

**ANDHRA PRADESH (ANDHRA AREA) TEMPLE ENTRY  
AUTHORIZATION ACT, 1947**

**5 of 1947**

**[13th May, 1947]**

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An Act to authorize entry into Hindu temples in the Andhra Area of the State of Andhra Pradesh and the offer of worship therein by all classes of Hindus. Whereas it is the policy of the State Government to remove the disabilities imposed on certain classes of Hindus against entry into Hindu temples in the State; And whereas the State Government are satisfied, from the rapidity with which, under pressure of Hindu public opinion, a number of temples have been thrown open to certain classes of Hindus in recent months, under the provisions of the Madras Temple Entry Authorization and Indemnity Act, 1939 that the time has now arrived for throwing open to all classes of Hindus every Hindu temple in the State; And

whereas the State Government consider that the provisions of the said Act are inadequate for the early and complete implementation of the policy of the State Government aforesaid: It is hereby enacted as follows:-

### **1. Short title, extent and commencement :-**

(1) This Act maybe called the Andhra Pradesh (Andhra Area) Temple Entry Authorization Act, 1947.

(2) It extends to the whole of the Andhra Area of the State of Andhra Pradesh.

(3) This section shall come into force at once; and the remaining provisions of this Act shall come into force on such date as the State Government may, by notification in the Andhra Pradesh Gazette, appoint.

### **2. Definitions :-**

In this Act, unless there is anything repugnant in the subject or context--

(1) 'temple' means a place, by whatever name known, which is dedicated to or for the benefit of, or used as of right by, the Hindu community or any section thereof, as a place of public religious worship, and includes subsidiary shrines and mantapams attached to such place;

(2) 'worship' means such religious service as the bulk of the worshippers may offer, or participate in, in accordance with such rules and regulations as may be made under this Act.

### **3. Right of all classes of Hindus to enter and offer worship in temples :-**

(1) Notwith- standing any law, custom or usage to contrary, every Hindu irrespective of the caste or sect to which he belongs shall be entitled to enter any Hindu temple and offer worship therein in the same manner and to the same extent as Hindus in general or any section of Hindus: and no Hindu shall, by reason only of such entry or worship whether before or after the commencement of this Act, be deemed to have committed any actionable wrong or offence or be sued or prosecuted therefor.

(2) Without prejudice to the generality of the foregoing provision it is hereby declared that the right conferred by sub-section (1) shall

include the following rights, if, and to the extent to which, they are enjoyed by Hindus in general, or any section of Hindus:-

(a) the right to bathe in, or use the waters of, any sacred tank, well, spring or water-course appurtenant to the temple, whether situated within or outside the precincts thereof;

(b) the right of passage over any sacred place, including a hill or hillock or a road, street or pathway, which is requisite for obtaining access to the temple.

**4. Power of trustees to make regulations for the maintenance of order and decorum and the due performance of rites and ceremonies in temples :-**

The trustee or other authority in charge of a temple shall have power, subject to the control of the State Government and to any rules which may be made by them, to make regulations for the maintenance of order and decorum in the temple and the due observance of the religious rites and ceremonies performed in the temple, but such regulations shall not discriminate in any way against any Hindu on the ground that he belongs to a particular caste or sect.

**5. Sanction for institution or continuance of suits, prosecutions, etc. :-**

(1) No suit for damages, injunction or declaration or for any other relief, no prosecution for any offence, and no application or other proceeding under the Madras Hindu Religious Endowments Act 1926, or any other law, shall be instituted in respect of any entry into or worship in any temple whether before or after the commencement of this Act, on the sole ground that such entry or worship is by a Hindu belonging to a particular caste or sect.

(2) No suit, prosecution, application or proceeding of the nature aforesaid, instituted before the commencement of this Act, shall be continued thereafter, without the sanction of the State Government.

**6. Power to decide disputes :-**

If any question arises as to whether a place is or is not a temple as defined in this Act, the question shall be referred to the State Government and their decision shall be final subject, however, to any decree passed by a competent Civil Court in a suit filed before it within six months of the date of the decision of the State

Government.

**7. Penalties :-**

Whoever--

(i) Prevents a Hindu from exercising any right conferred by this Act, or

(ii) molests or obstructs a Hindu in the exercise of any such right. shall be punishable, in the case of a first offence, with fine which may extend to one hundred rupees, and in the case of a second or subsequent offence, with imprisonment which may extend to six months, or with fine which may extend to five hundred rupees, or with both.

**7A. Offences under Section 7 to be cognizable :-**

All offences punishable under Section 7 shall be cognizable.

**8. Rules :-**

(1) The State Government may make rules for the purpose of carrying into effect the provisions of this Act in respect of temples generally or of any temple or class of temples.

(2) All rules made under this section shall be published in the Andhra Pradesh Gazette, and on such publication, shall have effect as if enacted in this Act.

**9. Power to remove difficulties :-**

If any difficulty arises in giving effect to the provisions of this Act, the State Government, as occasion requires, may, by order, do anything which appears to them necessary for the purpose of removing the difficulty.

**10. Omitted :-**

**11. Omitted :-**