



13/5/19
Inspection of Sathuragiri

Left Madurai at 5.30am

Discussed with Wild life warden. He has flagged the orders of the court to determine the holding capacity of the sanctuary.

He has also complained that the Kanji Mutt was illegally drawing water from the forest area.

Hindu Munnani leader who met me, requested to open the forest access to the temple on all the days, as existed before 2015, provide light facilities on the pathway for the devotees to descend during late evening.

Request for allowing devotees throughout the year needs to be examined, duly considering the circumstances under which such restrictions were imposed after the floods of 2015. Whether such a restriction is needed now, as reasonable SOPs are in place viz devotees are not allowed by the forest department if there is a heavy rain event, regulated passage etc. Further, construction of steel bridges across the jungle streams at needy places will further improve safety during the rainy season.

There is also a need to build steps or carve steps on the rocks, so that it is not slippery and the devotees can have safe passage. There is also a need for railings on the valley side of the pathway at a few places.

Two dormitories constructed by donors need to be repaired and put to use.

Signages for the temple, dormitories, Mudikannikkai Mandapam, showers, restrooms

Temple staff is now fully insufficient to handle, the peak volume of 15000 devotees twice a month. Temple should have plan to enlist volunteers and employ NMRs for the two occasions during the month.

Kanji madam has a bad waste disposal system. Kitchen and Annadana Koodam waste stagnates behind the madam becoming a breeding ground for mosquitoes.

They have requested for water. This needs to be examined duly considering the availability of water during this summer season.

Pillavadi Karuppanan well is yielding about 7500 litres in three hours. Recharge requires 8 hours. Hence about 15000 litres is available per day.

The well near the Sundara Mahalinga swamy temple is used to fill an 80000 litres capacity water tank. It takes about 10 days to fill the tank. It means about 20000 litres is available per day during the four days of Amavasya and Pournami.

Then there is a hand pump and a few Bore wells, which should be yielding enough water for the lean days.

I do not see why water can not be given to the Kanji Madam, provided they submit a waste disposal plan to the satisfaction of the forest department and also execute it. Till such time minimum amount of water can be given to take care of the needs of their workers and Annadanam for about 500 devotees, which may not generate much waste

The temporary shops seem to be generating lot of plastic waste. If they do not comply with the rules, they should be closed. I am told the auction for shops was only for pooja items, where as a few shops have become eateries without appropriate facilities and waste disposal mechanism. They should be closed following due process.