Private E-Sevai Center
CSC Center
STAR RAINBOW SERVICES
VADAPALANI
8144337349

HELLO MADRAS
hellomadrasdaily@gmail.com
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Southern Railway Announces Special Trains and Enhanced Facilities for Sabarimala Pilgrims



CHENNAI – 25 Nov, 2026 Southern Railway has made extensive arrangements to ensure safe and comfortable travel for pilgrims during the Mandala–Makaravilakku season 2026–27, which commenced on 16 November 2026.

204 Special Train Trips Announced

To meet the increased passenger demand, 204 trips of Sabarimala special trains have been notified as of 23 November 2026. These services connect major destinations, including Chennai, Kollam, Thiruvananthapuram, Mangaluru, Panvel, Kottayam, Visakhapatnam, Hyderabad and Vijayawada. Additional services will be planned based on passenger demand and reservation trends.

Enhanced Facilities at Key Stations

Special facilities have been arranged at Kottayam, Chengannur, Ernakulam Junction and Ernakulam Town, the major transit stations for Sabarimala pilgrims.

At Kottayam, a three-storeyed pilgrim facilitation centre can accommodate up to 900 people and provides toilets, bathrooms, cloakrooms, dining halls and mobile charging points. Retiring rooms and dedicated KSRTC bus bays are also available.

At Chengannur, three pilgrim shelters can accommodate 600 passengers. An AC waiting hall, retiring rooms and additional vegetarian catering facilities have also been provided. Ernakulam Junction offers waiting halls, retiring rooms, catering, cloakroom services and temporary pay-and-use toilets.

Ticketing and Passenger Assistance

Round-the-clock assistance booths operated by Railway Protection Force (RPF) personnel are functioning at Kottayam and Chengannur. Additional ticket counters and reservation facilities have been opened to manage the rush. Staff proficient in Tamil, Telugu and Kannada have been deployed to assist pilgrims from different states.

Southern Railway is coordinating with Kerala Government departments, KSRTC, the Travancore Devaswom Board, Police and Medical Departments. Additional catering facilities and seasonal taxi permits at major stations are also helping pilgrims with food and onward transportation.

Strengthened Security and Medical Support

Additional RPF personnel, including women officers, have been deployed. Security measures include intensified surveillance, anti-sabotage checks with dog squads and crime prevention teams.

Quick Response Teams comprising St. John Ambulance Brigade, Railway Medical Branch and Government Health Department personnel are positioned to handle medical emergencies. Kerala Railway Police assistance centres are functioning round the clock at Ernakulam, Chengannur, Thiruvalla, Kottayam and Kayamkulam. Crowd management plans have also been prepared, with additional CCTV coverage planned at Chengannur and Kottayam.

Continuous Monitoring

Railway officials are monitoring train operations, passenger amenities and crowd movement throughout the pilgrimage season. A special task force will be deployed at Chengannur, Ernakulam Junction and Kottayam on Makaravilakku Day to coordinate passenger movement and ensure smooth operations.

Southern Railway has reaffirmed its commitment to providing safe, comfortable and convenient travel for all Sabarimala pilgrims.