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NOTIFICATION

No. D. 32020/17/90-HMP. the 5th August, 1997. The Places of Worship (Special Provisions) Act 1991 (No. 42 of 1991) is hereby published for general information.

Lalbiakthanga,
Deputy Secretary to the Government of Mizoram,
Home Department.

MINISTRY OF LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS
(Legislative Department)

New Delhi, the 19th September, 1991/Bhadra 28, 1913 (Saka)

The following Act of Parliament received the assent of the President on the 18th September, 1991, and is hereby published for general information :—

THE PLACES OF WORSHIP (SPECIAL PROVISIONS)
ACT, 1991

No. 42 OF 1991

[18th September, 1991.]

An Act to prohibit conversion of any place of worship and to provide for the maintenance of the religious character of any place of worship as it existed on the 15th day of August, 1947, and for matters connected therewith or incidental thereto.

BE it enacted by Parliament in the Forty-second Year of the Republic of India as follows :—

1. (1) This Act may be called the Places of Worship (Special Provisions) Act, 1991.

**Short title
extent and
commence-
ment.**

(2) It extends to the whole of India except the State of Jammu and Kashmir.

(3) The provisions of sections 3, 6 and 8 shall come into force at once and the remaining provisions of this Act shall be deemed to have come into force on the 11th day of July, 1991.

2. In this Act, unless the context otherwise requires,—

Definitions.

(a) “commencement of this Act” means the commencement of this Act on the 11th day of July, 1991.;

(b) “conversion”, with its grammatical variations, includes alteration or change of whatever nature;

(c) “place of worship” means a temple, mosque, gurudwara, church, monastery or any other place of public religious worship of any religious denomination or any section thereof, by whatever name called.

Bar of conversion of places of worship.

3. No person shall convert any place of worship of any religious denomination or any section thereof into a place of worship of a different section of the same religious denomination or of a different religious denomination or any section thereof.

Declaration as to the religious character of certain places of worship and bar of jurisdiction of courts, etc.

4. (1) It is hereby declared that the religious character of a place of worship existing on the 15th August, 1947 shall continue to be the same as it existed on that day.

(2) If, on the commencement of this Act, any suit, appeal or other proceeding with respect to the conversion of the religious character of any place of worship, existing on the 15th day of August, 1947, is pending before any court, tribunal or other authority, the and no suit, appeal or other proceeding with respect to any such matter shall lie on or after such commencement in any court, tribunal or other authority :

Provided that if any suit, appeal or other proceeding, instituted or filed on the ground that conversion has taken place in the religious character of any such place after the 15th day of August, 1947, is pending on the commencement of this Act, such suit, appeal or other proceeding shall not so abate and every such suit, appeal or other proceeding shall be disposed of in accordance with the provisions of sub-section (1).

(3) Nothing contained in sub-section (1) and sub-section (2) shall apply to,—

(a) any place of worship referred to in the said sub-sections which is an ancient and historical monument or an archaeological site or remains covered by the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Sites and Remains Act, 1958 or any other law for the time being in force;

**24 of
1958.**

(b) any suit, appeal or other proceeding with respect to any matter referred to in sub-section (2), finally decided, settled or disposed of by a court, tribunal or other authority before the commencement of this Act;

(c) any dispute with respect to any such matter settled by the parties amongst themselves before such commencement;

(d) any conversion of any such place effected before such commencement by acquiescence;

(e) any conversion of any such place effected before such commencement which is not liable to be challenged in any court, tribunal or other authority being barred by limitation under any law for the time being in force.

5. Nothing contained in this Act shall apply to the place or place of worship commonly known as Ram Janma Bhumi-Babri Masjid situated in Ayodhya in the State of Uttar Pradesh and to any suit, appeal or other proceeding relating to the said place or place of worship

**Act not
to apply
to Ram
Janma
Bhumi-Ba-
bri Mas-
jid.**

6. (1) Whoever contravenes the provisions of section 3 shall be punishable with imprisonment for a term which may extend to three years and shall also be liable to fine.

**Punishment
for contra-
vention of
section 3.**

(2) Whoever attempts to commit any offence punishable under sub-section (1) or to cause such offence to be committed and in such attempt does any act towards the commission of the offence shall be punishable with the punishment provided for the offence.

(3) Whoever abets, or is a party to a criminal conspiracy to commit, an offence punishable under sub-section (1) shall, whether such offence be or be not committed in consequence of such abetment or in pursuance of such criminal conspiracy, and notwithstanding anything contained in section 116 of the Indian Penal Code, be punishable with the punishment provided for the offence.

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7. The provisions of this Act shall have effect notwithstanding anything inconsistent therewith contained in any other law for the time being in force or any instrument having effect by virtue of any law other than this Act.

Act to override other enactments.

(8) In section 8 of the Representation of the People Act, 1951, in sub-section (1),—

Amendment of Act 43 of 1951.

(a) in clause (i), the word "or" shall be inserted at the end;

(b) after clause (j), as so amended, the following clause shall inserted, namely:—

"(j) section 6, (offence of conversion of a place of worship) of the Places of Worship (Special Provisions) Act, 1991,".

V. L. SAMIA DEVI,
Secy. to the Govt. of India.