

## **Amarnath Yatra**

### **Why in news?**

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Terrorist recently attacked pilgrims on Amarnath Yatra.

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### **What is the significance of Amaranth yatra?**

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- The Amaranth cave deep is in the Himalayas in south Kashmir.

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- The cave is 3,888 m above sea level, can be reached only on foot or by pony.

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- Each year, hundreds of thousands of pilgrims make the trek up to the shrine.

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### **How the deity in the shrine is formed?**

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- The ice lingam is formed by a trickle of water from a cleft in the cave's roof.

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- The Shiva lingam gets its full shape in May, after which it begins to melt by August.

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- The water freezes as it drips, forming, over time, a tall, smooth ice stalagmite.

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- A stalactite is an icicle-shaped formation that hangs from the ceiling of a cave, and is produced by precipitation of minerals from water dripping through the cave ceiling.

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- Most stalactites have pointed tips.

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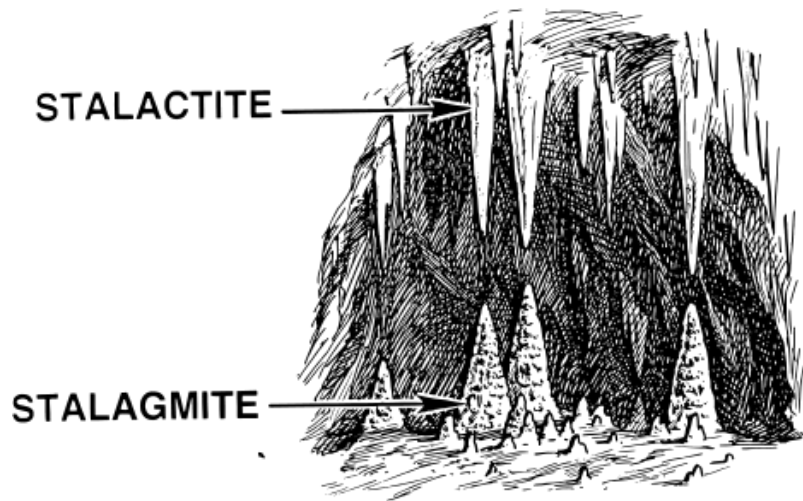
- A stalagmite is an upward-growing that have precipitated from water dripping onto the floor of a cave.

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- Most stalagmites have rounded or flattened tips.

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### **What are the other pilgrimages in Jammu and Kashmir?**

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#### **Vaishno Devi**

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- Vaishno Devi Mandir is a very popular Hindu temple dedicated to the Hindu Goddess
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- It is located in the Trikuta Mountains of Jammu and Kashmir.
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- It is at an altitude of 5200 ft above the sea level.
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- The Temple is 13.5 km from Katra.
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- Various modes of transportation are available from Katra including Ponies, Electric vehicles.
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- People who visit Amarnath also visit this shrine.
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#### **Shankaracharya Temple**

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- Situated on the Zabarwan Mountain in Srinagar, Kashmir.
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- Shankaracharya Temple is dedicated to Lord Shiva.

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- Visiting this temple involves the devotees to trek to the top of the hill on which it stands, about 1100 feet above the plains.

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- Built in 371 BC, the great saint Shankracharya is said to have stayed there during his visit to Kashmir.

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## **Raghunath Temple**

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- Raghunath Temple is one of the largest temple in North India and is located in Jammu.

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- It was built by Maharaja Gulab Singh (founder of the kingdom of Jammu and Kashmir) and his son Ranbir Singh.

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- There are seven shrines, each having its own Shikhara, present at the site of the temple.

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- Raghunath Temple enshrines many idols of the Hindu gods and goddesses but its presiding deity is Lord Rama.

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**Source: The Indian Express**

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