



# Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine Board

# Trikuta

## A Quarterly Newsletter

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### 67<sup>th</sup> Meeting of SMVDSB

## Lt Governor launches home delivery of Pooja Prasad, devotees to get 'Prasad' home delivered from Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine

The Lieutenant Governor, Sh. Manoj Sinha, who is the Chairman of Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine Board, formally launched home delivery of Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Pooja Prasad for devotees who may not be able to visit the Holy Shrine located in the Trikuta Hills, during the Board meeting held at the Raj Bhavan, Jammu on 21 September 2020.



Lieutenant Governor, Sh. Manoj Sinha formally launching home delivery of Pooja Prasad during 67<sup>th</sup> meeting of SMVDSB at Raj Bhavan, Jammu.

To get Prasad home delivered, a devotee can book the Pooja Prasad through Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine Board's website or through telephonic mode. Once the booking is done, the Board ensures that Pooja is performed within 72 hours and Prasad is despatched through Speed Post.



Meanwhile, till 30 September, 2500 packets of Pooja Prasad have been despatched by the Shrine Board to the devotees across the country through speed post for which the Board has entered into an agreement with the Postal Department.

The Lieutenant Governor, while chairing the first meeting of the Shrine Board since taking over in August this year, welcomed the Board Members, at the outset. The meeting was attended by the Board Members – H. H. Sri Sri Ravi Shankar, Dr. Ashok Bhan, Justice (Retd) Permod Kohli, Sh. K. K. Sharma, Maj. Gen. (Retd) Shiv Kumar Sharma, and Sh. K. B. Kachru.

Sh. BVR Subrahmanyam, Chief Secretary; Sh. Nitishwar Kumar, Principal Secretary to the Lieutenant Governor; Sh. Baleswar Rai (Special Invitee); Sh. Ramesh Kumar, Chief Executive Officer of the Shrine Board; and Sh. Vivek Verma, Additional Chief Executive Officer were also present in the meeting.

To begin with, the Board reviewed the timely and necessary precautionary measures taken by the CEO Shrine Board in view of the outbreak of coronavirus for ensuring the safety of the visiting pilgrims, staff and the public at large and lauded these proactive initiatives.

The Lieutenant Governor directed the CEO for phase wise increase in the number of outside UT pilgrims based on objective assessment of the ground situation.

The Board undertook a comprehensive review of the major infrastructure development projects of the Shrine Board, including those completed earlier, ongoing and which are in the pipeline, aimed at bringing about further improvement in the facilities for the convenience of the visiting pilgrims. The Lieutenant Governor directed the CEO for completion of ongoing works in a time bound manner for facilitating the visiting pilgrims. He further directed the CEO to explore various online facilities for the pilgrims like performing the Pooja, Havan and other

rituals through online mode during the prevailing situation.

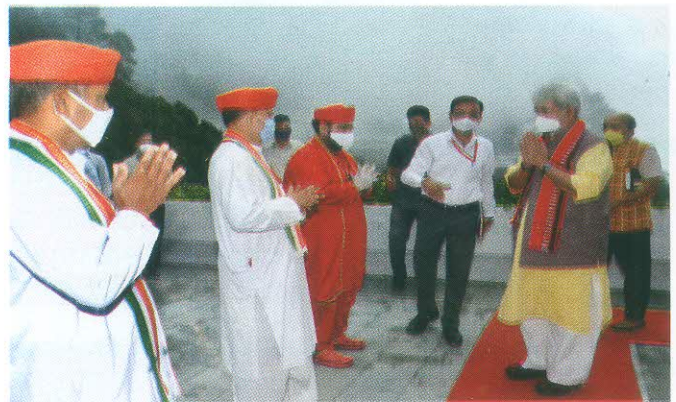
The meeting also had an appraisal of the functioning of the various projects taken up and accomplished by the Board for the benefit of the society at large. These included establishment of Shri Mata Vaishno Devi University, Gurukul, Superspeciality Hospital, Nursing College, Sports Complex, besides various social support initiatives taken by the Board.

Before the commencement of discussions, Sh. Ramesh Kumar, CEO gave a detailed presentation on the latest status of varied activities of the Board and the action taken on the implementation of various decisions of the previous meetings of the Board.

### **Lt Governor pays obeisance at Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine Inspects facilities for pilgrims**

Lieutenant Governor, Sh. Manoj Sinha, who is the Chairman of Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine Board, on 20 August paid obeisance at the Holy Cave Shrine of Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Ji and prayed for peace, progress and prosperity in Jammu and Kashmir.

