

REPRESENTATIVE LIST OF THE INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE OF HUMANITY

**Deadline: 31 March 2024
for possible inscription in 2025**

*Instructions for completing the form are available at:
<https://ich.unesco.org/en/forms>*

A. State Party or States Parties

India

B. Name of the element

B.1. Name of the element in the languages and scripts of the community(ies) concerned

Bhairav Dev Jhanki: भैरव यात्रा (Bhairav Yatra) A Unique Holi Celebration in Rajouri, Jammu and Kashmir organised by people from all the communities.

B.2. Name of the element in English

(Bhairav Yatra of Rajouri) **Bhairav Dev Jhanki in Rajouri, Jammu and Kashmir.**

C. Name of the communities, groups or individuals concerned

The Yatra is practiced and preserved by the local Hindu communities of Rajouri district in Jammu & Kashmir, particularly the Bhairav Devotees' Groups (Yatra Committees), temple

priests, and traditional performers and also Muslims, Sikhs all other communities living in the areas of Rajouri, Jammu and Kashmir.

1. General information about the element

For **Criterion R.1**, States **shall demonstrate that ‘the element constitutes intangible cultural heritage** as defined in Article 2 of the Convention’.

1.1. Provide a brief description of the element that can introduce it to readers who have never seen or experienced it.

Not to exceed 200 words

The Bhairav Yatra of Rajouri is an annual pilgrimage and folk procession celebrated around the Hindu festival of Holi. This vibrant and ancient practice involves thousands of devotees undertaking a journey to the sacred Bhairav temple located atop a hill near Rajouri town. The Yatra features traditional music, drumming, ritual dances, and a communal display of devotion, with participants dressed in ceremonial attire. The event holds great spiritual significance for the local community, honoring Lord Bhairav—a fierce manifestation of Lord Shiva. Believed to be centuries old, the Yatra is not only a religious observance but also a social and cultural gathering that unites diverse groups from across the region.

1.2. Who are the bearers and practitioners of the element? Are there any specific roles, including gender-related ones or categories of persons with special responsibilities for the practice and transmission of the element? If so, who are they and what are their responsibilities?

Not to exceed 100 words

The main bearers are local Hindu devotees, especially elders and priests who lead rituals, youth volunteers who organize logistics, and folk artists who perform. Women play key roles in preparing offerings, and temple custodians maintain oral traditions.

1.3. How are the knowledge and skills related to the element transmitted today?

Not to exceed 100 words

Knowledge is passed down through oral narratives, devotional songs, and family traditions. Youngsters learn by participating alongside elders. Community elders and temple priests ensure the rituals are performed accurately every year.

1.4. What social functions and cultural meanings does the element have nowadays for the communities concerned?

Not to exceed 100 words

The Yatra fosters communal harmony, spiritual renewal, and cultural continuity. It is a powerful symbol of identity for the Rajouri community and brings together people of all ages and backgrounds.

1.5. Can the State Party or States Parties confirm that nothing in the element is incompatible with existing international human rights instruments?

Not to exceed 50 words

Yes, the Bhairav Yatra respects all international human rights standards and is inclusive in practice..

1.6. Can the State Party or States Parties confirm that nothing in the element could be perceived as not compatible with the requirement of mutual respect among communities, groups and individuals?

Not to exceed 50 words

Yes, the Yatra is celebrated peacefully and promotes mutual respect across communities..

- 1.7. Can the State Party or States Parties confirm that nothing in the element could be perceived as not compatible with the requirement of sustainable development?

Not to exceed 50 words

Yes, the Yatra aligns with sustainable development by preserving traditional knowledge and promoting community-based cultural tourism.

- 1.8. Are there customary practices governing access to the element? If yes, describe any specific measures that are in place to ensure their respect.

Not to exceed 100 words

The Yatra is open to all, though certain rituals at the sanctum are led exclusively by temple priests. Participants follow customary codes of behavior and dress. Community volunteers ensure respectful participation.

- 1.9. Audiovisual materials about the element

- ☐ 10 recent photographs in high definition are submitted
- ☐ Form ICH-07-photo is attached to grant rights for the 10 photos submitted
- ☐ A video is submitted
- ☐ Form ICH-07-video is attached to grant rights for the video submitted



2. Contribution to visibility, awareness, dialogue and sustainable development

For **Criterion R.2**, the States **shall demonstrate that ‘Inscription of the element will contribute to ensuring visibility and awareness of the significance of the intangible cultural heritage and to encouraging dialogue, thus reflecting cultural diversity worldwide and testifying to human creativity’**. In addition, States are encouraged, with reference to Chapter VI of the Operational Directives, to recognize the interdependence between the safeguarding of intangible cultural heritage and sustainable development.

Given its extensive nature, criterion R.2 will be assessed based on the information provided in the nomination file as a whole including the answers provided in this section.

Do communities concerned consider that the element contributes to the following?

- ☐ Food security
- ☐ Health care
- ☐ Quality education
- ☐ Gender equality
- ☐ Inclusive economic development
- ☐ Environmental sustainability including climate change
- ☐ Peace and social cohesion
- ☐ Others (please specify):

Provide explanations in support of the statement(s) made above, as appropriate.

