricolour sales for Republic Day.

Praveen Khandelwal, general secretary of the Confederation of All India Traders, said the Ram temple's construction and forthcoming consecration had spawned "business prospects of millions of rupees, especially benefitting small manufacturers, traders and cottage industries".

"Manufacturers and traders of Ram temple models, photographs, brass artefacts and gift items made of cardboard and pine wood have seen a sharp increase in sales," he said, adding that printers of religious literature, banners, flags and tees, and even the music industry had benefited.

In the national capital, resident



Devotees take part in a *padyatra*, taken out from Vadnagar in Gujarat to Ayodhya, as it passes through Lucknow on Tuesday

TEMPLE RUN

- Uttar Pradesh CM Yogi Adityanath orders closure of schools and colleges on Jan 22, urges people to celebrate the day as a 'national festival'
- Sangh Parivar workers taking out *prabhat pheris*, or morning rounds, in localities
- Moradabad brass industry sees increase in demand for statues
- In Delhi's Sadar Bazar, sale of religious merchandise rivals that of tricolour for Republic Day
- RWAs, market bodies book tents, sound systems and LED walls in Delhi for live telecast of consecration
- *Shobha yatra* to begin from Jan 16

welfare associations and market bodies are in a rush to rent LED video walls to install in housing societies, markets and public places for devotees to watch the live telecast of the consecration ceremony.

According to Virender Babbar, who heads the Delhi Sound and Light Welfare Association, the demand for sound systems, tents, LED walls and even "wedding brass bands" had gone up.

"We estimate events will be organised in 15,000 temples across Delhi and another 10,000 or so in markets and localities. The BJP's block committees have booked sound systems, LED walls, and tents since it is the winter season. *Shobha yatra* are likely to start from January 16 and the BJP has hired brass bands for these," Babbar told *Business Standard*.

He, however, wondered whether January 22 might take away from the enthusiasm usually reserved for the Republic Day celebrations on January 26. "So far, the bookings for sound systems for January 26 are not as much as those for January 22."

According to a VHP leader, the outfit has appealed to Hindus worldwide, especially in countries that

allow religious freedom, to celebrate January 22 by visiting temples. *PTI* reported that members of the Hindu American community held a car rally across Houston on Sunday, stopping at 11 temples along the way amid *bhajan*s and "Jai Shri Ram" slogans.

The temples received a formal invitation from the Vishva Hindu Parishad of America to attend the consecration ceremony. Over 500 riders, carrying saffron banners with an image of the Ram temple, and the Indian and American flags, participated in the rally forming a 3-mile stream of 216 cars escorted by eight police officers on bikes.

"We are blessed to be living in this time and to be celebrating the return of Shri Ram to Ayodhya," said Umang Mehta, one of the organisers.

On Tuesday, UP Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath became the latest among the Sangh Parivar leadership to encourage people to celebrate January 22 as a "national festival", announcing that schools and colleges in the state would remain shut. "Considering the significance of the consecration ceremony of the eagerly awaited new idol of Shri Ram Lalla in Ayodhya Dham, the CM has declared

a holiday in educational institutions on January 22," an official release said.

For the convenience of tourists visiting Ayodhya, the CM instructed the administration to install multilingual signage across the city, including in all languages from the 8th Schedule of the Constitution and the six official languages of the United Nations.

He also directed officials to inscribe verses from the *Ramcharitmanas* on the highways from Lucknow, Prayagraj and Gorakhpur leading up to Ayodhya. More than 500 social media influencers will undertake a month-long 4,500 km *yatra* tracing the route taken by Lord Ram to return to Ayodhya from Tamil Nadu after the end of his exile. The Ramotsav Yatra will traverse Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh.

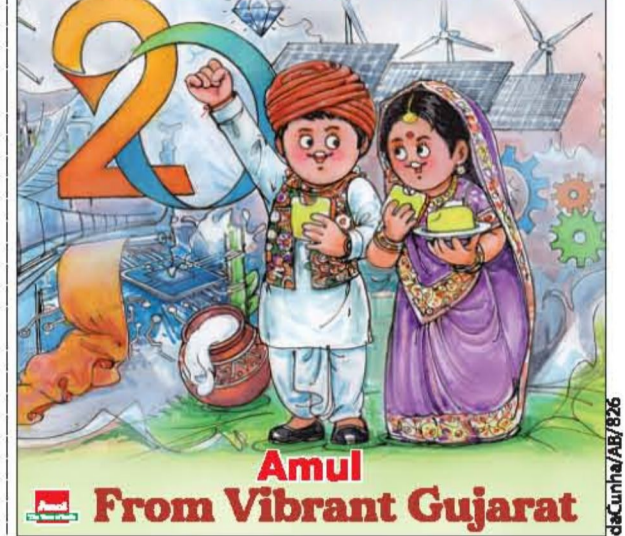
In West Bengal, at a public programme at Joy Nagar in South 24 Parganas on Tuesday, Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee said the BJP was indulging in a "gimmick show" through the inauguration of the Ram Mandir in Ayodhya ahead of the Lok Sabha polls. She said that "she does not support festivities that exclude other communities".