During his visit, the Lieutenant Governor was accompanied by Sh. BVR Subrahmanyam, Chief Secretary; and Sh. Ramesh Kumar, Chief Executive Officer, Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine Board.



Lieutenant Governor, Sh. Manoj Sinha visits Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine.



Sh. Manoj Sinha, who was on his first visit to Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine after taking over as the Lieutenant Governor of J&K UT on 6 August, inspected the wayside facilities put in place by the Shrine Board for facilitation of the pilgrims.



Lieutenant Governor, Sh. Manoj Sinha at the Holy Cave Shrine of Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Ji.

At Bhawan, the Lieutenant Governor inspected the arrangements made by the Board for the pilgrims in view of the resumption of the yatra on 16 August and asked the CEO that all precautionary measures taken by the Board in connection with the COVID-19 for the safety and security of the pilgrims and the Shrine Board staff should continue till the situation normalises.

The Lieutenant Governor also directed the CEO for expeditious planning and construction of Durga Bhawan for providing free of cost accommodation facilities for the pilgrims. Besides this, the Lieutenant Governor asked for further enhancing accommodation facilities for pilgrims, maximizing utilisation of IT-enabled services for facilitation of yatris and expediting work on the installation of Video Walls project. He also asked the CEO for enhancing religious activities at the Shrine.

Sh. Sanjeev Verma, Divisional Commissioner, Jammu; Sh. Mukesh Singh, IGP, Jammu Zone; Ms. Indu Kanwal Chib, Deputy Commissioner, Reasi; and Ms. Rashmi Wazir, SSP, Reasi also accompanied the Lieutenant Governor.

## Religious Activities

### **Yatra to Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine resumes from 16 August**

The yatra to the Holy Cave Shrine of Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Ji resumed on 16 August with the organising of special Pooja, Havan and Yagya at the Sanctum Sanctorum amidst chanting of Vedic Mantras and performing other religious ceremonies in which Sh. Ramesh Kumar, Chief Executive Officer and other concerned officers of the Shrine Board participated.



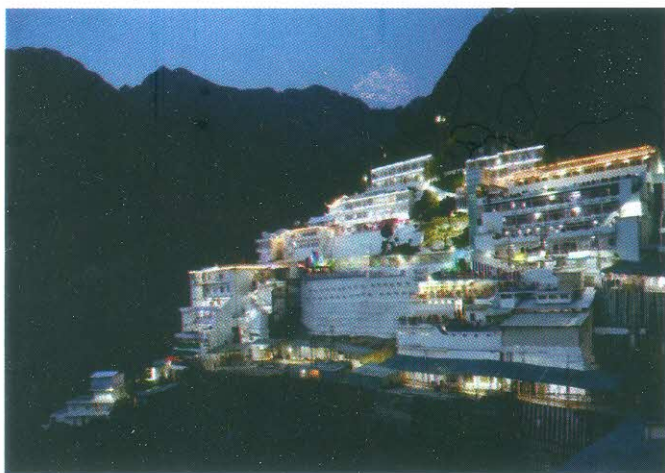
Pilgrims proceeding to Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine after resumption of yatra on 16<sup>th</sup> August 2020.

The Chief Executive Officer accompanied by a team of officers of the Board took stock of the arrangements for the resumption of the pilgrimage at Darshani Deodi, Helipad and right from Katra enroute to Bhawan on 15 August till late in the evening. The pilgrims lauded the arrangements put in place by the Shrine Board for their facilitation. Tremendous enthusiasm was observed among the pilgrims as the yatra resumed after about 5 months. It is pertinent to mention that in view of the COVID-19, the pilgrimage to Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine was suspended w.e.f. 18 March 2020.

During the first week of the resumption of pilgrimage i.e. upto 22 August 2020, there was a ceiling of 2,000 pilgrims per day, including 1900 from within Jammu and

Kashmir and the remaining 100 from outside J&K. This ceiling was later modified to 1750 pilgrims from within J&K and 250 from outside J&K. The quota of pilgrims from outside J&K UT was further enhanced to 500 pilgrims per day, out of the ceiling of 2,000 yatris daily. Thereafter, the number of pilgrims was enhanced to 5,000, including 4000 from within J&K and 1000 from outside J&K. The pilgrims are being allowed to undertake the pilgrimage after registration through online mode only through official website of Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine Board i.e. [www.maavaishnodevi.org](http://www.maavaishnodevi.org) in order to avoid any assembly of persons at the Yatra Registration Counter(s).

