



District Administration
Champawat



उत्तराखण्ड
एचमुच स्वर्ग!

CHAMPAWAT

— THE HUB OF HEAVEN —



THE HUB OF HEAVEN

पुष्कर सिंह धामी
मुख्यमंत्री
PUSHKAR SINGH DHAMI
Minister



PUSHKAR SINGH DHAMI
CHIEF MINISTER, UTTARAKHAND

I am happy to note that the District Tourism has come out with a coffee table book for Champawat district highlighting the enormous tourism opportunities this former capital of the Kumaon Kingdom holds. District Tourism is committed to placing Devbhumi Uttarakhand on the tourism map of the world as one of the leading tourist destinations and to making Uttarakhand synonymous with tourism.

This Coffee Table Book, dedicated to Champawat, depicts detailed information about the tourism - related activities in the district and is reflective of the multitude of places of interest right from the mystical mountains to mythologies and exquisite landscapes to exhilarating adventure.

An exquisite blend of photographs and efficacious writing makes this book a fascinating read. I congratulate the District Tourism and the District Administration of Champawat for this coffee table book and compliment the efforts of all who have contributed to this publication.

PUSHKAR SINGH DHAMI
CHIEF MINISTER, UTTARAKHAND



— THE HUB OF —
HEAVEN

सतपाल महाराज
पर्यटन मंत्री
SATPAL MAHARAJ
Tourism Minister



I am pleased to know that Champawat District Administration is bringing out a Coffee Table Book on tourism in the district. My heartiest wishes and congratulations to Champawat District Administration for bringing out the coffee table book, which reflects the grandeur of the district as an emerging tourism destination.

This coffee table book will go a long way to reflect the exquisite blend of the ingredients of history and mythology together with the picturesque landscapes, thus bookmarking Champawat in the list of every travel enthusiast.

SATPAL MAHARAJ
TOURISM MINISTER



SATPAL MAHARAJ
TOURISM MINISTER



— THE HUB OF — HEAVEN

रेखा आर्या
राज्य मंत्री
REKHA ARYA
Minister-in-charge,
District-Champawat



I congratulate Champawat District Administration on bringing out a coffee table book that traces the history and evolution of the district since its inception in 1966 while portraying it as one of the most sought-after tourism destinations for the globetrotter.

I do believe, the book will offer further impetus to the department in its efforts to take district tourism to newer heights while enlightening the readers about the significant tourism opportunities that this tiny hamlet has to offer.



REKHA ARYA
MINISTER-IN-CHARGE,
DISTRICT-CHAMPAWAT

REKHA ARYA
MINISTER-IN-CHARGE,
DISTRICT-CHAMPAWAT

DHEERAJ SINGH GARBYAL, IAS

SECRETARY, TOURISM & CEO,
UTTARAKHAND TOURISM DEVELOPMENT
BOARD, GOVT OF UTTARAKHAND (UTDB)



I would like to congratulate DTDC, Champawat on bringing out a coffee table book that offers a sneak peek into the rich heritage of Champawat seamlessly integrated with the modern initiatives of the government to make this hamlet a significant tourism destination for the visitors.

This book highlights the history of the district, key areas of interest and various types of tourism opportunities - Spiritual, Historic, Wildlife, Adventure to name a few. Further I take this opportunity to thank everyone who worked as a team to make this book a reality.

DHEERAJ SINGH GARBYAL
SECRETARY TOURISM & CEO UTDB

SHRI MANISH KUMAR, IAS

DISTRICT MAGISTRATE, CHAMPAWAT



I am extremely glad to see the Coffee Table Book take shape as per the concept our Champawat District administration envisioned months back.

The final product is better than we had imagined. I trust, this book will act as a platform to put forth the glorious history of the former capital of Kumaon on the bucket list of domestic & globe trotters.

I commend all the District administration staff who worked as a team to create this Coffee Table Book.

MANISH KUMAR
DISTRICT MAGISTRATE, CHAMPAWAT



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CHAMPAWAT

— THE ESSENCE OF KUMAONI CULTURE —

Champawat is a small town in the eastern kumaon division of the state of Uttarakhand, India is one of the eastern-most towns of the states. Sitting at an elevation of 1,670 metres above sea level, the region has Nepal region on its east, Udham Singh Nagar district on south, Nainital district on west and Almora district on north west. Champawat district is one among 13 districts of Uttarakhand and 12th largest district in the state by population. Earlier a part of Almora district, Champawat district came under Pithoragarh district in 1972 and was declared an individual, independent district in 1997.

As a little share in the history, this city is believed to be the place where Kurmavtar - the turtle incarnation of Lord Vishnu took place. The city of Champawat is best known for its temples, some of them dating back to as old as 10th century during the times of the Chand rulers. Some of the temples here are the finest embodiment of the Kumaon architecture. Folklores also suggest Champawat's reference in Mahabharata. Surrounded by lush tea gardens, which produce one of the finest teas in the region, the bustling town is also the administrative headquarters of the Champawat district.



HISTORY

CHAMPAWAT

This town finds its significance in history as an epitome of origin of culture and religion in Uttarakhand region. This place is considered to be the home to Nagas and Kinnars as described in the hindu mythology. The historical pillars, monuments, manuscripts, archaeological collections and folklores are the testimony to the historical significance of Champawat.

The original name of the Champawat city is said to be Champavati, derived from its location on the banks of the Champavati stream. The locals also suggest that this historical town has gotten its name from Princess Champawati, the daughter of King Arjun Deo, who ruled the region and had his capital here.

