

Efforts to make Sabarimala a global pilgrim centre



Meeting of Chief Ministers in January, says TDB chief. The TDB would consider allotting five acres each to each Southern State for setting up their own pilgrim facilitation centres at Nilackal, the base camp.

The Travancore Devaswom Board (TDB) is trying to elevate Sabarimala to the status of an international pilgrim centre in association with various other South Indian States, TDB president Prayar Gopalakrishnan has said.

He said Chief Minister Oommen Chandy would be convening a meeting of the Chief Ministers of all South Indian States, Pampa Sangamom, in January as part of this ambitious initiative. Efforts were on to ensure the participation of the Prime Minister in the event, he said.

Mr. Gopalakrishnan said a majority of the pilgrims visiting Sabarimala were from Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, and Karnataka and hence it was of prime importance to ensure the support of these States in Sabarimala development.

The TDB would consider allotting five acres each to each Southern State for setting up their own pilgrim facilitation centres at Nilackal, the base camp.

The Principal Secretary to the government would be convening a high-level meeting in Thiruvananthapuram on December 4 to take a decision in this regard, he said.

Queue complex

Mr. Gopalakrishnan said the six new self-contained queue complexes constructed on the Saramkuthy path would be of great help in regulating the crowd in a pilgrim-friendly way during the rush days of the pilgrim season.

The six queue complexes house a total of 18 halls with a capacity to accommodate 200 persons each.

The pilgrim movement on this stretch of the trekking could be regulated by periodically releasing the pilgrims from one compartment to another, he said.

The TDB chief said all the halls in the queue complexes would be having a medicated drinking water kiosk, snack stall, and toilets, besides television shows on temple-related functions.

Pilgrim tourism

Mr. Gopalakrishnan said the TDB would also explore the possibility of organising conducted pilgrimage trips, in association with the Kerala Tourism Development Corporation, linking the Ayyappa temples at Kulathooppuzha, Aryankavu, Achenkovil, Erumeli and the Pandalam Palace.

Efforts were on to revive the 'Thiru Kalyanam,' in associa