The pilgrims are also required to install Aarogya Setu App on their Mobile Phones, before proceeding on the yatra. It is also mandatory for the pilgrims to wear face masks/face cover(s). Every yatri is scanned by way of Thermal Image Scanners at the yatra entry points.



The magnificent night view of Bhawan.

The children below the age of 10 years, pregnant women, persons with co-morbidities and persons above the age of 60 years have been advised to avoid the yatra in the interest of their own safety from infection of COVID-19.

The COVID negative test report of the pilgrims from outside J&K and also from containment zones of J&K is being checked

at the Helipad and the Yatra Entry Points at Darshani Deodi, Banganga, Katra. Only those with negative reports are allowed to move beyond towards Bhawan. For the awareness of the visiting pilgrims about various precautionary measures to be adopted in view of COVID-19, regular announcements are also being made on the already installed Multi-Purpose Audio System on the track.

The free Langar at Tarakote Marg and Prasad Kendra at Sanjichhat have been operationalised for the facility of pilgrims; besides opening of Bhojanalayas at Katra, Adhkuwari and Bhawan.

For the ease and comfort of pilgrims, all the supplementary facilities set up by the Board like the Battery Operated Vehicles, Passenger Ropeway and Helicopter services have been put into operation by strictly following the social distancing norms and other precautionary measures.

The yatra to the Holy Cave Shrine is progressing smoothly and is picking up pace with each passing day. The booking by the devotees for Shradha Suman Vishesh Pooja and Atka Aarti have also now commenced through online mode. The accommodations of the Shrine Board at Bhawan, Adhkuwari, Katra and Jammu have also been thrown open for the pilgrims, following all the prescribed SOPs. The cloakrooms, blanket stores and all other facilities too have been made available to facilitate the pilgrims.

### **Shrine Board enters into agreement with Postal Department for home delivery of Prasad to devotees through Speed Post**

Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine Board entered into an agreement with the Department of Posts for the speedy delivery of Prasad to the devotees of Maa Vaishno Devi across the country.

In this connection, Sh. Ramesh Kumar, Chief Executive Officer of the Shrine Board and Sh. Gaurav Srivastava, Director (Headquarters), Postal Services, J&K signed



the agreement at the Spiritual Growth Centre, Katra on August 29.

For facilitating the devotees, especially during the prevailing circumstances, the Board introduced the facility of delivery of Prasad at their places. This initiative of the Board will greatly help the devotees to avail the Prasad who could not undertake the yatra due to the circumstances created by the pandemic.



CEO, Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine Board signing MoU with Director Postal Services.

In this regard, three categories of Prasad have been launched by the Board on 'no profit no loss basis' which can be booked either through the official website of the Shrine Board i.e. [www.maavaishnodevi.org](http://www.maavaishnodevi.org) or through telephonic mode on the dedicated mobile number [9906019475](tel:9906019475).

It is pertinent to mention that the Shrine Board has already offered the facility of allowing the devotees to perform Havan/Pooja, in absentia, at the Yagya Shala at Bhawan.

Among those present on the occasion of the signing of the agreement by the Chief Executive Officer of Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine Board and the Director, Postal Services, were Sh. Vivek Verma, Additional Chief Executive Officer; Sh. Hem Kant Prasher, Chief Accounts Officer; Dr. Sunil Sharma, Sh. Deepak Dubey and Sh. Vishavjeet Singh, Dy. CEOs; and other concerned officers of the Shrine Board and the Department of Posts.

## Administrative Activities

### Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine Board celebrates 35<sup>th</sup> Foundation Day

Performing of Pooja, Havan and Yagya marked the celebration of 35<sup>th</sup> Foundation Day of Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine Board on 30 August. These religious ceremonies were organised at Bhawan, Adhkuwari, Katra, Jammu and other locations in which the staff of the Shrine Board and the pilgrims participated. Employees of the Shrine Board took pledge on this occasion to perform their duties with sincerity and devotion.

Sh. Ramesh Kumar, Chief Executive Officer of the Shrine Board, on the auspicious occasion of the Foundation Day, congratulated the staff of the Shrine Board and impressed upon them to work with utmost zeal and dedication for providing continuously improving facilities to the pilgrims visiting the Holy Cave Shrine of Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Ji. He also gave details of various major infrastructure development projects completed and the facilities put in place by the Shrine Board for facilitation of the pilgrims. It is pertinent to recall that the Board was formed on this day in 1986.



