INAUGURAL FUNCTION OF PALANQUIN (PALKI) PROJECT AT SHRI MATA VAISHNO DEVI SHRINE BY HON’BLE GOVERNOR OF JAMMU & KASHMIR

A real life project titled 'Redesigning the palanquin system for use in Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine', has been carried out by National Institute of Industrial Engineering (NITIE) and Industrial Design Centre (IDC) of IIT Bombay. The project was initiated and funded by the office of the Principal Scientific Advisor to the Govt. of India, New Delhi. Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine Board extended all necessary support for the project. Team NITIE consisted of Prof. (Ms.) Karuna Jain, Director, Prof. Ashok K Pundir, Prof. Rauf Iqbal, Prof. Vivek Khanzode and Ms. Shreya Maulik.

The project was initiated in Nov, 2015. The deliverables of the project are i) Newly designed Palanquin and ii) Porters kit (Porter’s jacket, waist belt, knee caps and ankle caps).

Inauguration function of deliverables of Palanquin project was organized by the Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine Board at Matrika Auditorium, Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Campus, Karkryal, Karta on 19th April 2019. The Chief guest of the function was Hon’ble Governor of the Jammu and Kashmir and Hon’ble Chairman of the Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine Board Shri Satya Pal Malik. Various high profile dignitaries like, Dr. Devi Shetty, Shri Simrandeep Singh IAS, CEO Shrine Board, Shri Vivek Verma, IAS, Addl CEO Shrine Board along with other dignitaries were present in the function.

Prof. Ashok K Pundir and Prof. Rauf Iqbal attended the inaugural function from NITIE Mumbai being nominated by the Director. In the beginning of the function Shri Simrandeep Singh IAS, CEO Shrine Board in his speech conveyed thanks to Dr. R Chidambaram, Principal Scientific Advisor, Govt. of India, New Delhi and Hon’ble Governor of Jammu and Kashmir for initiation of the project. He has highlighted the role of NITIE Mumbai and IDC, IITB for this project. For the inauguration of deliverables, Prof. Ashok K Pundir and Prof. Rauf Iqbal were called on the dais to hand over the Jacket designed by NITIE, Mumbai to the Hon’ble Governor of the Jammu and Kashmir Shri Satya Pal Malik which was inaugurated the Hon’ble Governor.
The replica of the Palanquin was handed over to the Hon’ble Governor, Shri Satya Pal Malik by Prof. Rauf Iqbal and Shri Vaibhav Kumar from IDC, IITB, which was inaugurated the Hon’ble Governor, Shri Satya Pal Malik. The Hon’ble Governor handed over the replica of newly designed Palanquin to the porters, following which a live palanquin was brought on the dais by the porters.
Hon’ble Governor, Shri Satya Pal Malik has presented mark of appreciation to both NITIE Mumbai and IITB. Prof. Ashok K Pundir has received the Memento from the Hon’ble Governor of the Jammu and Kashmir on behalf of NITIE Mumbai. The program ended with vote of thanks.

Fig 5: New palanquin on the dais

Fig 6: Prof. Ashok K Pundir receiving the appreciation from the Hon’ble Governor
In the post lunch session, the team of NITIE and IITB were invited by the Shrine board in a function to formally hand over the newly launched palanquins to the porters. Prof. Ashok K Pundir was the Chief guest of the function. The team of NITIE and IDC, IIT B have formally handed over a new Palanquin to the Porters.

Prof. Ashok K Pundir and Prof. Rauf Iqbal also made a survey on the Bhavan area on 20th April 2019 to discuss with the porters about their feedback on new Palanquin. Few newly designed Palanquins were spotted on the road toward Bhavan and porters were happy about the new Palanquin because of it’s light weight and ergonomic features like, design of seat, leg space, handle for pilgrim’s stability and water bottle holder.
Fig 11: Newly designed palanquins

Fig 12: New palanquins on the track

Fig 13: Ergonomic features in new palanquin

Fig 14: Logos of the collaborating organizations