

Security beefed up in Tamil Nadu temples on Babri Masjid eve

Security was tightened Friday at temples across Tamil Nadu on the eve of the 16th anniversary of the Babri Masjid demolition. Thousands of people are expected to pray at temples Saturday to mark the annual transit of Jupiter, considered very auspicious.

Over 15,000 police personnel have been deployed to maintain peace in the state, Director General of Police K.P. Jain told IANS.

'The police have been deployed in temples in Madurai, Thiruvannamalai, Alangudi and other places. Metal detectors are in place and some devotees will also be selectively frisked,' Jain said. People visit temples to pray on Gurupeyarchi - the annual transit of Jupiter.

He said the police had turned down requests from several Islamic organisations for protest demonstrations to mark the Babri mosque demolition anniversary in the wake of the [Mumbai](#) terror attack last week.

Police commissioner K. Radhakrishnan said, 'We have deployed trained commandos at vulnerable places, including railway stations, temples, and Hindu-Muslim enclaves in parts of the city.'

The belongings of train and bus passengers were being physically checked and sniffer dogs were present at railway stations. Armed commandos were travelling in each train, the police said.

The heightened security had an unexpected fallout. In Tambaram, in the southern outskirts, a jeweller, N. Pichchumani, was detained with Rs.4 million worth of gold ingots and ornaments besides 26 kg of silver.

The jeweller, who belongs to the southern district of Karaikudi, was remanded to Puzhal prison Friday by a local court, pending further investigation.

The police were also on alert in the Maoist infested central-western districts of the state.

'We have been combing the forests in the vicinity following reports of suspicious movements in this district,' superintendent of police Najmul Hoda said by phone from Dharmapuri, 350 km southwest of here.

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