



കേരള സർക്കാർ

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Annadana Mandapam to be fully developed before vishu
The Annadana Mandapam at Sannidanam would be fully developed before the Vishu festival in 2017, Sabarimala High Power Committee chairman K.Jayakumar has said. He made this observation after visiting the dining facility. As many as 10,000 persons are being accommodated at the 27,000 SQ.Ft hall at present. On completing the work, the built up area would increase to 70,000 SQ.Ft and it would be able to accommodate 30,000 persons at one go and about 1.5 lakh persons would be fed per day, he said. As the pilgrimage season completes three weeks, the festival is being conducted in a fool proof manner sans any complaints. There were concerns about drinking water, dining facility and the waste treatment plant, but such concerns have all become unfounded. The Travancore Devaswom Board, the high power committee and the Kerala Water Authority have explored an alternative to bottled water by serving medicated water and purified drinking water, that has proved to be a success. Pilgrims have also accepted it. Not even 5 per cent pilgrims are coming with plastic

bottles. They have accepted the message. Next year, it will be experimented in the case of plastic covers too.

Facelift mooted for Pamba

Being the entrance to Sabarimala, it has been decided to clean the river and give a facelift to Pamba River, Mr.Jayakumar said. Bio-gas plants would be set up in Pamba and Sannidhanam. More details, including setting up of a 10 MLD waste treatment plant, would be finalised at the high-power committee meeting on December 15.

The Rs.99 crore sanctioned by the Union Tourism Department would be used for the purpose. Pilgrims would be made to undergo a shower before having a dip in Pamba. The water used for the shower would be purified and released to the Pamba. The channels for releasing human waste to the river would be plugged. It would be routed to the waste treatment plant. Food waste would be treated at the biogas plants. Mr.Jayakumar also visited the waste treatment plant at Sannidanam. The plant was working well. Two tanks would be set up at Sannidanam this year for storing water from Kunnar dam. After this festival season, a high level discussion would be done with police for making optimum use of the queue complex. Instead of standing in the queue the pilgrims would be able to relax at the queue complex. The Valiya Nadapanthal would be restructured so that pilgrims would be able to relax there too. Drinking water and seating facility would be provided at main points. More attention would be given to Erumeli and Karimala. Land has been identified for setting the aravana plant offered by Ravi Pillai. Discussions have been held with Kerala State Industrial Enterprises for installing the plant after the current season, he said.

Medical care at Thirumuttam too:

Offering a solace to scores of pilgrims, the Travancore Devaswom Board and the sahas Cardiology Centre are providing medical care at Thirumuttom too. A doctor's service is being provided near the Kodimaram (flag mast) for those who feel fatigued on ascending the steps and if needed, take them to hospital on stretchers in the event of an emergency. The assistance is being provided by a team headed by Dr.Vasudevan of sahas Cardiology Centre and a team of doctors led by him. The service is being provided from 8 a.m. to 11.30 p.m.About 60 persons seek medical assistance a day at the centre, duty doctor, S.Varun said. Those sustaining injuries and have sprain are being treated at the centre. This includes first aid and other treatment too. The

board is distributing medicated drinking water too. The Centre had been functioning since November 16.

Drinking water supply to more places:

The board has deployed 43 additional persons for distributing medicated drinking water to pilgrims at Valiya Nadapanthal, Sabarimala Executive Officer R.Ravisankar said. Medicated drinking water is being distributed to prevent the menace of plastic drinking water bottles in Sabarimala and its precincts. The 43 persons include 40 students and 3 teachers. Considering the increase in demand, it has been decided to deploy 150 persons for water distribution. The board had appointed three special officers for providing drinking water in Sannidanam, Pamba and Nilakkal. Distribution of biscuits along with water has provided a great relief to the pilgrims. Water is being distributed at 40 places at Sannidanam, special officer and Assistant Engineer, D.Madhu said.

Thantri's warning:

Sabarimala Thantri Kantararu Rajivaru has warned the pilgrims against observing practices such as relinquishing clothes and other belongings at Sannidanam and breaking coconuts all over. Relinquishing the customary mala and clothes in Pamba are against the customs and practices prevalent in Sabarimala. The customs in Sabarimala are in line with the Guru tradition. Wearing of the customary mala is according to this tradition. After completing pilgrimage, the pilgrims are bound to remove the mala after returning to the temple from there they start the pilgrimage in the presence of the Guru Swamy or any other temple and it should not be relinquished at Sabarimala. Such malpractices done by anyone should not be emulated, he said. It is mostly being done by pilgrims from other States. Similarly applying turmeric powder on the Naga idols is also against the custom. Pilgrims should desist themselves from such practices and board staff cannot completely stop them from involving in such practices, he said. A pilgrim need break only two coconuts, only one while ascending the steps and one while returning. Others are all unwarranted. It should be stopped, The forest path should be maintained properly without pollution. Pilgrims should maintain discipline. The time that the temple remains open has been increased in view of the rush. Now the temple remains open from 3 a.m. to 1 p.m. and from 3 p.m. to 11 p.m. This has helped pilgrims to return without much rush. The only hitch at

present is in crowd control at the Holy Steps.

Jayachandran on Harivarasanam

Noted music director M. Jayachandran was resuming his pilgrimage after a gap of two years. Earlier he had visited Sabarimala for 25 years. Listening to Harivarasanam is his passion. He strongly feels that the lullaby of Lord Ayyappa was immortalised by the music of the late G.Devarajan, but he had doubts whether the veteran music director had got due recognition, he felt. Devarajan Master could compose a simple tune for a work like Harivarasanam which is replete with meanings. He was a real music director, Mr.Jayachandran said.

