

Religious tourism has a very important role in the development and progress

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New Delhi,

Union Minister for Home Affairs, Shri Amit Shah flagged off the New Delhi-Katra 'Vande Bharat' Express, in New Delhi today. This is the second 'Vande Bharat' express after the New Delhi - Varanasi semi-high speed train flagged off by Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi in February this year. The coaches of this train are indigenously manufactured at the Chennai Rail coach factory.



Shri Shah congratulated the Ministry of Railways for giving a big gift to the people of the country, in this Navratras. He said that religious tourism has a very important role in the development and progress of Jammu-Kashmir. Every citizen of India has a desire to visit Vaishnodevi Temple at least once in the lifetime. From the day he took charge, Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi put forward a vision to connect places of religious interest across the country with a safe, efficient and comfortable high-

speed railway network. A number of steps have already been taken by the government to facilitate pilgrims to visit the places of their religious interest. The 'Vande Bharat' express is one big step in that direction while keeping in mind speed, scale and service as the prime priority, he said.

Shri Shah said that PM visualises Railways as the lifeline to achieve his vision of a \$5 trillion economy. 'Vande Bharat' is a hallmark of the success of 'Make in India' and the potential that it holds in giving a boost to the economy. This is evident with the speed at which the development and modernisation of railways is taking place under Shri Modi's leadership, he added. Home Minister said, "Railways must keep this fast paced development profile going on in full steam and achieve Prime Minister's vision of a \$5 trillion economy, in the same way as Railways played a major role in the success of Bapu's freedom struggle".

Remembering Mahatma Gandhi on his 150th anniversary, Shri Shah said that Bapu gave a philosophy to the world of how to derive simple solutions to the biggest of problems. One such philosophy during the freedom movement was 'Swadeshi' and railways played an integral part in Gandhiji's struggle for freedom by forming a connect with the people of India, he said. Shri Shah expressed pride in saying that this 'Vande Bharat' express is totally 'Swadeshi' and is at par with the latest rail transport technology across the world. This train is a big tribute that Shri Modi has given to the ideals of Bapu, with his vision of 'Make in India', he added. The Home Minister urged the Railway Minister to chart out the role of Railways in Gandhiji's journey during the freedom struggle, during the 'Gandhi@150' celebrations.

Speaking on the removal of Article 370, Shri Shah said that Article 370 was a roadblock in Jammu-Kashmir's development and its true integration with India. He expressed confidence that after its removal, the evil of terrorism would be completely eliminated from Jammu Kashmir. "I believe that in the next 10

years, Kashmir would be the leading state on development parameters. The beginning has happened with the flagging off of the Vande Bharat express. It is a big gift from PM Modi to the people of J&K by bringing development in the state and giving a boost to religious tourism there ", he said.

Concluding his address, Shri Shah expressed great satisfaction on the way Railways is getting transformed on the lines of 'Make in India' and making an unprecedented contribution in the growth of the economy.

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