Steeped in history and heritage, Champawat has been the capital of the Kumaon Kingdom between 10th to 16th century under the regime of Chand dynasty established by Som Chand. During this time, the city witnessed construction of a lot of temples and ancient monuments which are a prominent tourist attraction now. Two of the prominent temples - the Baleshwar and Nagnath temples were built in this city during the 11th and 12th centuries. This was also the period, when learning, new forms of painting were developed here.



TOURISM



Champawat is famed for the unparalleled blend of tourism options it offers. It is a destination for nature lovers as well as devotees. From a sneak-peek into the chapters of mythology, to what the glorious past looked like, and intricately-carved temples that are an embodiment of the then art forms to abundance of flora & fauna, Champawat has something for everyone across the age groups and interests. Local residents of Champawat still perform the rituals & fairs tracing their recorded history to the 10th century with some enthusiasm & interest, the rich cultural heritage of Champawat is worth experiencing.

HERITAGE SITES

The historical town of Champawat beautifully embraces the architectural marvels dating back to the 10th century. The architecture of the temples in the city speaks volumes of the skill and intricacies of the artistes of the times.



NAGNATH TEMPLE

Most prominent one is the **Nagnath**

Temple dedicated to Lord Shiva that is one of the finest examples of Kumaon architecture. Dedicated to Lord Shiva, this is the oldest temple of Shiva in Champawat. This Shiva temple is a haven for the architecture enthusiasts as well. This temple is one of the finest examples of kumaon architecture in the district. Lord Shiva is worshipped in his perpetual form of the wielder of the serpentine creatures at this temple signifying his detachment to the world. This temple is said to have been built by a sage named Guru Gorakhnath.





KOTWALI CHABUTARA

As the name suggests, this is a square platform made of stone. With a length of 2.75m and 0.83m high, this platform is termed as Chomra or Chabutra by the locals. Similar type of architectures are found in the entire middle Himalayan region. Basis the evidence available, this platform used to be part of a larger architecture and most likely there used to be a grand canopy over it. While the actual usage of such platforms is unclear, there is a local belief that at this place the king would sit and do justice hold court.



