

DRDO officials discuss arrangements for inaugural of Kalam's memorial

Focus on venue, readiness of helipad, traffic and security arrangements: Collector

S. Christopher, Chairman of Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) and Secretary, Department of Defence (R&D) discussed the arrangements to be made for the inauguration of the memorial of former president APJ Abdul Kalam with Collector S. Natarajan and senior officials on Monday.

After inspecting the progress of work of the memorial at Kalam's burial site at Pei Karumbu, near here, Mr. Christopher, accompanied by his DRDO colleagues, held discussions with the Collector, Superintendent of Police Omprakash Meena on the arrangements for the inaugural ceremony, scheduled for July 27, the second death anniversary of Mr. Kalam.

The discussion centred around the venue of the function, readiness of the helipad, parking bay and traffic and security arrangements, the Collector told *The Hindu*. "We are considering a couple of venues, including the open space opposite the memorial and it will be finalised in a few days," he said.

As Prime Minister Narendra Modi, his cabinet colleagues and a galaxy of VIPs were expected to attend the function, the officials were fully geared up, making all necessary arrangements. "Though there is no official communication yet on the Prime Minister's visit, the district administration is fully geared up," official sources said.

The district administration has renovated the helipad at Mandapam to receive the dignitaries by chopper from Madurai airport.

Two days ago, the Collector and Superintendent of Police discussed about the arrangements to be made with heads of various departments, including highways and public works department.

In a brief chat with reporters, Mr. Christopher said that the memorial would be a fitting tribute to Mr. Kalam for his immense contribution to the DRDO and Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO).

"We are never going to stop. The memorial will keep on growing with suggestions from all sections of the society," he said.

The DRDO, which built the memorial wanted people from all over the world to visit it, he said.

Library - It proposed to build a library and permanent exhibition after the State government made available additional lands adjacent to the memorial, he said.