

MAHABHARAT FEST AT PARYATAN BHAWAN

Get a taste of Draupadi's kitchen

LUCKNOW: The Mahabharat Festival at Paryatan Bhawan, Gomtinagar is a delight for both foodies and culture lovers. It not only serves gastronomic delights like 'Bhim's laddoo' and 'Dronacharya's kesar milk', but also takes visitors on a journey to mystical times of Lord Krishna.

The festival, inaugurated by chief minister Akhilesh Yadav on Saturday, has been organised by the tourism department in association with Delhi-based Draupadi Dream Trust and aims to promote the state's connection with the epic. It will continue till December 21.

Inaugurating the event, the CM said that UP was a land rich in culture and such festivals would continue to be hosted here.

Apart from the food festival which promises visitors a taste of Draupadi's kitchen, the event includes an exhibition and several other cultural programmes. A bi-



• An artiste dressed as Gandhari of Mahabharat.

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let and Panchsuni were performed on the opening day. Manuscripts, details of geographical, archeological and historical significance of places in UP associated with the epic have been put on view. The display also has pictures of a 300-year-old Urdu version of the Mahabharat. " Hastinapur, Mathura, Kampilya, Kashi, Naimisharanya and a number of cities in UP have been a part of the Mahabharat. The idea

behind organising this event is to show people that the places mentioned in the epic aren't just figments of imagination," said Neera Misra, chairperson trustee of the Draupadi Dream Trust. Amrit Abhijit, director general, tourism, said, "The cities in the epic - Kampilya, which is now Farrukhabad, Hastinapur, now Meerut, Kashi-Varanasi, Shoorsen-Mathura, Koshal-Faizabad, Shukratsal-

Muzaffarnagar - are places of historical significance. We want to showcase the art of these places and to promote them as tourist destinations." "There is a legend behind everything that has been exhibited here," added Neera.

The CM also inaugurated One Aashdi centre in Gomti Nagar on Saturday. A mobile app of tourism department and a mobile phone game on heritage walk of Lucknow were also launched.

TECHNICAL SNAG

A technical glitch interrupted the dance ballet - Draupadi Anarkatha - three times during the inaugural ceremony. As the pen drive malfunctioned again and again, the artists concerned finally had to call off the performance. Reacting to the confusion that ensued, the CM quipped, "I was stuck in a lift a day before and now a pen drive has interrupted the programme." **HTC**