

PRESS RELEASE

Text of the D.O. letter dated 16.11.2020 of Thiru. Edappadi K. Palaniswami, Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu, addressed to Shri. Narendra Modi, Hon'ble Prime Minister of India

Every year more than 4500 Haj pilgrims from Tamil Nadu and neighbouring States proceed for Haj pilgrimage to Saudi Arabia from the embarkation point at Chennai. Direct flights were operated from Chennai to Jeddah and back since the year 1987, benefitting the pilgrims of Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Puducherry, Lakshadweep, Andaman and Nicobar Islands.

The Haj Committee of India has now informed that due to COVID 19 pandemic, the number of embarkation points in India have been reduced from 21 to 10 for Haj – 2021 and Chennai has been left out of this list.

The Haj pilgrims from Tamil Nadu have been assigned Cochin as their embarkation point. It will be logistically challenging for Haj pilgrims, who are mostly senior citizens to travel from various locations in the State of Tamil Nadu to Cochin for boarding the flight. These pilgrims have represented to me about the hardship and difficulties they are likely to face while embarking on Haj pilgrimage from Cochin.

Keeping in mind the hardship and inconvenience caused to pilgrims from Tamil Nadu, I request that Chennai may be designated as an embarkation point for Haj 2021, as in earlier years. I would like to assure you that the State Government will follow all prescribed COVID 19 protocols for ensuring the safety of the pilgrims, while sending them from Chennai embarkation point.

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Issued By: - DIPR, Secretariat, Chennai - 9.