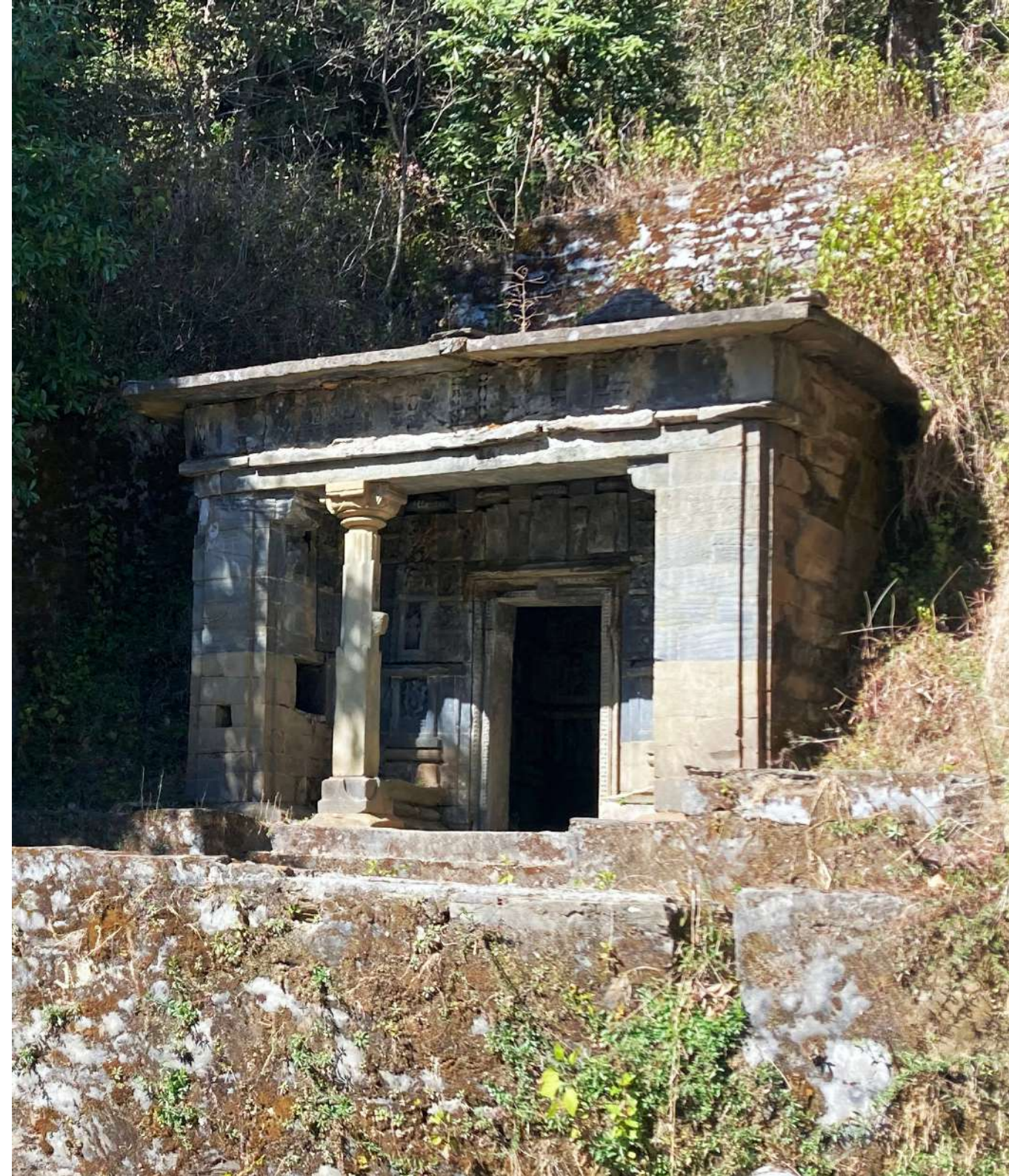
BALESHWAR TEMPLE

Baleshwar Temple is an ancient Shiva Temple located in the Champawat region. About 75 km from Pithoragarh, this temple is one of the best examples of Kumaoni architecture. Built by the monarchs of the Chand dynasty, Baleshwar Temple is a marvelous representation of stone carving. Believed to have been constructed between the 10th and 12th century AD, the temple is built on south Indian architecture and has been declared as a National Heritage Monument that is being looked after by the Archaeological Survey of (ASI) India. While the core of Baleshwar temple is dedicated to Lord Shiva (also known as Baleshwar), there are two other temples in the compound of Baleshwar, one dedicated to Ratneshwar and the other to Champawati Durga. A fair is held in the Baleshwar Temple compound on the day of MahaShivRatri.



BANASUR FORT

Banasur fort in Lohaghat of Champawat district echoes the architectural excellence from the medieval times. This place finds place in the Hindu scriptures as the residence of renowned king Banasura. According to the scriptures a fierce battle between Lord Krishna and Banasura is believed to have been fought here. Built on top of a hill and looking into the lush green valley of Kali Kumaon, the fort is located about 7 kms from Lohaghat on the Lohaghat-Devidhura road.



EK HATHIYA KA NAULA

Ek Hathiya Ka Naula roughly translating to 'water reservoir of a one-handed man' is located at about 5 km from Champawat. The reservoir displays excellent carvings on the stone structure. This reservoir is famous because of the legend of a hand carved out of stone. The locals believe that the entire structure was shaped by a single-handed craftsman in one night. This magnificent stone work was created during the era of Chand dynasty by Jagannath Mistry with the help of his daughter Kasturi. The carvings in Naula depict various scenes of folk life, dancers, instrumentalists, singers and working women. Another speciality of this unique artifact of Kumaon is that it has been constructed only with stones without the use of mortar.



GURDWARA REETHA SAHIB

Located at the confluence of the Lodhiya and Ratiya rivers, Gurdwara Shri Reetha Sahib is one of the prominent pilgrimage sites for Sikhs. Guru Nanakudev visited Ritha Sahib in the year 1501 year along with his disciples. Guru Nanak Dev Ji Maharaj is believed to have blessed the reetha (soapnut) tree so much that it bore sweet reetha for his hungry disciple Mardana. Also known as Meetha Reetha Sahib, this sikh pilgrimage was constructed in 1960. Devotees traveling to Gurdwara are served sweet Reetha in prasad.



PANCHAYATAN SHIV TEMPLE

A picturesque location in Lohaghat surrounded by the natural beauty of the neighbouring forests, creeks and high mountains with diverse flowers and different species of flora and fauna is where this sacred shrine of Lord Shiva, located a beautiful idol of Shiva and a shivling is at the temple with Naag Devta. The locals here have a belief about the temple that Lord Shiva protects the animals of villagers nearby. Lord Shiva, the temple deity is offered bhog with bells and milk. Tourists can experience the true and unique culture of Kumaon at this temple. Devotees of Lord Shiva visit the temple at any time of the year however season from March to October is considered the best time to visit.



GURU GORAKHNATH TEMPLE

A sacred pilgrimage destination for hindus, Gorakhnath Temple is situated at 36 kilometres from Champawat in the Manch Tamli area of the district. What makes this temple unique is the scared fire or dhuni in this temple which burns continuously. It is believed that this dhuni is burning from the time of Satyug. From here one can see the scenic landscape of Himalayas and river Sharda.



