

Manarcaud St. Mary's Syrian Orthodox Cathedral to get Pilgrim Centre Status

KOTTAYAM: The State Government has decided to list the famous Manarcaud St Mary's Cathedral as a pilgrim centre for a declaration later, said Kodyeri Balakrishnan, Minister for Home and Tourism here on Sunday.

The government believes that it has a responsibility to ensure sufficient infrastructure and facilities for the pilgrims thronging various centres including Manarcaud. A big change is going on in the state in the tourism sector, he said.

The State Government is committed to develop infrastructure around various prominent pilgrim centres in the state and promote pilgrim tourism, to give a new orientation in the tourism sector, he said.

He laid the foundation stone for the pilgrims quarters to set up in the vicinity of the Cathedral at a cost of Rs one crore, in the course of a cultural meet held on Sunday as part of the auspicious 'Ettunombu Perunal'. Half of the amount will come as central grant once the shrine is officially declared as a pilgrim centre by the State Government.

The Minister said that the Manarcaud church with its uniqueness will definitely find place in the tourism map, as it is poised to be located between tourist destinations in the eastern hills of the district and beyond and around the lake in the western side.

Catholicos Mor Baselios Thomas I inaugurated the meet. Irrigation Minister N.K. Premachandran distributed the foundation stones for ten houses, to be built for the poor, under the auspices of the Sevika Sangham of the Cathedral, on the occasion.

Opposition leader Oommen Chandy distributed tricycles to the handicapped in the function.

Diocesan metropolitan Thomas Mar Theemothios presided over the function. V.N. Vasavan, MLA spoke at the meet. District Collector Raju Narayana Swamy, diocesan secretary Rev Kuriakose Cor Episcopa Kizhakkedath and others were present.

Prior to the meet, six newly ordained bishops of the Jacobite Syrian church were accorded a warm reception at the entrance of the Cathedral.

Source : Indian Express