CEO, SMVDSB participating in Pooja and Havan organized on 35<sup>th</sup> Foundation Day of the Shrine Board.

At Katra, the main function was held at Niharika Complex where special Pooja and Havan was performed. Sh. Ramesh Kumar,

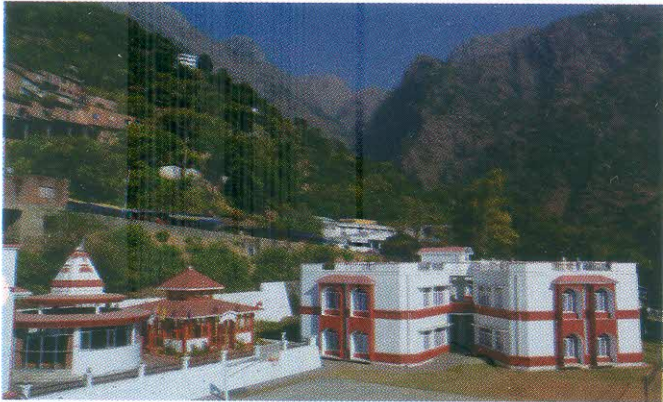


Chief Executive Officer of the Shrine Board; Sh. Vivek Verma, Additional CEO; and Sh. Vishavjeet Singh, Dy. CEO and other officers and staff of the Shrine Board, besides the pilgrims participated.

In view of the COVID-19, these functions were held by strictly following the social distancing norms and other precautionary measures.

### **SMVD Gurukul celebrates Annual Day**

Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Gurukul, Charan Paduka, Katra, celebrated its Annual Day on 30 August. Pooja, Havan and other activities were organised as part of the function.



A view of Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Gurukul. .

Dr. Ashok Bhan, Member Shrine Board and Chairman of the Governing Council for Gurukul; Sh. Ramesh Kumar, Chief Executive Officer, Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine Board; Prof. Y. K. Mishra and Prof. Vishwamurty Shastri, members of the Governing Council; and Dr. Sunil Sharma, Dy. CEO of the Shrine Board and Administrator of the Gurukul; besides the faculty, staff and more than one hundred students of the Gurukul participated in the function through online mode.

Dr. Bhan congratulated the management, staff and students of the Gurukul on the Annual Day function of the institution and lauded the students for excelling in academics as well as in co-curricular activities. He also appreciated the

efforts for organising online classes for the students of the Gurukul since the lockdown and conducting online tests for continuously evaluating their level of preparation.

Sh. Ramesh Kumar, CEO of the Shrine Board also congratulated the entire faculty and students and appreciated that besides organising the online classes, special online practical sessions for Yagya, Havan, Karam Kand etc. were organised for the students with the objective of imparting them practical training.

The students and teachers of the Gurukul presented Vedic and Puranic Mangalacharan and bhajans through online mode. Dr. Dhananjay Mishra, Principal of the Gurukul presented annual report of the institution.

### **TTD Chairman visits Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine**

Sh. Y. V. Subba Reddy, Chairman of the Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams (TTD) Trust Board visited the Holy Cave Shrine of Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Ji on 26 August and paid obeisance at the Sanctum Sanctorum.



Sh. Ramesh Kumar, CEO, SMVDSB presenting a memento to Sh. Y. V. Subba Reddy, Chairman, Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams Trust Board.

During the interaction, Sh. Reddy and Sh. Ramesh Kumar, Chief Executive Officer of Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine Board shared the best management practices being



followed at the Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams and Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine, respectively, for facilitation of the pilgrims. Sh. Ramesh Kumar also mentioned about the various infrastructure development initiatives taken and further arrangements being put in place by Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine Board for continuously improving and expanding the facilities for the visiting pilgrims in consonance with the emerging requirements of the pilgrimage.

### **Shrine Board undertakes monsoon plantation drive**

Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine Board is making continuous endeavours to conserve the environment and green the Trikuta Hills and the spaces along the tracks leading to the Shrine. Towards achieving this objective, Sh. Ramesh Kumar, Chief Executive Officer, Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine Board, on 21 July launched the monsoon plantation drive along the Tarakote Marg by planting saplings of Peepal, Bargad, Jacaranda and Tecoma.