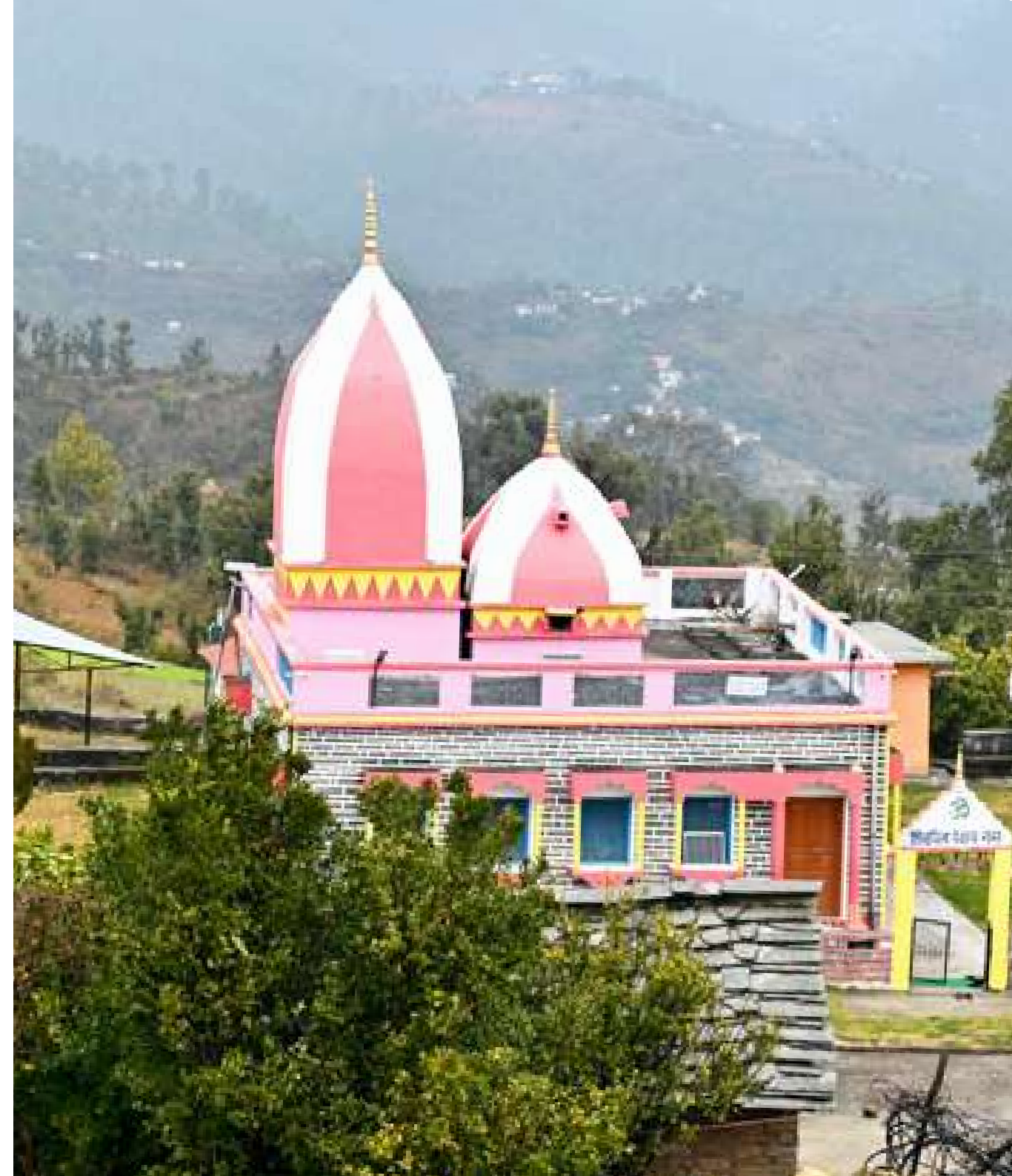
GOLU DEV TEMPLE

One of the most well-known temple in the region is devoted to the deity is the Chitai Golu devta temple. It is roughly 4 Km from the Binsar Wildlife Sanctuary's main gate and 10 Km from Almora. Golu Devta is revered throughout the area and is thought to be an incarnation of Gaur Bhairav (Shiva). He is regarded by his fervent followers as the giver deliverer of justice. In a practise known as Golu Darbar, Golu Dev used to go great miles on his horse and meet people from his realm. Golu Dev used to listen to the problems of the people and assist them in any way he could in providing them justice.



MANESHWAR TEMPLE

A historic temple called Maneshwar Temple is located about 7 miles from Champawat. A kilometer away from the Champawat-Pithoragarh, Maneshwar Temple is one of the oldest temples in Champawat. The temple is dedicated to Lord Shiva and was constructed in the eighth century by Nirbhay Chand a ruler of the Chand dynasty. The temple is also worshipped as a shakti peeth and a sacrament site of God Karma. The locals in here believe that bathing in the water found on nearby secret Naute located near the Maneshwar Temple, would ward off many diseases and disorders & help in salvation.



ADITYA TEMPLE

Aditya Temple is a beautiful temple of Sun God and Shiva. Located at Ramak village of Champawat district this temple is popularly known as Shivaditya Temple also. It is one of the rare temples of Sun God which was established by the kings of the Chand dynasty in the 16th century. It is also believed that during the exile Pandavas visited this place and worshipped God Shiva and consecrated the pious Shivling here.



SPIRITUAL

TOURISM

ADVAIT ASHRAM MAYAWATI

Set amidst dense deodar, pine and oak forests. Mayawati Ashram also known as Advaita Ashrama is one of the famous tourist attractions situated in the Old Tea Estate area in the Lohaghat region of Champawat district. Advaita Ashrama branch of the Ramakrishna Math this pristine ashram was founded on 19 March 1899 at the behest of Swami Vivekananda by his disciples James Henry Sevier and Charlotte Sevier. It was in the Alps that Vivekananda, while travelling with the couple, expressed his desire to have a similar hideaway for the monks in the Himalayas.

This ashram attracts devotees from all around the world to be captivated in its sacredness. This ashram is located at almost 1900 meter above the sea level, Mayawati Ashram offers an astounding view of the mighty Himalayan surroundings.

The original writings of Vivekananda are published here. Being a place dedicated to the study and practise of Advaita Vedanta, this ashram does not follow worshipping of idols or pictures. Not even the pictures of Ramakrishna were preserved on the premises in accordance with Vivekananda's goals for an ashram.

The ashram also offers lodging facilities that can be availed by the visitor. There is also a library and a small museum at Advait Mayawati Ashram.



VIVEKANANDA ASHRAM

With the commitment to serve mankind, Swami Vivekananda established the Ramakrishna Mission Association in 1897 and started the work of furthering the spirit of spiritual consciousness and harmony of all religions in the world. During this time, his supreme disciple Swami Virjanand Ji Maharaj took initiation from Swami Vivekananda. Between 1906 and 1914 Swami Virjanand was the President of Mayawati Ashram and he published the entire literature of Swami Vivekananda while staying here. After accomplishing this significant work, he started searching for another suitable place for himself in the mountains with the desire of solitude. His search was completed at Shyamalatal. Surrounded by beautiful natural pools and snow-capped peaks of the Himalayas this place was where that wandering monk set a retreat in his quest for solitude.

