



GOVT. OF KERALA

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**SABARIMALA PRESS RELEASE- 1**

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### **Additional medical facilities set up for Sabarimala pilgrims: Health Minister**

In view of the pilgrim season that begins in the hilly shrine of Sabarimala from today (16.11.2021), additional arrangements are put in place for providing better medical aid for pilgrims, state Health Minister Veena George has said.

Apart from the medical facilities made available at different places in Pathanamthitta district, pilgrims can also avail medical aid if necessary at Alappuzha, Kottayam and Idukki districts. A well-connected and extensive ambulance network is in place along with several mobile medical units. Besides that 15 basic life support (BLS) ambulances, one additional life support (ALS), and two minibuses are available for medical service.

Pilgrims can avail of medical treatment at Community Health Centre Erumeli, Kozhencherry District Hospital, Ranni Perinad Community Health Center, Ranni Taluk Headquarters Hospital, Pandalam Valiakoikkal Temple Midway Camp, Adoor District Hospital, Mundakayam Taluk Hospital, Kanjirappally General Hospital, Vandiperiyar Community Health Centre, Kumily Primary Health Centre, Chengannur District Hospital and Pathanamthitta District Hospital, the release said. Besides that special aid posts are set up at Chengannur Railway Station and Mahadeva Temple.

At Nilakkal Primary Health Centre, Charalmedu Dispesery, Erumeli Community Centre and Pathanamthitta General Hospital doctors are posted along with other supporting staff, said minister. Two cardiologists, two pulmonologists, five physicians, five orthopaedics, four surgeons, three anaesthetists, eight assistant surgeons are posted for providing medical services for the pilgrims. Apart from that six lab technicians, 13 pharmacists, 19 staff nurses, 11 nursing assistants, 17 hospital assistants and four radiographers are posted. In addition to this, in all emergency medical centres, nurses will be available.

Special teams are in-charge of preventing epidemics and conducting mosquito eradication drives. Health officials will make sure that the water in Sannidhanam and nearby places is of the required quality. Availability of doxycycline capsules used

as preventive medicine for leptospirosis and anti-snake venom has been ensured, minister said. For medical aid, pilgrims can call Disha 104, 1056, 0471 2552056, 2551056.

(PR-1)

### **Sabarimala shrine opened for mandala pooja**

The holy hilly shrine of Sabarimala was opened on Monday for Mandalam and Makaravilakku Pilgrimage. The outgoing head priest of the shrine V K Jayaraj Potti opened the shrine as tantri Kandararu Mahesh Mohanaru presided over the ceremonies. The head priest walked down the holy eighteen steps of the shrine and ceremonially ignited the sacred fireplace 'Aazhi'.

Later, the new head priest of the Sabarimala N Parameswaran Namboothiri and Malikappuram head priest Shambhu Namboothiri took over. Special Commissioner and Kollam District Judge M Manoj was present during the ceremony.

The pilgrim season at the hilly shrine begins on the first of Malayalam month of Vrishchikam (November 16). The Mandala Pooja Festival at the shrine will be held from November 16 to December 26. Afterwards, the holy shrine will be opened for the Makaravilakku festival on December 30. The Makaravilakku festival will be held from December 30 to January 20. Pilgrims are allowed to enter Sabarimala for darshan till January 19. The mandala pooja after the deity wearing the golden attire 'Thanka Anki' will be held on December 26. On the Makaravilakku day (January 14) at 6.30 pm, 'deeparadhana' with the deity adorned with 'Thiruvabaranam', will be held.

(PR-2)

