

Registration counters at Katra railway station for Vaishno Devi pilgrims from today

CEO for joint efforts to ensure smooth Navratra celebrations

STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: With the Navratri festival approaching, the Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine Board (SMVDSB) will start registration counters at the railway station in Katra for the ease of pilgrims in the wake of the expected influx to the cave shrine during the period.

The board reviewed various arrangements in the run-up to the Navratras beginning from October 3 and called for enhanced focus on heightened security and operational readiness ahead of the 9-day festival.

"This year, we have taken additional initiatives. We are launching registration counters at Katra railway station, which will start functioning from tomorrow," Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Anshul Garg told reporters here.

He said that eight dedicated counters have been set up at the station, which will start registration of devotees from 5 am.

"With this, the number of registration counters has gone up to 47 from 39. The devotees can register themselves at 47 places. All facilities have been put in places at registration counters", he said.

Highlighting specific measures, Garg said new RFID cards have been introduced for enhanced security and mandatory registration for all pilgrims. "New card will be introduced from tomorrow morning", he said.

Garg presided over a crucial meeting at Katra where extensive discussions were held on preparations in collaboration with security agencies and local authorities.

The meeting focused on enhancing security and operational readiness ahead of the Navratra festival from



CEO SMVD Shrine Board Anshul Garg chairing a meeting at Katra.

October 3 to 12.

Addressing concerns related to crowd management, fire safety, and disaster preparedness, the CEO underscored the necessity for synchronised efforts to manage the anticipated influx of pilgrims.

Recent directives from Manoj Sinha, Chairman of SMVDSB and Lieutenant Governor of Jammu and Kashmir, reinforced the importance of meticulous planning and cooperation among all stakeholders.

The stringent frisking procedures and enhanced surveillance through drones and CCTV cameras will be implemented to ensure real-time monitoring of the pilgrimage route and shrine area, the CEO said.

"The deployment of additional security forces and quick response teams further fortifies the multi-tier security grid designed to safeguard devotees", he added.

"We are committed to providing a safe and comfortable experience for all pilgrims," Garg said and stressed the Board's focus on maintaining cleanliness, adequate water supply and improved lighting along the pilgrimage route.

Plans are also underway to address traffic congestion issues caused by unauthorised parking with a special

enforcement drive, he said.

"With meticulous planning and collaborative efforts, SMVDSB aims to uphold the sanctity of the pilgrimage while ensuring the safety and well-being of every devotee during the upcoming Navratra festivities", he added.

The stage is set for a spiritually enriching and incident-free celebration at the revered Mata Vaishnodevi Shrine, he said.

The meeting aimed to assess the critical areas like security and operational preparedness for ensuring a seamless pilgrimage experience during the Shardiya Navratra.

The meeting was attended by Addl. Chief Executive Officer, SMVDSB; SSP, Reasi; Commandant, CRPF; Jt. Chief Executive Officer and Dy. CEO, SMVDSB; SP, Katra; Sub Divisional Magistrate, Bhawan; Asstt. CEO, SMVDSB; SDPO Katra, Bhawan, Tehsildar, SMVDSB and officers from Army, IB, CID, Fire Services, SMVDSB and other intelligence agencies.

Additionally, the CEO issued directives for the smooth regulation of vehicle movement, improved sanitation, drinking water supplies and enhanced lighting on the track and Katra. Special

attention was called to resolving traffic issues caused by unauthorised parking with plans for a special drive to tow away such vehicles.

It was informed to the chair that a multi-tier security grid comprising the Police and para military forces will be in place to ensure the safety and smooth conduct of the yatra. The meeting concluded with the clear instructions to ensure hassle-free pilgrimage experience for all devotees during the festival.



Rotary Club Mumbai West Coast felicitates Dr. A K Kapoor with Lifetime Achievement Award, Ritesh Kapoor with Nation Builders Award

STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: Rotary Club Mumbai West Coast felicitated Dr. A.K Kapoor, Chairman Adarsh Educational Trust Jammu with Lifetime Achievement Award and Ritesh Kapoor, Director Principal ASN Higher Secondary School, Channi Himmat, Jammu with Nation Builders Award in a function organized at Sanjeevani World School, Dahehar East, Mumbai on September 28, 2024. The Nation Builders Award is an annual initiative by the Rotary Club to acknowledge and reward outstanding educators, individuals, and organizations making significant contributions to nation-building. Royal Princess of Orissa, Dr. Manjula Pooja Shroff, MD & CEO Karolex Group was the Chief Guest on the occasion while PDG Rtn. Dr. Balkrishna Inamdar was the Special Invitee whereas Rtn. Dr. Seema Negi, President of the club and Anantha Krishnan Balasubramanian, CEO Karolex were the Guests of Honour. Speakers spoke on the occasion were Lina Ashar, Snehal Pinto. Lt Gen. Surendra Kulkarni and the youngest entrepreneur Shreyaan Daga. During the occasion, a book on making Young adults cyber secure titled "Safe Ten Steps" by Ragini Bharadwaj and Dr. Manjula Pooja Shroff which is a sequel to the book Baby steps to big dreams was also released by the dignitaries and later the signed book by the author was presented to the awardees.

Dr. Shroff also shared her idea behind the book and its value in today's era for making our young adults safe and secure from cyber threats. Around 235 educators were felicitated by the Rotary Club with Nation Builders Award, 7 Jury members with appreciation awards and 4



Dr. A.K Kapoor, Chairman Adarsh Educational Trust Jammu being honoured with Lifetime Achievement Award and Ritesh Kapoor, Director ASNHSS Channi Himmat with Nation Builders Award in a function at Sanjeevani World School, Dahehar East, Mumbai.

Educators were awarded with Lifetime Achievement Awards.

The awardees from Pre-primary to higher education, counsellor and special educators were felicitated for their tireless contributions to shaping the minds of future generations. The awardees were recognized for their dedication, innovation, and commitment to excellence in education. The awardees were selected through a rigorous process, evaluating their impact on students, teaching methodologies, and community involvement. It was also informed that around 900 nominations were filled up for the felicitations out of which the jury shortlisted just 239 educators for this prestigious honour. The ceremony was attended by prominent dignitaries, educational leaders, and Rotary Club members. These educators have gone above and beyond to inspire, motivate, and empower the youth. Their selfless service is building a stronger, more compassionate nation, and Rotary Club Mumbai West Coast was proud to recognize their efforts. Speaking on the occasion, Dr. A.K Kapoor

expressed his gratitude and humility. He said that the Lifetime Achievement Award is not just a recognition of his work but also a tribute to the tireless contributions of his team, mentors, and family who has supported him every step of the way in his 55 years of his service. He added that he will continue the zeal of serving the society with determined commitment and selfless motives. He said that the Lifetime Achievement Award validates our commitment to creating positive change & inspires us to continue striving for excellence.

Ritesh Kapoor on being felicitated with Nation Builders Award lauded the role of Rotary Club Mumbai West Coast for doing yeoman services towards the society and for recognising the educators, counsellors and leaders for their tireless efforts in shaping the future of the nation. He added that the Nation Builders Award is a prestigious recognition of exceptional leadership and vision in inspiring community engagement and development.

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