



# Government of Kerala

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### Press Release

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## Added Facilities To Traditional Route Pilgrims

A host of facilities await pilgrims arriving at Pamba via the traditional forest route from Erumeli via Azhutha, Mukkuzhi, Karimala and Valiyanavattom. The Travancore Devaswom Board is planning to provide special darshan at Sabarimala for pilgrims taking the hard traditional forest path, President, Prayar Gopalakrishnan said. These pilgrims, who reach the sannidanam would be permitted to climb the 18 holy steps through a special or virtual queue. The TDB president's decision to do so comes in the wake of his recent trek through the traditional forest path, which he undertook for understanding the hardships involved in the trek. Pilgrims reaching the top of Karimala after ascending a 33 km stretch would be issued special pass, enabling them to reach the holy steps through a special or a virtual queue. The pass would be issued by a high-level committee comprising TDB, Forest Department and police personnel. Mr.Gopalakrishnan trekked this path last year too, making him the first TDB president to do so.

Mr Gopalakrishnan also met Gurumoorthy Chettiyar Swami who had served rice porridge to him during his trek last year. Mr Gurumoorthy recalled how the president had taken the lead to set up a dedicated water connection for him to get drinking water, which helped him to prepare porridge to pilgrims. Two days prior to the current trek by the TDB president, Mr Gurumoorthy informed the president that he was not getting enough water at Karimala hilltop and hence could not continue the *anna danam* for the past five days. Earlier, attempts by Gurumoorthy to secure water from wells did not succeed. In this context, directions have been given to provide water in huge tanks so that *anna danam* would not be affected. Drinking water provided by Forest Conservation Society and Eco Development Societies are providing great relief to the pilgrims.

The TDB president also directed to shift the oxygen parlour from Koyikkakavu to the location where the climb begins. He asked the police to prevent anti-social activities at Inchippara and Mukkuzhi where pick-pocketing cases have been reported due to poor light. Steps would be taken to open a medical centre and set up an oxygen parlour at the peak of Karimala.

## **Manarkad Sanghom offers Kanikka to Lord Ayyappa**

A five-member group from Manarkad led by Periya Swami Ravi Manohar and Rajappan reached Sabarimala and as part of a 22-year-old tradition the group placed *panakkizhi* (a small bag of coins) before Lord Ayyappa. The coins are collected from devotees in Manarkad. The *panakkizhi* is placed on the third day of the Mayalam month of *dhanu*. The group started its journey to Sabarimala from the Bhagavathy temple at Manarkad on the 1<sup>st</sup> of dhanu and en route they conducted bhajans at various places. When this tradition began 22 years ago, the group had 11 members. The number has now come down to five. Besides Periya Swami Ravi Manohan and Rajappan, other members of the current group that reached sannidanam through the traditional forest path include Saseendran, Prakash Kumar and Suresh Kumar.

## **Sarana Veedhi directory released:**

The Akhila Bharatha Ayyappa Dharma Prachara Sabha released the second edition of the Sarana Veedhi directory, featuring details of former priests of Sabarimala temple. Thanthri Kantaru Rajeevaru released the directory by handing over a copy to Federal Bank chairman Shyam Sreenivasan. Melsanthi T.M.Unnikrishnan Namboodiri, Sabarimala Devaswom Executive Officer R.Ravisankar and Administrative Officer Yathindranath were present during the occasion. Sarana Veedhi office-bearers P.N.Kmenon, K.Ayyappa Das, Vinod Kumar Balakrishnan, T.A.Sajeev, A.P.Kaladharan and former melsanthi Brahmasri Edamana N.Damodaran Potty were also present.

## **New batch of police personnel takes charge:**

The fourth batch of police personnel comprising 1,800 members, took charge for assisting pilgrims at Sabarimala yesterday. DIG P.Vijayan who addressed the briefing session of the new batch, which was held in the sannidanam auditorium, reminded that all police personnel on duty are bound to provide selfless service in any circumstance at the sannidanam. Unlike law-and-order duty, there is a need to ensure the security of the temple as well as that of the pilgrims and ensure hassle-free darshan to them, he said. He also urged the new batch of officers to cooperate with other government departments and a host of other agencies functioning in and around the sannidanam.

The new batch has an SP, an ASP, 19 DySPs, 36 CIs and 1,520 policemen. The commando wing has two inspectors, four SIs and 42 civil police officers. The Quick Response Team has two SIs and 30 civil police officers. The Bomb Squad has one CI, six SIs and 110 civil police officers. The tele-communication wing has a CI, 10 SIs and six civil police officers.

The police station at sannidanam will be manned by an SI and 20 policemen. The Intelligence wing is headed by a DySP, while the Shadow Police wing has four SIs and six civil police officers. The new batch of police personnel will be on duty till December 29. Sannidanam Special Officer

N.Vijayakumar also addressed the new batch.

## Ashtapathy CD released

Sannidanam Special Officer N.Vijayakumar released the ‘Chandana Charchitham’ Ashtapathy CD by handing over a copy to Kattoor Harikumar. The release was followed by a musical tribute by Mr.Harikumar and Sivakumar Amrithakal

