



Jan Vishwas (Amendment of Provisions) Bill, 2023

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Why in News?

Recently, the **Jan Vishwas (Amendment of Provisions) Bill, 2023** was passed in Lok Sabha during the monsoon session and aims at giving a boost to **Ease of Living and [Ease of Doing Business](#)**.

What is the Jan Vishwas (Amendment of Provisions) Bill, 2023?

▪ About:

- The Bill proposes to **amend 183 provisions in 42 Central Acts administered by 19 Ministries/Departments**, covering various domains such as environment, agriculture, media, industry, trade, information technology, copyright, motor vehicles, cinematography, food safety, etc.
- The main objective of the Bill is to **decriminalize minor offences** that do not involve any harm to the **public interest or national security** and replace them with civil penalties or administrative actions.

▪ Background:

- The Bill was introduced in **Lok Sabha on 22nd December 2022** and referred to the **Joint Committee of Parliament**.

▪ Need:

- Rationalize criminal provisions to **reduce undue pressure on the justice system**.
- Address **technical and procedural defaults** without imposing severe penalties.
- Establish a balanced approach between the **severity of offence and prescribed punishment**.
- Boost the **growth of businesses by eliminating barriers** and promoting a **conducive legal environment**.

▪ Key Features of the Bill:

- The Bill seeks to remove **imprisonment clauses and/or fines in some provisions and convert them into penalties in some others**.
 - The penalties will be determined by **adjudicating officers** appointed by the respective Ministries/Departments.
- The Bill also introduces **compounding of offences in some provisions**, which means that the offenders can settle their cases by **paying a certain amount without going through a court trial**.
- The Bill provides for a periodic **revision of fines and penalties every three years**, with **an increase of 10% of the minimum amount for various offences in the specified Acts**.
- The Bill removes all offences and penalties under the **Indian Post Office Act, of 1898**, which is considered to be obsolete and **irrelevant in the present context**.

▪ Benefits:

- By introducing administrative adjudication mechanisms, the **Bill reduces pressure on the justice system**, helps in reducing **case pendency**, and facilitates a more efficient and effective justice dispensation.
- The Bill will foster **trust-based governance** by ensuring that citizens, businesses, and government departments **operate without fear of imprisonment for minor, technical**

or procedural defaults.

▪ **Concerns:**

- The Jan Vishwas Bill replaces imprisonment with fines or penalties, which is **not enough for decriminalization**.
- Experts argue that the Bill represents a '**quasi-decriminalization**', and more efforts are needed to institutionalize true decriminalization.
- Concerns were raised about the **appointment of adjudicating officers** under the Air (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act and the Environment (Protection) Act, 1986, **questioning their technical competence for such legal proceedings**.

What are the Key Laws Covered in the Bill?

- [The Indian Forest Act, 1927.](#)
- [The Air \(Prevention and Control of Pollution\) Act, 1981.](#)
- [The Information Technology Act, 2000.](#)
- [The Environment \(Protection\) Act, 1986.](#)
- [The Copyright Act, 1957.](#)
- [The Patents Act, 1970.](#)
- [The Railways Act, 1989.](#)
- [The Food Safety and Standards Act, 2006.](#)

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