

# Shri Amarnathji Yatra 2016: Post Yatra Review

## *Governor thanks State Government, Security Forces and all other involved agencies for smooth conduct of Yatra*

**Srinagar, August 20:** Governor N. N. Vohra, who is the Chairman of Shri Amarnathji Shrine Board, lauded the very high level of coordination among the State Government, Army, Central Armed Police Forces, J&K Police, Shrine Board and each of the concerned State Government Departments, agencies and local stakeholders involved with the management of Shri Amarnathji Yatra-2016. He also thanked the people of the Valley, particularly of Anantnag and Ganderbal districts, for their valuable support for ensuring the smooth conduct of this arduous pilgrimage. The Governor was addressing the Post-Yatra 2016 Review Meeting which was followed by a felicitation function at Raj Bhavan here today.

The Governor observed that the preparations for the smooth conduct of this year's Yatra started very early and various arrangements were made well within the prescribed timeframe. However, due to unforeseen developments in the Valley, the number of pilgrims who performed this Year's pilgrimage were far less than that during Yatra 2015.

Thanking the State Government for the strong support provided by it the Governor said that arrangements on the ground were much better this year and appreciated the efforts of every stakeholder involved in organizing Yatra 2016.

The Governor observed that the Yatra proceeded smoothly barring two serious accidents involving vehicles carrying Yatris at Awantipora and Chandanwari. He said that drawing lessons from these two accidents, which resulted in several deaths, it needs to be ensured that such unfortunate incidents do not recur.

The Governor reiterated his direction to the CEO to immediately launch a full scale post-Yatra sanitation drive, fully involving the Pahalgam and Sonamarg Development Authorities, so that the entire Yatra area is effectively cleaned up in the next 5 days.

The Governor also directed the CEO to ensure complete cleaning up of all Camp sites and to prepare a Camp and route-wise Action Plan

for Yatra 2017, keeping in view the experiences gained during this year's pilgrimage. He stressed that route-wise arrangements of all aspects of the Yatra must be worked out well in advance.

The Governor observed that the Yatra Review Meetings are being convened every year, for the past six years, immediately after the culmination of the Yatra, with a view to securing feedback and identifying every element in the overall arrangements for the just concluded Yatra which requires to be improved, for the better management of the ensuing pilgrimages.

On the basis of the feedback received from the Camp Directors, the Governor asked Mr. P.K. Tripathi, Chief Executive Officer (CEO), Shrine Board, to initiate action to prepare Camp-wise and route-wise Action Plans for Yatra 2017, on a time-bound basis, particularly focusing on the requirements of medicare, water and power supply, sanitation, environment protection, accommodation and all other required facilities.

The Governor, as Chairman of the Shri Amarnathji Shrine Board, presented certificates and mementoes to the officers who attended the Meeting, as a token of the Board's appreciation and thanks for their valuable support for the smooth conduct of the Yatra 2016.

Mr. P.K. Tripathi, CEO gave details of the initiatives which had been taken for Yatra 2016, a new Exit gate at Chandanwari beyond glacier towards Pissu Top. 50 m barricading with covered shed at Domel Access Control Gate; covered roof at frisking gate at Serbal near Nunwan shifting of the pony stand at Panjtarni outside the Camp for smooth movement of Yatris, augmentation of the CCTV Cameras at Domel and Chandanwari with 360 degree viewing angle new Cameras for better monitoring of the gates, a new fencing at Sheshnag and Panjtarni Camps for better security of the Camp areas. Improved Telecom connectivity in the Yatra area with additional Band Width by BSNL using VSATs and Army OFC; and availability of 7 days validity Pre-paid SIM cards to the Yatris at Lakhanpur border and at Bhagwati Nagar, Jammu in addition to Baltal and Nunwan Base Camps; printing and distribution of Yatra Nirdeshika – a booklet containing Dos and Don'ts, free of cost, among the intending Yatris along with Yatra permits,

For On-spot registration Counters in Jammu, the system of issuing Tokens was introduced for the first time, so that the intending Yatris do not have to stand in long queues for obtaining Yatra Permits and Yatris

could be registered in a transparent and comfortable manner. “Bulk SMS service”, was introduced to deliver Yatra centric messages as well as ‘dos and don’ts’ free of cost, to the intending Yatris on their Mobile numbers. On-line advance quota of heli tickets on Neelgrath–Panjtarni – Neelgrath route was increased to 250 and on Pahalgam–Panjtarni –Pahalgam route to 126 per day in order to ensure increased availability of on-line tickets.

