

Times of India  
09 August 2018

## Kochi: Aluva, Manappuram set for Karkidaka Vavau Rituals

# Manappuram set for 'bali' rituals

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

**Kochi:** Parts of Aluva manappuram in the Mahadeva Temple premises, where 'Karkidaka vavau bali rituals' will be held this Saturday, have been flooded after water level in Periyar River rose. The water level is expected to rise further as Idamalayar dam would be opened on Thursday morning. Authorities anticipate flooding of the temple on Saturday.

In a meeting to evaluate the situation, temple authorities have asked the Devasom Board to help with the losses they might suffer if an emergency arises. "The help and assistance of Indian Navy would be sought," said Jayakumar, administrative officer of Aluva Mahadeva temple. Aluva municipality they are prepared to face any emergency. "Schools for relief camps have been identified and school buses would be deployed to transport people in case of an emergency," said Lissy Abraham, chairperson, Aluva municipality.

About 50,000 people used to visit the temple for conducting rituals on Karkidaka vavau every year. If the water level increases again, the flow of devotees can be reduced to as far as just 5,000, says temple administrative officials.

The number of 'balitharas' for performing the rituals have been reduced this time because increased water



File Photo

ALUVA MANAPPURAM

levels. Last year there were 70 'balitharas' but this year only 50 have been readied. Temple authorities said even if balitharas are flooded, the rituals would not be cancelled. "When a similar situation occurred back in 2013, rituals were conducted in the nearby roads. Arrangements will be made for that if such a situation arise," said Jayakumar.

The shopkeepers are reluctant to open stores fearing losses. "Only around 10 shops have been set up here. Usually there would be a minimum of 20 shops around the temple premises during the vavau bali," said Jayakumar. Authorities also fear a fall in revenue from rituals if the devotees fail to turn up in large numbers as usual because of the water scare.

The temple had been inundated many times this year. The premises had to be cleaned five times, with a single cleaning costing about two lakhs, officials said.