

## VHP, Bajrang Dal threaten campaign for Amarnath land

The Vishwa Hindu Parishad (VHP) and the Bajrang Dal have termed protests in the Kashmir Valley against land allotment to Amarnath shrine authorities as an 'international conspiracy' and threatened to launch nationwide demonstrations.

'We will carry out nationwide demonstrations if the land is not used for providing facilities to the pilgrims,' Bajrang Dal national convener Prakash Sharma said in Kanpur Thursday.

Several VHP and Bajrang Dal leaders are in Kanpur to participate in a seven-day VHP executive council meet.

'If our demands are not accepted, we will carry demonstrations against Congress president Sonia Gandhi and Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister Ghulam Nabi Azad,' said Surendra Jain, central secretary of VHP's youth wing.

The Jammu and Kashmir cabinet March 5 allotted to the Shri Amarnath Shrine Board (SASB) 40 hectares of forestland in Baltal, to provide temporary facilities for pilgrims.

Board chief executive Arun Kumar said the SASB would make concrete structures on the land now that the board has proprietorship. The state government rebutted him and said the land was not allotted but only temporarily diverted to it without any authority to build permanent structures there.

Several organisations in the Kashmir Valley have protested the land allotment while groups in Jammu have been demonstrating against any move to cancel the allotment.

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