

GOVERNMENT OF ANDHRA PRADESH

ABSTRACT

MINORITIES WELFARE DEPARTMENT – Guidelines for assistance to Christian pilgrimage – Orders – Issued.

MINORITIES WELFARE (ICM) DEPARTMENT

G.O.Ms.No. 29

Dated 21st July, 2008.

Read the following:

1. From Sri T.Stanley Babu, IRTS, Advisor to Govt. of A.P. Representation dated 26.4.2008.
2. From the Executive Vice President, A.P. Federation of Churches Hyderabad Letter dated 25.4.2008.
3. Govt.D.O.Lr.No. 7064/ICM/A2/07, dated 1.5.2008 and even of No. dated 10.6.2008.

ORDER:

In the Budget 2008-09 an amount of Rs.2.00 crores has been provided under new scheme for assistance to Christian pilgrimage.

2. To operationalize the new scheme, the following guidelines are issued:

Guidelines on Christian Pilgrimage to the Holy land of Jerusalem

Introduction

This pilgrimage covers a very large number of places connected with the life of Jesus Christ in Israel. Mainly, they are:

- a. Place of birth - BETHLEHEM
- b. Place of Crucifixion, Death and Resurrection – JERUSALEM
- c. Place of bringing up - NAZARETH
- d. Place of Baptism - JORDAN RIVER
- e. Places of preaching - around DEAD SEA and SEA OF GALILEE
- f. Several other places connected with Christian faith.

This is only tentative. To be finalized after final selection of tour operator. In the event of any international problem some items may be dropped.

Pilgrimage to Holy land is very sacred to all Christians and is a trip for Spiritual Rejuvenation. The pilgrimage covers several places of Worship, Tradition and Christian Rituals. At almost all the above places, churches are built and during visits, the pilgrims have opportunity to pray and worship besides two most important aspects of pilgrimage, i.e., Baptism and Eucharistic Celebration.

Groups of about 50 pilgrims are being led by Travel agents who are well experienced and exposed to the above Christian holy places, traditions and Christian Practices.

Ordinarily, the tour period is for a week (Israel Government issues visas only for 7 days). It is proposed to evaluate the standard tour packages being offered by travel houses now namely Jordan and Israel package, Egypt – Israel – Jordan tour package and adopt the most economical package.

(P.T.O.).