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PRESS RELEASE

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Health Department is in full strength at Sabarimala

With the fall of Mandala season, the Kerala State Health Department has made all facilities ready to face any medical emergency at Sabarimala. The department has made available the service of sufficient number of doctors, nurses, paramedics, and ambulances. Specialist doctors, nurses, and paramedics were posted at various medical centres at Pampa, Neelimala, Charalmedu, Appachimedu, Sannidhanam, Sahas medical centre, Nilakkal, Pathanamthitta general hospital and also at the temporary hospital at Pandalam.

Special Sabarimala ward has been opened at the general hospitals at Pathanamthitta, Adoor, Taluk hospital at Ranni. Kozhencheri district hospital, Ranni-Perunad primary health centres. 16 Emergency medical centres will be opened along the way from Pampa to Sannidhanam in order to give primary treatments to the devotees. Specialist cardiologists have been posted at Sannidhanam, Appachimedu, Pampa, Pathanamthitta general hospital and the centres will work round the clock informed District Medical Officer Dr A L Sheeja.

In Sannidhanam alone the department has posted 43 employees that include doctors, nurses, paramedics. while at Sahas at Sannidhanam nine are posted. In Appachimedu cardiology centre 20 staffs have been allotted and at Neelimala 22 are already posted. In Charalmedu dispensary ten staffs are made available and in Pampa government hospital 79 are posted so far. In Karimala taluk hospital nine staffs are already observing their duty.

Ambulance services are made available for 24 hours at Pampa government hospital, Nilakkal and Erumeli health centres, Pathanamthitta general hospital, and various other places, said Sabarimala Nodal officer Dr R Santhosh Kumar. In order to organize various cleaning activities, health inspectors, health supervisors, and junior health inspectors were posted.

Meanwhile, the department has made sufficient stock of medicines, bleaching powder at Pampa government hospital. Moreover, the lifesaving machines were subjected to inspection and

ensured that all are in working condition. The authorities have said that more measures will be taken according to the rise in the number of devotees and to the situation.

Along with this, the government hospital at Sannidhanam starts functioning under the guidance of nodal officer Dr. G Suresh Babu. The hospital has 40 staffs in various sections to tackle any medical situation here. Cardiology, General Medicine, Pediatric, Ortho, Surgery are the departments currently open at the hospital. Along with the nodal officer, an additional Medical Officer in charge has also been at service. An equipped operation theatre is also opened in case of any medical emergency.

Apart from doctors and nurses, the service of various paramedics like lab technician, pharmacists were also available at the hospital. The service of two ambulances will be available for 24 hours along with the service of health inspectors in safeguarding the public health of the devotees. (PR 5)

Appam, Aravana stock is sufficient:

Devaswom Board Commissioner

All facilities have been made available for the devotees for a smooth pilgrimage at Sabarimala, said Devaswom Board Commissioner N Vasu. He said this after going through the facilities arranged for the devotees during the Mandala-Makaravilakku festival. He said that this year the pilgrimage is progressing on a peaceful note. There saw a rush on the opening day of the season but due to hartal there was a drop in the rush at Sabarimala on Saturday, said him. The devotees from Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, and Karnataka are coming in large numbers these days.

Thirty lakh of aravana container has already been stocked and sufficient appam also is made available. He said that at present the counters are sufficient for the smooth distribution of appam and aravana. During the rush in the coming days, the board will decide whether to open more counters. The annandanam (free food) is served to devotees on daily basis and it is getting a good response from the devotees. Along with this, the board is distributing medicinal drinking water to devotees at 12 centres in and around Sabarimala. Oxygen parlours and Emergency medical care centers are opened at various places in the trekking path. Devaswom Commissioner also stated that they have already informed police about the difficulties faced by the devotees as part of the current police curb and he hoped that there will be loosening of this control with the consent of the police soon. (PR 6)

RAF and NDRF become part of 'Punyam Poonkavanam'

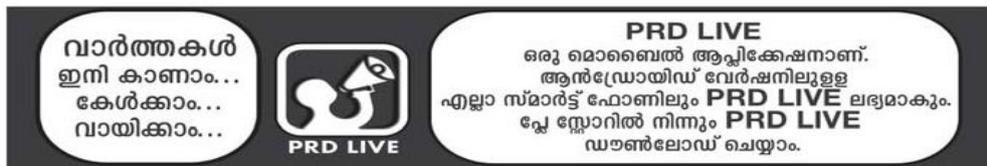
Rapid Action Force (RAF) and National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) showed that their devotion to Lord Ayyappa is something above their duty on Sunday. The two forces have become an example by taking part in the cleanliness drive 'Punyam Poonkavanam'. The Kerala Police, and Vishudhisena volunteers too have joined hands with the national forces on Sunday in their cleaning drive. The 60 RAF personnel and 30 NDRF personnel took part in the cleaning initiative under the leadership of RAF deputy commandant Dinesh and NDRF deputy commandant G Vijayan. The two forces have become part of the cleaning drive in Sabarimala from 2002. NDRF deputy commandant G Vijayan has said that there saw a large decrease in the waste deposited by devotees in Sabarimala. People have become aware of waste management and are not throwing wastes at random, said G Vijayan. (PR7)

Emergency Help Centres to be strengthened: District Collector

In connection with the ongoing Sabarimala pilgrim season, the functioning of the Emergency Help Centres will be strengthened, said Pathanamthitta District Collector P B Nooh. He said with this the district administration aims at the coordination of disaster management and other departments. A blueprint on the functioning of the centres and officers are already decided and it will come into operation within three days, said the District Collector.

Collector also inspected the drinking water distribution and toilet facilities at Sabarimala. He said that the toilets at Pampa will be ready in full scale soon. Most of the toilets are now operating. He also inspected the government hospital at Pampa and said that the installation of the equipment is fast progressing at the hospital.

Collector also met Police chief I G Vijay Sakhare, SP's Sivavikram, K S Sudarsan, Pradheesh Kumar, RAF second in commandant Satheesh Kumar Dubey, Deputy Commandant Dinesh Kumar, Singara Vel. (PR 8)



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