

Week full of VIP visits in Chandigarh

Security agencies in Chandigarh and adjoining Punjab will be on their toes this week with a slew of VVIP visits in and around the city.

Starting Monday, when at least four union ministers are expected to be here for different events, the Chandigarh police will be on high alert Tuesday also when Prime Minister Manmohan Singh arrives here.

The prime minister, in his day-long visit to the city where he owns a house in the upscale Sector 11, will attend the convocation at the Post-Graduate Institute of Medical Education and Research (PGIMER) followed by another special convocation at his alma mater, Panjab University.

He will also lay the foundation stone of a multi-purpose auditorium on the PU campus here Tuesday.

'The police and other security agencies will be fully stretched during this week. All security arrangements are in place,' a senior Chandigarh police officer said.

On Monday, union agriculture minister Sharad Pawar will be in the city to watch the fourth one-day international (ODI) between India and Australia at the Punjab Cricket Association (PCA) stadium at Mohali in Punjab, 10 km from here.

Pawar is a former Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) president.

The Indian and Australia cricket teams, both of which enjoy Z-plus security cover, arrived in Chandigarh Sunday for the ODI. They will stay in Chandigarh at Hotel Taj and move to Mohali every time for practice and the match Tuesday.

Union Tourism Minister Selja will be here for the closing ceremony of the first Chandigarh national crafts mela at the Kalagram complex here.

Union Health Minister Ghulam Nabi Azad is also expected to come to the city though his visit has not been finally confirmed, Chandigarh administration officials said.

Chandigarh Member of Parliament (MP) and union parliamentary affairs minister Pawan Kumar Bansal will also be in the city to prepare for the prime minister's visit.

Other dignitaries visiting Chandigarh Monday will be General (Retd) N.C. Vij, chairman of the prime minister's disaster management committee and former Army chief, and the governor of Nagaland.

On Nov 7 and 8, President Pratibha Devisingh Patil will arrive here for a function. She will then proceed to Amritsar in Punjab where she will attend a function of the Nanhi Chhaan (little shadow) foundation which campaigns against female foeticide with a message also for environment conservation.

(© IANS / India eNews)