CEO Shrine Board launching plantation drive.

The Shrine Board is planting 1.10 lakh plants of different species under its Annual Greening Plan during the current financial year thereby bringing another 100 hectares area under green cover. Of these, 80,000 saplings were planted during the monsoon

plantation season while the remaining 30,000 plants will be planted during the coming winter plantation season.

After launching the plantation drive by the CEO of the Shrine Board, a massive plantation was undertaken in the Tarakote Marg area in which the staff of the Board and the CRPF personnel took part. The species being planted include Peepal, Bargad, Bauhinia, Amrud, Amla, Jamun, Kalpavriksh, Chinar, Tecoma, Jacaranda, Rudraksh, Bhera, Arjuna, Amaltas, Hibiscus, Bougainvillea and other soil binder species.

Among those who participated in the plantation drive included Sh. Vivek Verma, Additional CEO of the Shrine Board; Sh. Hem Kant Prasher, Chief Accounts Officer; Dr. Jagdish Mehra and Sh. Vishavjeet Singh, Dy. CEOs; Sh. Vinay Khajuria, ACF; and other concerned officers of the Board.

### **I-Day celebrations at Katra Shrine Board CEO unfurls tricolour**

The 74<sup>th</sup> Independence Day was celebrated with traditional fervour and patriotism at Katra.

The main function at Katra was held at the Shrine Board's Sports Complex, where Sh. Ramesh Kumar, Chief Executive Officer, Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine Board, hoisted the tricolour and took salute from the contingents drawn from J&K Police and CRPF.



CEO Shrine Board taking salute after hoisting tricolour on 74<sup>th</sup> Independence Day function at Katra.

Speaking on the occasion, Sh. Ramesh Kumar greeted the people on this



joyous occasion. He recalled the sacrifices made by the great national leaders for attaining freedom for the country from foreign rule. He said that India is the largest and most vibrant democracy in the world which has made tremendous headway in varied fields of development.

The Chief Executive Officer also underscored the need for making untiring endeavours by one and all to carry forward the country on the path of rapid progress and prosperity.

Among those present on the occasion were Sh. Vimal Indu, President, Municipal Committee, Katra; Sh. Vivek Verma, Additional CEO of the Shrine Board; Dr. Sunil Sharma, Dr. Jagdish Mehra and Sh. Vishavjeet Singh, Dy. CEOs, SMVDSB; Sh. Ashok Kumar, SDM, Katra; Sh. Amit Bhasin, SP, Katra; Sh. Jitendra Kumar Gupta, Commandant, 6<sup>th</sup> Bn. CRPF; Sh. Rajinder Singh, OSD; and Sh. Ashok Kumar, the then Director Sports, SMVDSB.

Others who also participated in the function included Members of Municipal Committee, Katra, civil, police and security forces officers, prominent citizens, media persons and officers and staff of the Shrine Board.

As part of the Independence Day celebrations, Sh. Ramesh Kumar, CEO, SMVDSB, also hoisted the tricolour at the Central Office of the Shrine Board at Katra, where officers and employees of the Shrine Board were present.

At Bhawan, the flag was hoisted by Sh. Naresh Kumar, SDM Bhawan, in presence of CRPF, Police and Shrine Board staff.

In view of the COVID-19, these functions were held by strictly following the social distancing norms and other precautionary measures.

## National Sports Day celebrated at Shrine Board's Sports Complex

Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine Board celebrated National Sports Day at a brief function held at its Sports Complex at Katra on 29 August.



CEO Shrine Board paying floral tribute to late Major Dhyan Chand on National Sports Day.

Sh. Ramesh Kumar, Chief Executive Officer of the Shrine Board, paid floral tribute to hockey wizard, late Major Dhyan Chand, in whose honour National Sports Day is celebrated every year on 29 August. He also dwelt on the laudable achievements of the sports persons trained and groomed at the Sports Complex who have excelled in various sports and games. He planted a sapling of *Rudraksha* in the Shrine Board's Sports Complex. On this occasion, it was informed that five outstanding sports persons of the Shrine Board's Sports Complex who have made remarkable achievements in various sports will be felicitated later.

Sh. Vivek Verma, Additional CEO; Dr. Sunil Sharma and Sh. Vishavjeet Singh, Dy. CEOs; Sh. Rajinder Singh, OSD and Sh. Vinay Khajuria, ACF; and other concerned officers and staff of Board were among those present on the occasion.

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