Established in 1915 this ashram is run by the Ramakrishna Mission and is a major center of social service and spirituality. The ashram is located about 22 km from Tanakpur and almost 56 kms from Champawat bus station. This picturesque place is located on the banks of a natural lake named Shyamalatal.

A photograph of two tigers in a forest. One tiger is lying on a large, fallen tree trunk in the foreground, looking towards the camera. The other tiger is standing on a higher part of the same tree trunk in the background, looking away. The forest is dense with green foliage and hanging vines.

WILDLIFE

TOURISM

NANDHAUR WILDLIFE SANCTUARY

Nandhaur Wildlife Sanctuary was created in 2012 in the Terai Arc Landscape - a forest zone stretching between Uttarakhand India and Nepal. This lesser known gem of Uttarakhand is famous as a tiger reserve, and enjoys the highest concentration of tigers in the entire state. Declared a sanctuary in the year 2012, Nandhaur opened its gates to wildlife tourism in 2015. Boasting of raw paths, untouched land, virgin landscapes and untamed jungles. It is one of the youngest sanctuaries of the country Nandhaur offers a mosaic of various landscapes and an ideal destination for true naturalists seeking something more than the overly-visited 'touristy' sanctuaries.

Since 2002 Nandhaur Wildlife Sanctuary area was part of the Shivalik Elephant Reserve. In the year 2004, the Wildlife Institute of India recognized Nandhaur Wildlife Sanctuary area as one of three viable habitats key to the long-term future of the tiger.

This sanctuary is primarily a sal forest with more than 100 species of trees including shisham, bamboo, teak etc. Also the sanctuary is home to about 25 species of mammals 250 species of birds 15 species of reptiles and 20 species of fishes. The major mammalian species include Asian elephant, leopard, tiger and sloth bear.



ADVENTURE

TOURISM

RIVER RAFTING IN TANAKPUR

River rafting expedition is carried out in Tanakpur of Champawat district on the lower section of Kali river Kali River also called Kali Sharda forms a natural border between India and Nepal.

River rafting trip at tanakpur offers one a disconnect from civilization when the river flows through the Terai jungles. Isolated remote sandy beaches make this rafting experience a unique one. Also the rich flora and fauna add to the experience. During rafting one can easily spot a wide variety of rare birds and wildlife. Kali Sharda is a high volume river with mostly up to class III kind of rapids and one class IV rapid.



ANGLING

A paradise for nature lovers, anglers and adventure junkies, Pancheshwar marks the boundary with Nepal at the confluence of the rivers Kali and Saryu. This famous fishing and angling location is home to the Himalayan Golden Mahseer also known as river tiger and the pre-historic looking Giant Devil Catfish. Set in an enthralling backdrop of beautiful mountains and lush green valley this place has been a major attraction amongst anglers from around the world. Angling in some of the great Indian Himalayan regions offers passionate anglers a ticket to delve into some of the remotest areas accessible through boats.

AERO

SPORTS

The geography of this region lends itself to adventure very naturally. The intimidating Sahyadri on the East, leading to bottomless valleys, impenetrable jungles, bountiful creeks, expansive seashores and serpentine roads... all of them are truly game for sporting adventures such as cycling, biking, trekking, valley crossing and scuba diving.



PARAGLIDING

Those who seek an adrenaline rush in making sky their playground would find Champawat as a haven for Paragliding. Glide high in the air and experience birds-eye views of the immense white water rivers fascinating mountain peaks and flowers blooming in the midst of lush greenery.

PARAMOTORING

Done with exploring the majestic land of Champawat? let the wings sprout off your shoulders as you get ready to touch the sky above through Paramotoring or Powered paragliding and be mesmerized! With a parachute propelled by a motorized fan paramotoring feels like flying in the sky almost on your own like a free bird.

JOY RIDE IN OPEN AIRCRAFT

Experience the thrill of in-flight and glorious views from the top as you plan a joyride in open aircraft in Champawat. What makes this adventure sport even special is its exclusivity to Champawat in whole of the Uttarakhand.

PLACES OF INTEREST

The historical town of Champawat beautifully embraces the architectural marvels dating back to the 10th century. The architecture of the temples in the city speaks volumes of the skill and intricacies of the artistes of the times.



PATAL RUDRESHWAR CAVE

The story of Patal Rudreshwar Cave built in Champawat district of Uttarakhand is no less than a miracle. It is believed that when Lord Shiva did penance here he attained salvation only after that. Not only this, the way to this cave was shared by Goddess Durga herself. It is said that Goddess Durga told a 14-year-old boy the way to this cave in his dream. The 40 m long and 10 m wide Patal Rudreshwar cave was discovered in 1993. Earlier this cave was called as the home to bats. There is a small pond inside the cave, on the edge of which a white stone figure like a bull has been made and in the center of the pool there is a white stone Shivling. 5 streams of water naturally fall from the rock above the Shivling.





INDO NEPAL BORDER AT BANBASA

Banbasa is a small town in the Champawat district of Uttarakhand. Located about 84 km from Champawat, this place is on the border of India and Nepal. It is about 5 km from Banbasa to the Nepal border. Banbasa's quiet and secluded atmosphere attracts many visitors. Tourists who come here also visit the border with Nepal. Banbasa is known for the Banbasa Weir and the dam near the Sharada River.



