

Governor reviews Yatra arrangements at Base Camps

Srinagar, May 14 - Mr. N. N. Vohra, Governor of Jammu and Kashmir, who is also the Chairman of Shri Amarnathji Shrine Board today visited the Yatra Base Camps at Baltal and Pahalgam and conducted an aerial survey of the entire Yatra route to review the snow situation and preparedness for making timely arrangements for the upcoming Shri Amarnathji Yatra which will commence on 28th June, 2013.

The Governor inspected the ongoing construction work of Sewage Treatment Plants (STPs) at the Baltal and Nunwan Yatra Base Camps and directed the concerned officials to complete it well before the commencement of the Yatra. He also inspected the treatment blocks being constructed for the treatment of wastes from the Langars. The Governor hoped that with the completion of the STPs at the Base Camps and the flows from the toilet blocks and Langars being connected to the STPs would eliminate concerns about environmental pollution. He also directed that all the toilets, at every Camp location, should be connected to proper waste disposal systems and foolproof arrangements should be made for maintaining cleanliness of toilet facilities.

The Governor directed the CEOs of Pahalgam Development Authority and Sonamarg Development Authority to make effective arrangements for the daily collection and dumping of garbage and stressed the need to identify suitable dumping sites and making all arrangements for the disposal of garbage on scientific lines. The Governor was informed that considering the heavy rush during entire summer due to the Yatra and the tourist season, a Project Report for the identification and development of suitable garbage disposal sites near Pahalgam and Sonamarg has been prepared and the necessary clearance in this regard is being obtained.

While reviewing the arrangements for providing medical facilities to the pilgrims, the Governor impressed upon the Chief Medical Officers of Anantnag and Ganderbal districts to set up medical camps with adequate manpower, equipments and medicines. He also directed that each medical centre should have proper toilet facilities as well as water supply connections. He asked both the Deputy Commissioners to ensure effective coordination in this regard.

The Governor impressed upon the PHE department to make suitable projects to lay underground water supply facility at the Base Camp locations to avoid unnecessary expenditure being incurred every year for bringing water supply pipes and transporting them back after every Yatra. The PHE officials informed that underground water supply pipe is being laid at the Baltal Base Camp and for other camp locations a suitable Project Report would be prepared.

The PDD officials informed that while electricity supply has been restored upto Neelgrath and Chandanwari, the same would be done upto Domel in one week's time. The power supply at other Camp locations would be operational by 10th June, 2013 positively. The Governor asked the PDD officials to make sure that adequate diesel supply for the Generator sets at Holy Cave, Panjtarni and Sheshnag is ensured in order to have uninterrupted telecom facilities.

The Governor asked Deputy Commissioners of Anantnag and Ganderbal to make sure that the requisite permission for the setting up of tents and shops are granted to deserving eligible persons from the local areas as per the laid down guidelines, in a transparent manner. He asked the Deputy Commissioners to make sure that Lay Out Plans prepared for all the Camp locations are strictly adhered to and permissions are granted accordingly. While marking the Lay Out Plans on the ground, adequate fire gaps must also be ensured and the quality of tents must be examined before granting permission, stressed the Governor.

The Governor stressed on the Police Authorities of the two districts to ensure that all regulatory measures are undertaken to ensure that only registered Yatris are able to cross the Access Control Gates at Chandanwari and Baltal. He also stressed that under no circumstances Yatris should be allowed to move beyond the Access Control Gates after the cut-off time fixed for the day. He also stressed the need for proper traffic management and directed the traffic officers to ensure proper parking of vehicles on the road leading to Pahalgam and Chandanwari and appropriate traffic management at Baltal Base Camp by way of making the alternate route from Baltal to Neelgrath functional for one way traffic. The Governor has also directed Divisional Commissioner, Kashmir to coordinate with Army authorities to make shifting of Baltal Helipad to Neelgrath possible with effect from Yatra 2014. This move will help decongest Baltal Base Camp.

The Governor also enquired about provision of shelter sheds in the Yatra area and was informed that Tourism department has placed order for procurement of thirty shelter sheds which will be installed well before the Yatra commences. The Governor directed that all these shelter sheds which could prove immensely useful in case of disaster or bad weather condition, should be having adequate toilet and water supply facilities in the vicinity.

The CAPD officials informed the Governor that adequate supply arrangements have been made for the coming Yatra. However, the question of providing subsidized ration and gas cylinders need to be decided by the State Government with the approval of concerned Union Ministry. The Governor asked the CEO to work out the requirements and immediately take up with the concerned Central Ministry to early resolve this issue.

The Review Meeting at Anantnag besides Principal Secretary to Governor and CEO, SASB, Mr. Navin K. Choudhary, was attended by DIG Anantnag, Mr. Vijay Kumar, DC Anantnag, Mr. Farooq Lone, SSP, Anantnag, Mr. Ramesh Jalla, CEO,

PDA, Mr. Nissar Wani, Addl. CEO, SASB, Mr. P.P. Singh and concerned District officers of different departments. At Baltal, review meeting among others was attended by DC, Ganderbal, Mr. Sarmad Hafiz, SP. Ganderbal, Mr. Shahid Mehraj, General Manager, Works, SASB, Mr. R. K. Pandita and all concerned district officers.

Earlier in the day, the Governor accompanied by Mr. Navin K. Choudhary, CEO, SASB undertook an aerial survey of the entire Yatra area including Holy Cave, Panjtarni, Mahagunus Top, Sheshnag and Chandanwari. While reviewing the snow situation, the Governor asked the CEO to coordinate the effort to ensure snow clearance at the earliest possible which will facilitate putting in place other Yatra arrangements in time. The Governor also asked the CEO to ensure close coordination with Divisional Commissioner, Kashmir, to resolve any issue arising while making Yatra arrangements.

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