



## **Press Release**

### **Uttarakhand tourism welcomes you to celebrate Shivratri at the revered 24 temples of Uttarakhand**

Devotees celebrate the union of Lord Shiva and Parvati as Maha Shivratri. The festival of Maha Shivratri will be celebrated across the country on 01 March. Lakhs of devotees visit various temples of Mahadev in Uttarakhand to receive the blessings of the God of Gods.

Uttarakhand Tourism Department has shortlisted 24 Shiva temples from Garhwal and Kumaon region of Uttarakhand under the religious 'Shaiv Circuit' for the devotees visiting Uttarakhand from India and abroad. Lord Shiva resides in these 24 temples in Devbhoomi, Uttarakhand and devotees can spiritually conduct the rituals with complete devotion here.

Devbhoomi Uttarakhand has been called the land of Lord Shiva. It is said that Lord Shiva resides in Kailash, Kankhal and Himalayas all of which is present in Uttarakhand. Even today, Lord Shiva is the deity of Uttarakhand in various forms.

Additional Director Tourism, Uttarakhand Vivek Chauhan said "Lord Shiva resides in various forms in the temples of Uttarakhand. On the auspicious occasion of Shivratri, I request the devotees to visit various temples of Lord Shiva in Uttarakhand and gain virtuous profit from the same. Uttarakhand government welcomes every shiva devotee coming to Uttarakhand. This Shivratri will also host the first Shahi Snan for Kumbh Mela at Haridwar."

Secretary Tourism, Uttarakhand Mr. Dilip Jawalkar said “ We welcome all the Shiva devotees visiting the temples of Uttarakhand on the auspicious occasion of Maha Shivratri. These temples apart from being religiously rich are also serving as the source of economy for the people. The financial stability of thousands of people are connected directly or indirectly with these temples.”

In order to promote the religious tourism in the state, 12 temples from Garhwal region and 12 from the Kumaon region has been included in the ‘Shaiv Circuit’.

Ancient 12 temples of Garhwal region:

1. Ekeshwar Mahadev, Pauri – This temple is one of the famous and important Siddhpeeths dedicated to Lord Shiva. Temples belonging to Vaishno Devi and Bhairavnath ji is also included in the premise. Ekeshwar Mahadev is also known as 'Igasar Mahadev' in the regional language.
2. Kedarnath, Rudraprayag – Situated at an elevation of about 3584m from sea level at the banks of river Mandakini is the revered Kedarnath temple which is also known as Shiva’s Dham. It is also one amongst the 12 jyotirlingas dedicated to Lord Shiva
3. Madhmaheshwar, Ukhimath – Situated at an elevation of about 9700 feet from sea level, this temple is located 30 km from Ukhimath. Famously known as Panchkedar, Madhmaheshwar is the second holy kedar out of the 5 dhams of Lord Shiva. Here the navel of Lord Shiva is worshipped
4. Tungnath, Chopta – The third Kedar Tungnath temple of the Panchkedars, is situated at an elevation of 12070 feet from sea level. The arms of Lord Shiva are worshipped in Tungnath temple. A Ravan Shila is also located near the temple. According to popular belief, Raavan worshipped Lord Shiva in this Shila.
5. Rudranath, Chamoli - Ekanan or face of Lord Shiva is worshipped in Rudranath in the form of Chaturth Kedar. The ‘Rudra’ avtar of Lord Shiva is worshipped here. The temple is surrounded by kunds on all three sides like Suryakund, Chandrakund, Tarakund and Manaskund.

6. Koteshwar Mahadev, Tehri - Koteshwar Mahadev is located on the banks of river Bhagirathi at Chaka in Tehri. The temple also includes a self made 'Bhoo shivling'. Childless couples get the blessings of Lord Shiva here and their wishes gets fulfilled

7. Kaashi Vishwnath, Uttarkashi – Vishwnath temple or Kaashi Vishwnath is one of the oldest and ancient Hindu temples of Lord Shiva. The temple was constructed over 150 years back at the banks of Bhagirathi river. According to historical and religious significance, this temple is a symbol of meditation and peace.

8. Daksh Prajapati, Haridwar – Daksh temple situated in Kankhal of Haridwar district is an important pilgrimage centre dedicated to Lord Shiva. Kankhal is also famous as in laws house of Lord Shiva. It is believed that Daksh Prajapati, father of Sati performed a havan at this place.