ABBOTT MOUNT

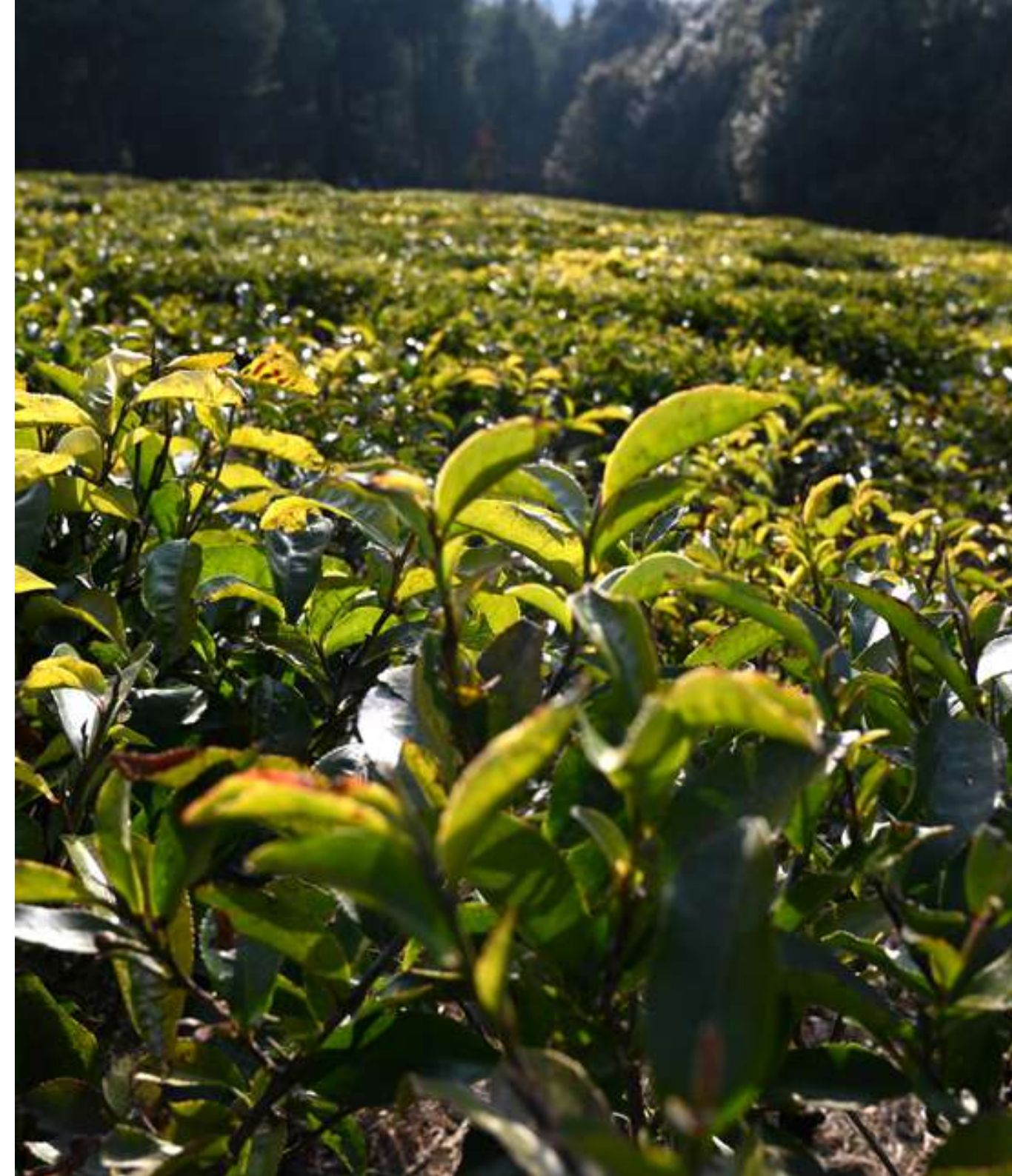
Located atop a hill the hill station of Abbott Mount is nuzzled in the Kali Kumaon region of Champawat district. This picturesque hill station was discovered by Britisher John Harold. Abott in the pre-independence era and that is how the hill got its name. He built 13 cottages here some of which are still there. The tiny hamlet treat one with views of peaks like Trishul, Nanda Kot, Nanda Ghunti and the Nanda Devi spanning in an arc across a valley.

This is the place bestowed with panoramic scenic beauty and various colors of nature. Surrounded by thick forests of pine and deodars, this hilly hamlet is situated at the confluence of Surya and Mahakali Rivers. This spot also resides a church built in 1942 where prayers are bell held once or twice a year.