Oxygen concentrators were installed for the first time at critical locations which were in addition to Oxygen Concentrators provided at each MAC. Doctors and Specialists from the States of Haryana, Punjab, Uttar Pradesh, Gujarat etc. and Super-specialty Hospitals i.e. AIIMS, Safdarjung, RML Hospital, PGI, Chandigarh etc. were also deployed in the Yatra area for the first time. 20 teams of MRTs of JKAP/SDRF/CRPF were with 10 Oxygen cylinders. Sign boards for milestones indicating next medical centre, the distances and approximate walking time, were installed for the first time, Hospitals at Sheshnag and Panjtarni were housed in proper accommodation and a Telemedicine facility introduced at Sheshnag with the help of ISRO and Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, GOI.

New large size sign boards indicating Satellite map with route chart superimposed with altitude, facilities available etc. along with Dos and Don’ts displayed at major places including Jammu and Yatra Base Camps. The new informative mile stone sign boards with distances were installed all along both the Yatra tracks. 445 new toilets, 140 baths and 863 dustbins were added for this year’s Yatra.

While thanking one and all for the speed and promptitude with which all those involved with the conduct of the Yatra had worked, the CEO said that it was due to this synergy which helped in the successful management of the Yatra.

The issues which were reviewed during the meeting included: feasibility of further improvements in the existing system of Registration of Yatris and Access Control measures; Medical arrangements, improvement of tracks, sanitation arrangements; functioning of Langars and other services; improvement of telecommunications operation of helicopter services; improvement of telecommunication services rendered by BSNL; Disaster Management arrangements; services rendered by various other departments and agencies and the scope for improvements therein.

Mr. Jitendra K. Singh, Additional Chief Executive Officer of the Board, presented the vote of thanks on the occasion.

Mr. B.R Sharma, Chief Secretary; Mr. B.B. Vyas, Financial Commissioner, Planning and Development; Mr. Raj Kumar Goyal, Principal Secretary Home; Mr. Dheeraj Gupta, Principal Secretary Power Development Department; Mr. K. Rajendra, Director General of Police; Lt. Gen. Satish Dua, GOC.15 Corps; Mr. S.N. Shrivastava, Additional Director General CRPF; Mr. Rohit Kansal Commissioner Secretary PWD; Mr. Sanjeev Verma, Secretary PHE; Dr. Mandeep Kumar Bhandari, Secretary Health; Mr. Baseer Ahmed Khan, Div. Comm. Kashmir; Mrs. Nirmal Sharma, Secretary Labour and Employment; Mr. Farooq Ahmed Shah, Secretary Tourism; Mr. Atul Karwal, IG CRPF, Srinagar; Mr. S.J.M. Gillani, IGP, Kashmir; Maj. Gen. Ashok Narula, GOC, Hqrs. Victor Force; Mr. Vikash Chandra, IG BSF, Srinagar; Mr. Vasu Yadav, Member Secretary, State Pollution Control Board; Mr. S.F.A. Gillani, Chief Conservator of Forest (Central); Air Commodore Manoj Marathe, AOC, Srinagar; Dr. Shahid Iqbal Choudhary, Director Information; Mr. Syed Abid Rashid Shah, Deputy Commissioner, Anantnag; Mr. Tariq Hussain Ganai, Deputy Commissioner, Ganderbal; Mr. Imtiaz Ismail, Superintendent of Police, Ganderbal; Mr. Zubair Ahmad Khan, Superintendent of Police, Anantnag; Mr. Mohd. Saleem Beg, GM, BSNL, Srinagar; Dr. Shamas-ud-Din Makhdoomi, Director General, Animal Husbandry Department; Mr. R.S. Sodhi, Director General, Fire and Emergency Services; Col. Anil Kumar Mor, CO, 18- Punjab Domel; Col. Sudhir Tokas, CO, 26-Punjab, Sheshnag; Police Yatra Officers; Heads of Departments, Camp Directors, Additional Camp Directors, senior Civil, Army, Security Forces and Police officers were prominent among those who participated in the meeting.

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