9. Shiv Mandir, Timmersen, Chamoli - A natural Shivalinga is created in this spiritual cave of Timmersen Mahadev. Locals of the area visit the temple to worship shivlinga and pay their respects. This temple is located 700 metres from the last village Niti valley

10. Binsar Temple, Pauri – This temple of Lord Shiva is also known as Bindeshwar temple. It is believed that this temple was made by Maharaja Prithvi in remembrance of his father Bindu. A fair is also organized in the temple every year on the occasion of 'Vaikund Chaturdashi' and 'Kartik Purnima'

11. Taadkeshwar Temple, Lansdowne – This is one of the religious centre dedicated to Lord Shiva in Lansdowne area. It is one of the holy siddhpeeths

12. Lakhamandal Temple, Dehradun – Lakhamandal Shiv temple is situated at Lakhamandal, near by to Dehradun. It is believed that a Laakshagrah was created here during the Mahabharat era by Kauravas to kill Pandavas. Yuddhisthir established a Shivling at this place which is also present at the temple, popularly known as Mahamuddheswar

Ancient 12 temples of Kumaon region:

1. Jaageshwar Mahadev, Almora – Located at a distance of 38 km from Almora, Jaageshwar Mahadev is an important religious and natural tourist centre. According to popular beliefs and Ling Puraan, Jaageshwar dham is one amongst the 12 jyotirlingas established by Lord Vishnu. This is one of the traditional dham of Shaivism

2. Binsar Mahadev, Ranikhet - This temple dedicated to Lord Shiva was constructed in the 10th century. Inlaid with statues of Hindu deities in the form of Maheshmardini, Har Gauri and Ganesha, the architecture of this temple is magnificent. Binsar Mahadev Temple is popular for its archaeological importance and flora. This temple is located at a distance of about 20 km from Ranikhet

3. Kapileshwar Temple, Almora – Kapileshwar Shiv temple is located at a distance of 12 km from Almora. This temple is considered as one of the grand temples of Uttarakhand. The special attraction of this temple is its ornate creations and the height of the temple is estimated to be about 37 feet.

4. Patal Bhubaneshwar, Pithoragarh – The Patal Bhubaneshwar cave situated at Gangolihat, Pithoragarh is magnificent. According to the traditional Skand

Purana each stone craft present at the Paatal Bhubaneshwar cave holds a lot of secrets. The stream of water in this cave continuously anoints the Shivlinga.

5. Thalkedar temple, Pithoragarh - Situated at an elevation of about 2000 feet, this temple is located at Thalkedar hills. This temple is famous for its Shivling which is believed to be thousands of years old. This is one of the revered religious temple which is situated 16 kms from Pithoragarh.

6. Bagnath Temple, Bageshwar – This temple is famous as the Byagreshwar or Bagnath temple. It is also known as the Kaashi of Uttarakhand. The premise of Bagnath temple includes statues of Uma-Mahesh, Vishnu, Parvati, Surya, Dashavtar Patt, Chaturmukh Shivling, Ganesh, Kartikey from 6th,7th to 10th ,11th centuries.

7. Kranteshwar Mahadev, Champawat – Kranteshwar Mahadev temple is situated at Koorm hills of Champawat district. According to historians, the name of the Kumaon region has been taken from Kurm hills. This temple is also famous for its unique architecture. The locals of the place address the Kranteshwar Mahadev as KandeV and Kurmapad.

8. Risheshwar Mahadev, Champawat - This temple of Lord Shiva situated on the banks of the Champawat-Lohawati river was once a halt to the Kailas Mansarovar Yatra. Risheshwar Mahadev Temple is a major centre of faith for the people of Lohaghat. A visit to Lohaghat is considered incomplete without the visit to Risheshwar Mahadev

9. Siddha Narsingh Temple, Champawat – Situated at an elevation of 2050 metre above sea level, devotees visit the Siddh Narsingh temple all around the year. Though there is a crowd of devotees in the Siddha Narasimha temple at all times, but a huge crowd of devotees can be seen here at the time of Navratri.

10. Bhimeshwar Mahadev temple, Bhimtal – Bhimeshwar Mahadev temple is located at Bhimtal, Nainital at the banks of Bhimtal lake. Located at 22 kms ahead of Nainital, the devotees offer milk and water to the Shivling situated at the temple on the occasion of Shivratri. It is believed that this temple was established by Pandavas

11. Mukteshwar Temple, Nainital – Mukteshwar temple is situated at the hills of Mukteshwar from ancient times. The temple is designed in Katyuri style and the devotees offer milk and water to the shivling at the time of Shivratri

12. Moteshwar Mahadev, Uddhamsinghnagar – It is one of the ancient temple since Mahabharat era and is one of the 12th up jyotirling. Due to the thickness of the shivling present here, it is known as Moteshwar Mahadev. In the Skanda Purana, it is believed that a devotee who puts water from the holy ganges at the temple will get salvation.