Delhi HC permits PepsiCo to claim patent for chips

The Delhi High Court on Tuesday ruled that PepsiCo can claim a patent for the potato variety grown for its potato chips. The Division Bench thus set aside the single judge order of July 5 last year dismissing Pepsi's appeal against an order that revoked the company's patent-protected potato variety used for making chips. Pepsi had filed an appeal under the Protection of Plant Varieties and Farmers' Rights Act, 2001 (the Act) challenging the December 3, 2021, order of the Protection of Plant Varieties and Farmers Rights Authority (the Authority) in the Delhi High Court.

BHAVINI MISHRA

Bees saal aabaad!



64/Comha/AB/826

RASHID KHAN 1968-2024

Maestro leaves behind a rich legacy in Hindustani music

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
Kolkata, 9 January

Classical singer Ustad Rashid Khan, aged 55, passed away in a city hospital on Tuesday after valiantly battling cancer for over four years. The maestro, who is survived by his son, two daughters and wife, left an enduring legacy with soul-stirring notes, his melodious voice echoing through time with an indelible imprint on the rich heritage of Hindustani music.

Possibly the last living legend of Rampur Sahaswan *gayaki* (style of singing), Rashid Khan (pictured) was recognised as the 31st generation of Sangeet Samrat Mian Tansen, as detailed on his official website.

Known for his mastery in the "Vilambit Khayal" *gayaki*, he captivated millions of Hindustani vocal classical music enthusiasts for more than three decades.

Born in Badayun, Uttar Pradesh, his initial training was under his maternal grand-uncle, Ustad Nissar Hussain Khan. In April 1980, he relocated to Kolkata at the age of 10 when Nissar Hussain Khan moved there with his grandfather. Rashid Khan's debut concert took place when he was just 11, and by 1994, he had gained recognition as a musician.

While demonstrating a shared mastery of instrumental stroke-based styles, reminiscent of Nissar Hussain's renown, Rashid Khan gravitated towards the *khayal* style, presenting it in a manner uniquely his own.

While excelling in Hindustani vocals, Rashid




WIKIMEDIA COMMONS

Khan also showcased his proficiency in playback music, lending his voice to hits in films such as *My Name is Khan* (2010), *Jab We Met* (2007) and *Manto* (2018).

Rashid Khan was recognised for his innovative approach, blending Hindustani vocals with genres like Sufi and collaborating with Western instrumentalist icon Louis Banks. He engaged in *jugalbandis* with sitar artist Shahid Parvez.

Apart from Padma Shri and Padma Bhushan awards, Rashid Khan was conferred with the West Bengal government's state honour, Bangabhusan, in 2012.

#BSMorningShow



In focus

How can Lakshadweep trump Maldives?



Today's Special

What will be the significance of India's first AI city?



Market Insight

Is geopolitics the unknown risk for the markets?


BEST BUSINESS PROGRAMME (GOLD)
at afaqs! 'The Future of News' Awards

The Business Standard MORNING SHOW

Mon - Fri | 8am

Get the answers in today's episode

Visit mybs.in/MorningShow or scan this code to watch.



businessstandard
 bsindia
 business.standard
business-standard.com

TEAMMARKSMEN

MARKSMEN DAILY
MOST PREFERRED BRANDS 2023
3rd EDITION

A multi-lens approach to building differentiated brands

RECOGNISING THOSE CRAFTING ELEVATED BRAND EXPERIENCES

Celebrating standout brands that are a beacon of trust, purpose, and resonance in an evolving and dynamic marketplace. The pantheon of brands recognised include:

Presented by **MARKSMEN DAILY** | Telecast Partner **TIMES NOW** | Magazine partner **in Focus** | Media partner **Business Standard Insight Out** | Research partner **LeadCap Ventures** | Brought to you by **TEAMMARKSMEN**

UPCOMING EVENTS

 22nd March 2024 Mumbai	 22nd March 2024 Mumbai	 05th April 2024 Bengaluru	 25th April 2024 Mumbai
-------------------------------	-------------------------------	----------------------------------	-------------------------------

ENQUIRE NOW

contact@teammarksmen.com | +91 99607 30059 | www.teammarksmen.com