Not to exceed 200 words

The Bhairav Yatra significantly contributes to cultural visibility, intergenerational learning, and social cohesion in the Rajouri region. By involving community members of all ages in preparations, rituals, and performances, it ensures the transmission of traditional knowledge and values. Local schools often incorporate stories and themes from the Yatra in folk programs and debates, promoting quality education. Economically, the Yatra boosts local livelihoods through the sale of offerings, food, and traditional items. The event also fosters peace and social unity, as it transcends social divisions and strengthens communal identity. In recent years, there has been a growing emphasis on eco-friendly practices during the Yatra, such as minimizing plastic use and organizing cleanliness drives at the hill shrine. As a vibrant expression of living heritage, the Bhairav Yatra reflects human creativity and the cultural diversity of Jammu & Kashmir, while offering a sustainable model for heritage-based rural development.

States are encouraged to submit audiovisual materials that convey the communities' voice in support of the statements made above.

- ☐ Materials (written, audio-visual or any other way) are submitted

3. Safeguarding measures

For **Criterion R.3**, States **shall demonstrate that ‘safeguarding measures are elaborated that may protect and promote the element’**.

What safeguarding measures are put in place to protect and promote the element? Include in your answer the communities' role in the planning and implementation of measures described.

Not to exceed 500 words

The Bhairav Yatra is safeguarded through a combination of community-driven initiatives, local government support, and cultural awareness programs. The primary custodians of the Yatra are community-based Yatra Committees and temple authorities who annually organize and supervise the rituals and procession. These committees play a crucial role in maintaining the authenticity of the tradition and ensuring participation across all age groups.

Transmission is sustained through active involvement of youth in event organization, musical performances, and ritual preparation. Elders and priests share oral histories and guide new generations in understanding the spiritual and cultural significance of the Yatra. Local schools occasionally host folk performances and storytelling sessions to introduce children to this heritage.

The Rajouri district administration supports the Yatra by facilitating logistics, ensuring public safety, and promoting the event through its cultural calendar. In collaboration with the Department of Culture, awareness campaigns and documentation efforts have been initiated, including photography, video archiving, and community interviews.

Efforts are also underway to adopt environmentally responsible practices. Volunteers conduct pre- and post-Yatra cleanliness drives, and awareness about reducing plastic use and preserving the natural landscape of the hill shrine is emphasized.

The community's active role is central to all safeguarding efforts, ensuring that the Yatra continues to thrive as a dynamic and inclusive expression of Rajouri's intangible heritage.

4. Community participation in the nomination process and consent

For Criterion R.4, States shall demonstrate that 'the element has been nominated following the widest possible participation of the community, group or, if applicable, individuals concerned and with their free, prior and informed consent'.

4.1. Describe how the communities, groups or individuals concerned have actively participated in all stages of the preparation of the nomination.

Not to exceed 300 words

People from all the communities and especially the members of Bhairo Committee were actively participating in this nomination preparation and other due process.

☐ Consent (written, audio-visual or any other way) to the nomination of the element from the communities, groups or individuals concerned is attached in support to the description above

4.2. Community organizations or representatives concerned

Contact person for the communities:

Title (Ms/Mr, etc.): Mr.
Family name: Arun Kumar
Given name: Arun Kumar
Institution/position: Main Role of Bhairav played by him
Address: Dassal, Rajouri
Telephone number: 9906356626
Email address: nishugupta00001@gmail.com

Other relevant information: C/o Nishu Gupta Mob :9596677729

☐ Contact information for main community organizations or representatives, non-governmental organizations or other bodies concerned with the element are attached, and their details can be published on the website of the Convention as part of the nomination

5. Inventory

For **Criterion R.5**, States **shall demonstrate that the element is identified and included in an inventory of the intangible cultural heritage present in the territory(ies) of the submitting State(s) Party(ies) in conformity with Articles 11 and 12 of the Convention.**

5.1. Name of the inventory(ies) in which the element is included

It is already identified as intangible cultural heritage by Rajouri Development Authority looking after tourism aspects of Rajouri as well as Jammu and Kashmir Govt.

5.2. Name of the office(s), agency(ies), organization(s) or body(ies) responsible for maintaining and updating that (those) inventory(ies), both in the original language and in translation when the original language is not English or French

District Administration Rajouri.

5.3. Reference number(s) and name(s) of the element in the relevant inventory(ies)

5.4. Date of the element's inclusion in the inventory(ies)

Is the information concerning the updating and periodicity of the inventory(ies), as well as the participation of communities, groups and NGOs concerned to the inventorying process, included in the periodic report on the implementation of the Convention?

☐ Yes, the information is included in the periodic report. Specify in the box below the year in which that report was submitted

☐ No, the information is not included in the periodic report. Provide information in the box below

Not to exceed 200 words

☐ An extract of inventory(ies) in English or in French and in the original language, if different, is submitted

6. Correspondence and signature

6.1. Designated contact person

Provide the contact details of a single person responsible for all correspondence concerning the nomination. For multinational nominations, provide complete contact information for one person designated by the States Parties as the main contact person for all correspondence relating to the nomination.

Title (Ms/Mr, etc.): Mr.
Family name: Abhishek Sharma
Given name: Abhishek Sharma
Institution/position: Deputy Commissioner, Rajouri
Address: DC Office, Rajouri
Telephone number: 9906545614
Email address: abhi1shrma@gmail.com

Other relevant information:

6.2. Other contact persons (for multinational nomination only)

Provide below complete contact information for one person in each submitting State, other than the primary contact person identified above.

Title (Ms/Mr, etc.):	Mr.
Family name:	Rahul Maini
Given name:	Rahul Maini
Institution/position:	Stenographer to DC,
Address:	DC Office, Rajouri
Telephone number:	9796884556
Email address:	rahulmaini24@gmail.com
Other relevant information:	

6.3. Signature on behalf of the State Party or States Parties

Name:
Title:
Date:
Signature:

Name(s), title(s) and signature(s) of other official(s) (for multinational nominations only).

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