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Ministry of Jal Shakti



Union Minister Shri C.R. Patil Highlights Prime Minister's Commitment to Ganga Conservation while inaugurating Ganga Utsav 2024 at Haridwar

Minister of State Shri Raj Bhushan Choudhary underscores Ganga Utsav's role in promoting conservation and reverence for Maa Ganga

Ganga Utsav is Organized by NMCG to Celebrate Ganga River's National Status and Promote Conservation Efforts

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Union Minister for Jal Shakti Shri C R Patil inaugurates Ganga Utsav 2024 at Chandi Ghat in Haridwar today in august presence of Minister of State for Jal Shakti Shri Raj Bhushan Chaudhary and Uttarakhand Minister for Women & Child Welfare Smt. Rekha Arya. The Secretary of the Ministry of Jal Shakti, Mrs. Debashree Mukherjee was also present on the occasion. Ganga Utsav 2024 is organised by the National Mission for Clean Ganga (NMCG) to mark the anniversary of declaring the Ganga River as the National River. The primary aim of this festival is to promote the conservation of the Ganga River, emphasize its cultural and spiritual importance, and raise public awareness about cleanliness. This eighth edition of the event was the first to be held on the riverbank, with celebrations extending across 139 districts in the Ganga basin states. Each state hosted a main event organized by District Ganga Committees.



Speaking on the occasion, Union Minister for Jal Shakti Shri C R Patil shared the Prime Minister's message that the Ganga benefits 600 million people of this country and revered as a mother, it gives selflessly without taking. Sh. Patil emphasized that revering rivers as mothers is deeply rooted in our culture and conserving the river is a noble initiative that we all must ensure. Shri Patil recalled that, upon becoming Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi expressed that "Maa Ganga has called me." Since then, the Prime Minister has shown unwavering commitment to raising awareness and rallying public support for the conservation of Maa Ganga.

Union Minister Shri Patil noted that Prime Minister's *Jal Sanchay, Jan Bhagidari* initiative has gained widespread support, with people actively participating in the cause. Rainwater harvesting structures are being constructed across states to store water. He emphasized that *Jan Samarthan* (public support) is essential for conserving Maa Ganga, as it requires a collective, holistic effort from everyone.



Sh. Patil also interacted and had a discussion with spiritual leaders and gurus present in the Utsav under a session titled Ganga Samvad. Speaking at the session, Sh. Patil emphasized for river conservation and rejuvenation and urged everyone to spread awareness about this to save Maa Ganga. Sh. Patil flagged off Ganga Women Rafting Expedition. The 50-day long expedition will conclude at Ganga Sagar traversing through 9 major cities & towns across the Ganga River. This historic expedition will coincide with various activities organized across several districts in the five key states of the Ganga basin. He also felicitated BSF River Rafting team on the occasion.





Speaking at the event, Union Minister of State for Jal Shakti, Shri Raj Bhushan Choudhary, highlighted that Ganga Utsav is a unique festival dedicated to river conservation, with many activities planned to promote the conservation and cleanliness of the Ganga. He emphasized that rivers are not just sources of water but are also sacred and deeply significant, especially Maa Ganga, which unites us all. He affirmed that, under Prime Minister Narendra Modi's leadership, efforts are underway to ensure the cleanliness and conservation of Maa Ganga.



Sh. Raj Bhushan Chaudhary said that through the Namami Gange initiative, ₹7,144 crore has been sanctioned in Bihar for 39 Sewage Treatment Plants (STPs), with 17 already completed. Conservation efforts are also focused on Ganga's tributaries. These projects are essential for

conserving Maa Ganga, a river with rich historical and cultural significance and help in driving national development through conservation of rivers, he added.

Chief Minister of Uttarakhand, Shri Pushkar Singh Dhami had also conveyed through Video message for conservation of Maa Ganga.

Union Minister of State Shri Raj Bhushan Choudhary flagged off National Book Trust (NBT) Bus as part of Ganga Utsav 2024. The NBT bus with literature regarding river Ganga carries out 'Ganga Pustak Parikrama' with the theme 'Ganges through the ages: A Literary Bioscope'. The bus will travel through major 10 cities in the 5 riparian states along the Ganga River basin.



This year's event saw participation from several river cities under the River City Alliance, an organization that now includes 145 river cities nationwide. The alliance's main objective is to promote healthy urban rivers through an integrated approach to river-sensitive urban planning. This approach aims for pollution-free, continuously flowing rivers that are cherished by all, contributing to water-secure cities and fostering inclusive, sustainable urban development. The festival serves as a key platform to underscore the cultural and spiritual importance of rivers in our society.

The festival featured a "Ghat Par Haat" market along with stalls from local departments to highlight various aspects of the Namami Gange initiative. A range of engaging activities for children, including quizzes, film screenings, magic shows, puppet shows, and drawing and painting competitions, promoted their involvement in river conservation. Additionally, *Nukkad Nataks* (street plays) focused on raising awareness about river conservation among the youth. The event also included an exhibition on Namami Gange, showcasing the diverse facets of this important initiative.

Minister of State for Jal Shakti, Shri Raj Bhushan Choudhary and other dignitaries also participated in Ganga Arti at Haridwar.

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