Isha Foundation shows the way

Among the few good options available for pilgrims is the Kailash-Manasarovar yatra organised by the Kovai-based Isha Foundation.

In total contrast to the erratic arrangements by many tour operators, Isha’s planning is meticulous. In fact, it handles one of the largest groups of yatris in Nepal. This year, 514 pilgrims from 21 countries, including India, will undertake the pilgrimage in different batches beginning July 4. Isha has quite some experience under its belt as this is the fourth year of its tour operations.

Ma Gambhiri, one of the co-ordinators, says the presence of Isha founder Sadhguru Jaggi Vasudev makes all the difference as it is a spiritual pilgrimage interspersed with satsangs and meditations. The sadhguru advises yatris to undertake the journey in a spirit of meditation to experience the spiritual energy of the pilgrimage.

For each batch of 20 participants, there is a volunteer. About six doctors travel with each group with a complete medical kit, including IV fluids and all equipment to handle any emergency. This year, doctors have even had an orientation session to handle swine flu.

Four yatris share an oxygen cylinder and they are taught how to use it. Toilet tents with seats are arranged at Manasarovar, which are cleaned by volunteers every four hours.

Simple breathing practices that take just about five minutes are taught so the yatris can do it about six times a day to cope with the tedium of the journey better. Toilet tents with seats are arranged at Manasarovar, which are cleaned by volunteers every four hours. The yatris bypass several locations where there are no proper toilet facilities by staying longer at Saga, which has five-star hotels.

Though they engage tour operators, their role is kept to a minimum.

Sounds interesting? Want to try it out?

Snapshots

Gita R (extreme right in a yellow saree) at the Swayambunath Temple in Kathmandu; P Mohan and his wife Kalyani at Kailash Manasarovar; and the reflection of Mt Kailash in Manasarovar lake. Gita and Mohan passed away because of inadequate medicare.