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### Virtual queue for darshan at Sabarimala to be revamped

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*The Hindu* Pilgrims waiting at the Lower Tirumuttom to ascend the holy 18-steps (Pathinettampady) leading to the Lord Ayyappa Temple at Sabarimala on Tuesday evening. Photo: Leju Kamal

The `virtual queue' system for holy darshan at Lord Ayyappa Temple at Sabarimala introduced by the Kerala Police would be revamped, said Mr P.Chandrashekharan, Additional Director General of Police.

Talking to *The Hindu*, Mr Chandrashekharan who is also the chief police co-ordinator at Sabarimala said the existing system permits the pilgrims to make multiple bookings in the name of the same person.

This would deny chances of many pilgrims who opted for online registration for holy darshan, he said.

According to the ADGP, the idea is to correct various flaws identified with the prevailing system by the next pilgrim season.

He said the department would explore the possibility of taking the fingerprint of the pilgrims for online registration of their name for holy darshan at Sabarimala through the `virtual queue'. This would eliminate the chances of multiple bookings by the same person, he added.

#### **‘Virtual queue’**

Mr Chandrashekharan said the e-registration and `virtual queue' system at Sabarimala was part of a pilgrim-friendly crowd management programme of the Kerala Police.

As per the system, pilgrims may register their names on the Kerala Police website, [sabarimala.keralapolice.gov.in](http://sabarimala.keralapolice.gov.in), opening the link `Q Coupon'. Those who have made online booking need not wait for hours together in the long-winding queue for holy darshan at the Ayyappa Temple.

Pilgrims who register their names on the website can reach the Valiya Nadappanthal, bypassing the general queue, at the time allotted for them. They will be permitted to enter the general queue for holy darshan at the Lower Tirumuttom.

#### **Pilgrims' safety**

Mr Chandrashekharan said there were reports on alleged attempts by certain quarters to spread a false propaganda in the neighbouring States that the law and order situation in Kerala was in a bad shape due to the Mullaperiyar

issue. He said Kerala Police was planning to launch an awareness campaign on its website aimed at dispelling fears apprehension among the pilgrims.

The ADGP said the State police have made elaborate precautionary measures to ensure the pilgrims' safety and smooth passage for each Sabarimala pilgrim in the nook and corner of the State.

As many as 16,000 pilgrims are being provided with the facility for holy darshan a day through the virtual queue system at Sabarimala. As on Tuesday, bookings for holy darshan through e-registration on the website have been completed upto January 17. Pilgrims could book their names on the Kerala Police website for holy darshan through the 'virtual queue' for January 18, 19 and 20 as per the e-registration data available on Tuesday afternoon, official sources said.

The Sabarimala pilgrimage ends on January 20 evening and the temple will be closed on January 21 morning, immediately after the customary exclusive holy darshan by the royal representative from the Pandalam Palace.

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