

## Shri Amarnathji Yatra 2012

### Governor undertakes aerial reconnaissance of Pahalgam-Holy Cave-Baltal tracks

#### *Holds meeting at Baltal Base Camp*

SRINAGAR, JUNE 2 – Mr. N. N. Vohra, Governor, who is Chairman of the Shri Amarnathji Shrine Board, today undertook an aerial reconnaissance of the Pahalgam-Sheshnag-Holy Cave-Panjtarni-Baltal circuit to assess the status of snowmelt along both the Yatra routes and at the various Camps along the tracks. He also reviewed progress on the ongoing work of clearance of tracks of frozen snows and putting in place logistics at various enroute Camp locations for the smooth conduct of the ensuing Shri Amarnathji Yatra, which is scheduled to commence, on both the Baltal and Chandanwari routes, on 25<sup>th</sup> June, 2012.

The Governor, accompanied by Mr. Navin K. Choudhary, his Principal Secretary and Chief Executive Officer of the Shri Amarnathji Shrine Board, flew to the Holy Cave but could not land there because of the very accumulation of frozen snow on and alongside the helipad near the Shrine. The Governor undertook an aerial reconnaissance of the Panjtarni Camp, half of which is under snow, and Sheshnag Camp, all of which is still under snow. Due to bad weather the envisaged aerial survey could not take place in the morning from both the Baltal and Chandanwari-axis. Consequently, the aerial survey of the entire route was conducted in the afternoon. Simultaneously, a team of officers/engineers of SASB as well as a group of the State Police officials undertook a ground survey to assess the likely time frame within which men and materials could be moved to establish vital facilities and arrangements for the Yatra.

The Governor reiterated his directions that additional manpower should be employed for clearance of tracks and for putting in place various Yatra-related arrangements. He directed the CEO to ensure that all the Yatra-centric arrangements must be positioned as per the earlier envisaged timelines and reiterated the need for very close coordination at all levels to facilitate the visiting Yatris. He stressed that the repair of huts and all other infrastructure, establishment of water and power supplies, sanitation and other arrangements must be made on the earliest possible basis, notwithstanding the time being lost because of recurring rains and fresh snows.

From Baltal the Governor drove to Domel and reviewed the track clearance work, construction of Entry Gate and Shelter being constructed by the Sonamarg Development Authority under the Disaster Management Plan. He also inspected the additional toilets being installed at the Baltal Base Camp.

The Governor had a meeting with the Army authorities at Domel and discussed security and other Yatra related issues with them. Thereafter, he reviewed the ongoing works at the Baltal Base Camp, including those relating to water and power supply, availability of ration, LPG and other essential commodities, transport and traffic arrangements, telecommunication, fire fighting arrangements, installation of Public Address System, repair of huts, toilets and baths, Sewage Treatment Plant, medicare, upgradation of road from Ranga Morh to Baltal Base Camp and construction of an alternate road from Nilgrath to Baltal. He directed that while laying tents for the pilgrims at Baltal and various other Camp locations there must be adequate provision for firelines.

Chairing the review meeting at Baltal Base Camp, the Governor held discussions with Mr. Showkat Ahmad Mir, Deputy Commissioner, Ganderbal, Mr. Shahid Mehraj, Superintendent of Police, Ganderbal, Mr. Mohammad Yousuf, CEO, Sonamarg Development Authority, and the District and Divisional Heads of Departments of all concerned Departments. At this meeting, all the Yatra related arrangements, being made at the Baltal Base Camp and on the Baltal-Holy Cave route by the various Departments, including the Public Health, Power, Consumer Affairs, Health, Labour, Forests, Fire and Emergency Services, Tourism, Information, BSNL, Animal Husbandry and other agencies were reviewed.

The Governor was informed that water and power supply will be fully restored at the Baltal Base Camp by 10<sup>th</sup> June and at rest of the Camp locations by 18<sup>th</sup> June. It was stated that all the arrangements will be in place well before the commencement of the Yatra.

Mr. Preet Pal Singh, Additional CEO of the Shrine Board, Mr. K. G. Bamba, GM Works SASB, Mr. B. D. Mengi, the Camp Directors Mr. Amit Sharma, Mr. Manohar Lal Raina, Mr. Ashok Kumar Pandita, Mr. Tilak Raj, Mr. Rajnish Kumar, Mr. Ranjit Singh and Mr. Surinder Mohan and other concerned officers and senior engineers of various departments were present on the occasion.