

Kanwar Yatra

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Kanwar Yathra Latest News

Delhi Chief Minister recently said no nuisance will be tolerated during Kanwar Yatra, days after glass shards were found scattered along a stretch of the yatra route in Shahdara.

About Kanwar Yathra

- It's an **annual pilgrimage**, held in the **Hindu month of Shravan** (typically **July-August**), where **Shiva devotees** (known as **Kanwariyas**), **primarily in North India**, **fetch holy water from the Ganges River** and **carry it back to their local Shiva temples** (often barefoot and walking distances of hundreds of kilometers).
- They visit the temples to **offer holy water** to Lord Shiva, especially **on the auspicious day of Shivratri** during the **month of Shravan**.

What happens at Kanwar Yatra?

- The term “**Kanwar**” refers to a **special carrying apparatus, typically a bamboo pole, with two equal loads** (usually pots filled with Ganga water) suspended from either end.
- This pole is **balanced on the pilgrim’s shoulder**. “Yatra” simply means a journey or procession.
- Thus, the Kanwar Yatra literally means the “**journey with the Kanwar.**”
- The core ritual of this pilgrimage is to **collect sacred water**, known as “Gangajal,” from River Ganga, particularly **from places like Haridwar, Gaumukh** (the source of the Ganges glacier), **Gangotri in Uttarakhand**, and **Ajgaibinath Temple in Sultanganj, Bhagalpur (Bihar)**.
- The devotees then **return by carrying Ganga water in kanwars** to seek the blessings of Shiva.
- The water is **offered to Shiva temples**, including the 12 Jyotirlingas across India and other shrines like the Pura Mahadev Mandir and Augharnath in Uttar Pradesh, the famous Kashi Vishwanath temple, and the Baba Baidyanath Temple in Deoghar, Jharkhand. The ritual is known as Jal Abhishek.
- Devotees often carry the holy water to offer at temples in their towns and villages.
- Many **pilgrims believe** that **once the pot is filled with holy water, it should not touch the ground**.
- While carrying the water, devotees **walk barefoot**; some complete the pilgrimage by lying flat on the ground. **Modern times** have seen some adaptations, with some **using cycles, motorbikes**, or even **vehicle convoys** for parts of the journey, though the purists still prefer walking.
- Kanwariyas **typically dress in saffron-colored robes**, a color associated with renunciation and spirituality in Hinduism.
- **Many observe fasts** during the pilgrimage, and the consumption of food, water, and salt is restricted.

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