

Governor flags-off Helicopter services from
Pahalgam, Mian Altaf from Baltal

Governor pays obeisance at the Holy Cave Shrine;
prays for sustained peace, harmony in J&K

*‘Yatra commences simultaneously on both the
routes’*

SRINAGAR, JUNE 25 - The annual Yatra to the Holy Cave Shrine of Shri Amarnathji in the Kashmir Himalayas commenced today on both the Pahalgam and Baltal routes simultaneously, with Mr. N. N. Vohra, Governor Jammu and Kashmir, paying obeisance at the Sanctum Sanctorum and participating in the “pratham darshan and pooja”. He prayed for sustained peace, harmony, progress and prosperity in the State.

Mrs. Usha Vohra, First Lady, and Mr. Navin K. Choudhary, Chief Executive Officer of the Shri Amarnathji Shrine Board, accompanied the Governor during the visit, paid obeisance at the Holy Cave Shrine, along with other senior officers of SASB, Government, Police and Security Forces. Immediately thereafter, the Yatra formally commenced when the gates were thrown open to the eagerly waiting pilgrims.

After his visit to Shri Amarnathji Shrine early in the morning, the Governor also reviewed the arrangements made for the Yatris at the Holy Cave Shrine Camp and conveyed the Shrine Board’s thanks to the State Government, Army, Central Para Military Forces, State Police and all the concerned agencies for their support and cooperation. He stressed the need for effective supervision and close day to day monitoring by the Camp Directors and all the functionaries involved in the management of the Yatra for ensuring smooth conduct of the pilgrimage, particularly keeping in view the difficulties

and stoppages caused by intermittent rains and bad weather and the still large accumulation of frozen snows in the Holy Cave and Sheshnag Camps and on over 12 kilometres of the tracks.

Later, the Governor flew to the Baltal Base Camp and joined Mian Altaf Ahmad, Minister for Forests, who flagged-off the two Baltal-Panjtarni helicopter services which are being operated by M/s Summit Aviation Pvt. Ltd. and M/s Himalayan Heli Services Pvt. Ltd. The Governor also reviewed the Yatra arrangements put in place at this Base Camp and the Camps enroute the Holy Cave.

Prominent among those present at Baltal were Mr. Showkat Ahmad Mir, Deputy Commissioner, Ganderbal; Mr. Shahid Mehraj, Superintendent of Police, Ganderbal; Mr. Mohammad Yousuf, CEO, Sonamarg Development Authority and other concerned officers.

From Baltal the Governor proceeded to Pahalgam where he inaugurated the Pahalgam-Panjtarni helicopter service being operated by Pawan Hans Helicopters Ltd. Thereafter, he visited the Frisking and Spot Registration Counters which were set up yesterday. Later, he visited the Nunwan Base Camp where he reviewed the arrangements made for the Yatris.

The Governor also visited Chandanwari where he inspected the functioning of the Control Gate and the arrangements at the Chandanwari Camp. He directed that one more Shelter Unit should be set up next to the Control Gate for the convenience of the pilgrims.

Mr. Vijay Kumar, DIG (Range); Mr. Farooq Ahmad Shah, Deputy Commissioner, Anantnag; Mr R. K. Jalla, SSP, Anantnag; Mr. Mir Altaf Ahmad, Chief Executive Officer, Pahalgam Development Authority and other concerned officers were present at Pahalgam.

The Governor interacted with the Yatris at the Holy Cave, Baltal, Pahalgam, Nunwan Base Camp and Chandanwari and enquired about the

adequacy of the arrangements made for the Yatra. The Yatris were appreciative of the arrangements made by the Shrine Board, the State Government agencies and other service providers, despite the continuing bad weather, and expressed their thanks.

This year's Shri Amarnathji Yatra, which commenced from Baltal and Pahalgam this morning, will conclude on Raksha Bandhan on 2nd August, 2012. The registration of the Yatris for this year's Yatra had commenced on 7th May, 2012.

Meanwhile, Mr. Navin K. Choudhary, CEO, has once again appealed to the intending Shri Amarnathji Yatris to embark on the pilgrimage only after obtaining, in their own interest, a valid Yatra Permit. This would ensure against any avoidable inconvenience to them. The CEO reiterated that Yatris not possessing valid Yatra Permits will not be able to proceed beyond the Nunwan and Baltal Base Camps.

The CEO said that the Board has also issued a detailed Advisory of Do's and Don'ts for the Yatris visiting the Holy Cave Shrine of Shri Amarnathji. The Yatris need to strictly adhere to these Do's and Don'ts as they have to undertake an arduous trek through high mountain ranges under adverse weather conditions, he added.

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