



UNION TERRITORY OF JAMMU & KASHMIR
OFFICE OF THE DEPUTY COMMISSIONER RAJOURI
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Subject: Submission for Nomination to UNESCO Representative List & National Inventory of
Intangible Cultural Heritage – "Bhairav Yatra in Rajouri, J&K"

Sir,

With the subject cited above undersigned request for the nomination of "Bhairav Yatra in Rajouri, Jammu & Kashmir" for inclusion in the UNESCO Representative List of Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity and its addition to the National Inventory of Intangible Cultural Heritage under the esteemed guidance of the Sangeet Natak Akademi.

In support of this request, we have enclosed the necessary documentation detailing the history, cultural impact, and significance of the Bhairav Yatra. We kindly seek your esteemed consideration and guidance in facilitating this nomination process.

Abhishek Sharma
Abhishek Sharma, IAS
Deputy Commissioner,
Rajouri

Bhairav Dev Jhanki: A Unique Holi Celebration in Rajouri, Jammu and Kashmir



Source: <https://jammukashmir.punjabkesari.in/>

The Bhairav Dev Jhanki is a distinctive festival celebrated annually in the Rajouri district (border district) of Jammu and Kashmir, marking the onset of the Holi festivities. This age-old tradition, deeply rooted in local beliefs and customs, attracts thousands of devotees and tourists from across the country.

Historical Significance and Origin



Source: [Escape.to.mountains \(Instagram Page\)](#)

The origins of the Bhairav Dev Jhanki are intertwined with the region's history and folklore. It is believed that centuries ago, Rajouri faced severe droughts leading to widespread suffering. In response, the revered Bhairav Baba is said to have intervened, bringing relief to the parched land. To commemorate this divine intervention and to ward off future calamities, the tradition of the Bhairav Jhanki was initiated and has been observed ever since.



The Procession and Rituals

The festival commences a week before Holi with the vibrant Bhairav Jhanki procession. A central feature of this event is a devotee embodying Bhairav Baba, leading the procession through the streets of Rajouri. Residents, irrespective of age, gather in large numbers on rooftops, streets, and balconies to witness this spectacle. The atmosphere is charged with devotion and enthusiasm as participants sing, dance, and play traditional music.

Two significant aspects of the festival are the 'Bhairav Baba Ka Teeka' and the 'Chimta Roopi Prasad'. Locals believe that receiving the teeka (a ceremonial mark) and the prasad (sacred offering) protects them from diseases and negative influences. This belief underscores the community's faith in Bhairav Baba as the guardian against evil and misfortune.



Source: <https://www.thestellarnews.com>; Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2W3l-d-J5Fs>;

Cultural Integration and Community Participation

The Bhairav Dev Jhanki is not just a religious event but a testament to the communal harmony in Rajouri. People from diverse religious backgrounds come together to participate in the festivities, reflecting the region's inclusive spirit. The week-long celebrations foster unity, with various cultural programs, fairs, and communal feasts enhancing the festive spirit.

Comparative Traditions

While the Bhairav Jhanki is a unique feature of Rajouri's cultural landscape, similar traditions can be observed in other parts of India. For instance, Kolkata hosts the Nakuleshwar Bhairav Jhanki ahead of Holi, where devotees pay homage to Lord Bhairav. However, the scale, rituals, and local significance of the Rajouri celebration set it apart, making it a distinctive cultural event.

Conclusion

The Bhairav Dev Jhanki of Rajouri is a vibrant celebration that encapsulates the rich cultural heritage and communal harmony of the region. Its unique rituals, historical significance, and widespread participation make it a compelling candidate for inclusion in the ICH National Inventory and a potential nomination to UNESCO's list of intangible cultural heritage.



Source: <https://www.jagran.com/jammu-and-kashmir/rajouri-bhairav-jhanki-in-rajouri-22537289.html>; Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2f6zPE1B0oI>;