SHYAMLA TAL

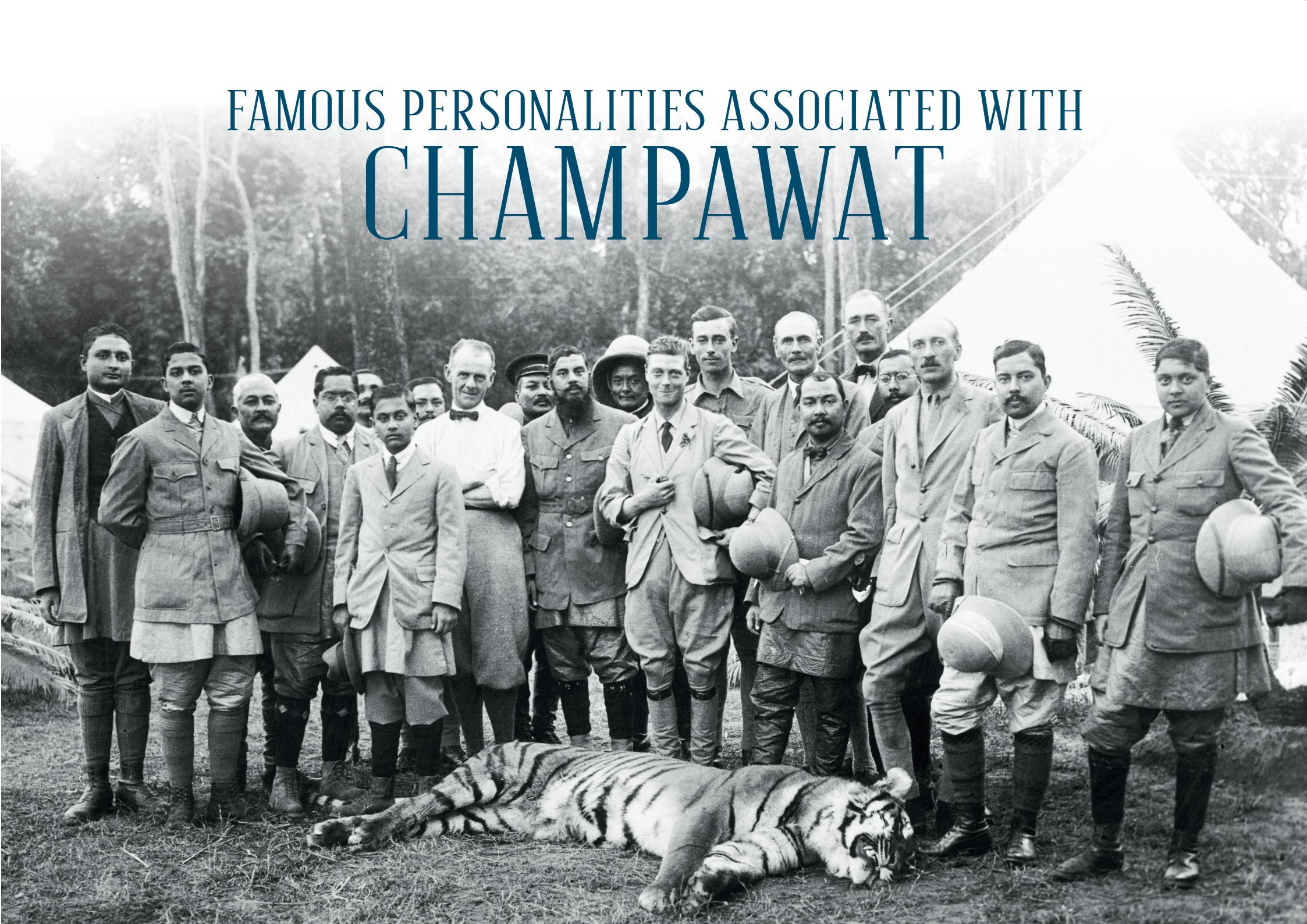
Tucked amidst the lush green mountains looking up the sky, is Shyamla Tal - a natural lake located in a beautiful hamlet at 30 kms from Tanakpur town in Champawat District. As the name indicates, the lake is known by the word Shyaam meaning a little dark complex color that is used to describe Lord Krishna in Hindu religion. The lake owes its blackish color to the muddy water and surrounded hills. Situated at an overwhelming height of 1500 meters above the sea level, the lake Shyamala Tal covers an area of more than 1.5 sq km area. There is a famous Swami Vivekananda Ashram located on the banks of lake visited by many people round the year. A beautiful place with a peaceful natural ambience the lake is often compared to heaven by tourist and visitors.



TEA GARDENS AT CHAMPAWAT

Champawat district has a lot to offer beyond the heritage sites and spiritual tourism one of the being the mystic beauty of the lush green tea gardens. The district boasts of some of the finest tea estates that call for an exotic trip to have that lifetime journey of tea gardens. Champawat tea gardens are now being developed as **tea tourism by the Tea Development Board** in the district. Apart from black tea, white tea is also being produced in the gardens. Also, the production of organic green tea has kicked off in the district. Present the tea produced in Champawat tea gardens is being sold under the brand name 'Uttarakhand Tea'.

FAMOUS PERSONALITIES ASSOCIATED WITH CHAMPAWAT



EDWARD JAMES CORBETT



The British hunter, tracker, naturalist, and author who hunted a number of man-eating tigers and leopards in the Indian subcontinent, has also visited the Champawat district. Holding the rank of colonel in the British Indian Army, Corbett hunted down Champawat Tiger - the first designated man-eating tiger he killed. The Champawat Tiger was responsible for an estimated 436 documented deaths in the India & Nepal valley. It is for his efforts that he is lauded by thousands of villagers of Kumaon and Garhwal for saving them from man-eating tigers and leopards. The rest house of Corbett in Dubar Jainal, Champawat, where he stayed during his crusade of eradicating the man-eaters from the regions, is regarded as the memorial for the great wildlife aficionado. Don't be surprised to see the people of Champawat commemorating the birth anniversary of this legendary hunter. Leopard of Panar who reportedly attacked almost 400 people and Champawat Tiger, responsible for an estimated 436 deaths, were some of the man-eaters shot and killed by Jim Corbett in the region of Champawat.

