

Lieutenant Governor chairs 74th Meeting of Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine Board

*LG inaugurates pilgrims-centric facilities at Darshani Deodi,
Banganga & Adhkuwari*

Jammu, [March 06](#): Lieutenant Governor Shri Manoj Sinha chaired the 74th Meeting of Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine Board (SMVDSB), at Raj Bhawan, [today](#).



The meeting was attended by Members of the Board-
Mahamandleshwar Swami Vishveshvaranand Giriji Maharaj, Shri

Baleshwar Rai, Dr Ashok Bhan, Dr Neelam Sareen, Shri K.K Sharma, Shri Suresh Kumar Sharma and Shri Raghu K. Mehta.

Dr Mandeep K. Bhandari, Principal Secretary to Lieutenant Governor and Shri Anshul Garg, Chief Executive Officer, SMVDSB also attended the meeting.

The Board, which met under the chairmanship of Hon'ble Lieutenant Governor held comprehensive review of its past decisions, ratified the actions taken after its last meeting and took several new decisions against 20 key Agenda Items having far reaching implications for functioning of the Board and augmenting pilgrim services.

Important decisions were taken in respect of new and underway projects of the Board such as construction of Exit Track & Remodelling of Manokamana area at Bhawan (a part of the Master Plan for Bhawan area), development of helipad in collaboration with Shri Shiv Khori Shrine Board in village Hutt at Katra, New Vaishnavi Bhawan at Bhawan, Cottages (near Sports Stadium), Katra, Widening of Yatra track from Sanjichhat to Bhawan and operationalization of Medical College of the Board at Kakryal.

To cater to the substantial increase in footfall at Bhairon Ji Temple following the installation of the Passenger Ropeway in the year-2019, the Board concurred with the re-development of the Bhairon Ji Temple Complex to address key concerns, including the implementation of an efficient queue management system, provision of locker facilities and additional washrooms. The project seeks to facilitate simultaneous darshans, reduce turnaround times and enhance the overall pilgrim experience, ensuring seamless crowd management. The project is slated for completion within 12 months. The Board approved an amnesty scheme to settle long-standing litigation matters with shop licensees, providing a one-time opportunity for resolution.

The meeting also reviewed the implementation of the Annual Green Plan of the Board for the current year and approved the Annual Green Plan for the year 2025-26.

The Lieutenant Governor directed the CEO SMVDSB to conduct a thorough evaluation of the existing Sewage Treatment Plants (STPs) across the Shrine Board's premises to assess their adequacy in handling the generated sewage and necessary measures be taken to augment STP capacities.



He further directed to explore targeted initiatives to increase reliance on renewable sources of energy especially solar power to the extent feasible in the area of the Shrine.

The Lieutenant Governor also emphasised on implementation of robust feedback mechanism for fostering continuous improvement in the services provided by the Shrine Board.

He lauded the important contribution of Board Members in the last three years since the Board was reconstituted. He said, the pro-active association and continuous guidance by the Members were instrumental in taking the Board's reputation to newer horizons.

The Board took appraisal of peripheral institutions under the SMVD Charitable Society including Gurukul, Hospital, Sports Complex, College of Nursing, Medical College and approved grants-in-aid and financial assistance to support their functioning. The Board also discussed several measures for expeditious completion of the Shankaracharya Temple project in collaboration with local stakeholders.

The Board observed that Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine has seen a consistent surge in devotees with the annual pilgrimage exceeding 90 lakh for the third consecutive year, reaching an impressive 95 lakh last year. The significant growth attributed to the dedication of major projects in the Bhawan area including Durga Bhawan with Tripti Bhojanalya, Skywalk, Remodelled Parvati Bhawan and Atka Area. Furthermore, the expansion of facilities and amenities in Katra and other sectors such as the Queue Complex at Darshani Deodi, YRC at Railway Station, holding area at Adhkuwari, pilgrims cum employees' accommodation and the establishment of Prasad Kendras have also contributed to this growth. The provision of free Langars, medical facilities, facilitating senior citizens and divyang and Arti & Poojan facilities, coupled with eco-friendly and digital initiatives has significantly enhanced the pilgrimage experience.



On the sidelines of the meeting, the Lieutenant Governor inaugurated several pilgrim-centric facilities including the Queue Complex at Darshani Deodi, Banganga and the Holding Area at Adhkuwari. The Queue Complex provides shelter during all weather conditions and streamlines devotee movement. Meanwhile, the Holding Area at Adhkuwari reduces congestion and waiting times, improves crowd management, safety and ensures a smoother movement of pilgrims towards the sanctum sanctorum.

On the occasion, 50gm and 100gm Silver Coins were also launched, adding to the diverse facilities available to pilgrims. Notably, the Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine Board had previously developed gold and silver coins in various denominations featuring an inscription of Goddess Mata Vaishno Devi Ji, ensuring guaranteed purity.

Earlier, Sh Anshul Garg, CEO, SMVDSB gave a detailed presentation on varied activities of the Shrine Board and the action taken with regard to the implementation of various decisions of the previous meetings of the Board.