GURU NANAK DEV JI



The tiny hamlet of Champawat has had the privilege of being visited by notable personalities that played a major role in firming up the significance of the district. One of the notable personalities to have visited the Kali Kumaon Champawat is Guru Nanak Dev Ji. Along with Bhai Mardana Ji, Guru Nanak Dev Ji visited Gurdwara Meetha Reetha Sahib around 1960. The Gurudwara was built in 1960 at the confluence of Lodhiya and Ratiya rivers. It is said that Guru Nanak Dev Ji sat under a reetha tree and asked Bhai Mardana Ji to eat a reetha. Reetha (soapnut) is usually bitter in taste, but the reetha which Guru Nanak Dev Ji plucked for Bhai Mardana Ji was sweet. Jogis were surprised by all this and later they come to know that on the side Guru Nanak Dev Ji was sitting all the reethas had become sweet. These trees are still there in the Gurudwara and the reethas are still said to be sweet in taste. This is the reason why this place is called Meetha Reetha Sahib.



SWAMI VEVEKANANDA

Swami Vivekananda traveled to Kumaon twice, once in 1890, when he walked from Nainital to Almora and later in 1901 when he visited Mayawati Ashram. It was 18 January 1890 when feet of Swami Vivekananda fell on the land of Champawat for the first time. Swami Vivekananda on his way to console the wife of Captain Sevier (Founder of Advaita Ashram Mayawati) on his demise took a rest for the night at Dak Bungalow of District Panchayat, Champawat. Here, along with spirituality, he discussed with people the natural beauty of Champawat. Swami Vivekanand had an affinity with the Himalayas. During his third visit to Almora in 1898 Swami Vivekanand decided to shift the publication office of Prabuddh Bharat from Madras to Mayawati from where it is published since then.

GURU GORAKHNATH

The land of Champawat has been visited by a number of influential people including Guru Gorakhnath who is credited to lit the pious dhuni at the Guru Gorakhnath Temple. The Gorakshpeeth in Uttarakhand is world famous, and what adds to its glory is an external dhuni that is burning continuously since the ancient times. And yes the Guru Gorakhnath Temple holds a prominent place in entire North India as a spiritual sacred site.





FAIRS & FESTIVALS

CHAMPAWAT

BAGWAL AT DEVIDHURA

Celebrated on Raksha-Bandhan every year, at Varahi Devi Temple Devidhura, the Bagwal fair at Devidhura is popular for its mesmerizing traditional song and dance. Very unusual one, the fair is marked by an unusual unique practice in which two groups dance and sing in the folk traditions while they throw stones at each other, only protecting themselves with large wooden shields. This traditional song and dance act stops soon after the priest appears and both sides meet and reconcile.

The Varahidevi temple of Devidhura is situated at the border of Almora, Pithoragarh and Nainital districts. A distinctive highlight of this fair is the image of Goddess Varahi kept in a locked brass casket. The casket is taken out in a procession to a nearby mountain spring where a blindfolded priest ritually bathes the image and puts it back in the holy casket.



PURNAGIRI FAIR

When it comes to festivals enjoyed in Champawat district, one of the most talked about festivals is the Purnagiri Mela. Organized by the Shri Purnagiri Temple on Annapurna Peak, this fair attracts devotees from all across the surrounding areas. The area where the temple is currently located is believed to be where part of the navel of Sati and Savan Prajapati was cut off by Vishnu Chakra. The fair takes place during the auspicious and revered festivals of the Hindus, Navratri. The sacred temple of Shri Purnagiri, where the mela is performed, is one of the 108 Siddha Peetha temples and attracts large numbers of pilgrims seeking divine blessings during the Navratri festival. The temple is located near Tunya and Tanakpur. Tunya is 17 km away from the temple and Tanakpur is 20 km away, on the right bank of the Kali River in Champawat district of Kumaon district.



JOR MELA AT REETHA SAHIB

The famous Jor Mela of Reetha Sahib dates back to more than 500 years to him and begins with a series of Guru Granth Sahib recitations. The fair takes place during Buddha Purnima and is attended by thousands of Sikh pilgrims from far-off places. A large number of pilgrims take a bath at the confluence of the Ratia and Ladhiya rivers and pay obeisance at the Guru's court. Devotees coming to Gurdwara are served sweet Reetha as prasad. During mela the religious divan hall of the famed Meetha Reetha Gurudwara is decorated by the Ragidarbari poets of the Sikh panth that narrate the valor and bravery of the panth.



LOCAL PRODUCE

Before leaving the picturesque landscape of Champawat, one could look forward to collecting spellbinding iron craft products and handmade products from here. The handicrafts are available in the local markets at a pretty reasonable price. Tea enthusiasts can try their hands at Champawat tea which has a pleasant aroma and taste to it. There are many local markets, where one can find tea leaves. Another prominent local produce of Champawat is raw honey which has always been a distinguished culinary delicacy along with significant medicinal properties. One can pick from a plethora of honey brands including the ones from Self Help Groups in the nearby markets of the district.



HOW TO REACH

By Air:

Bareilly Airport in Uttar Pradesh is 176 Kms from Champawat and is well connected to major airports of the country. One can begin their journey to Champawat in bus, taxi or jeep from Bareilly airport.

By Train:

Tanakpur in Champawat is the railway station 75Km from Champawat town. Tourists can begin to their destination through road from Tanakpur railway station.

By Road:

Champawat is well connected by road with neighbouring districts & states which connect it with rest of the Uttarakhand, rest of India and even the neighbouring country Nepal through Tanakpur.



CHAMPAWAT

— THE HUB OF HEAVEN —