



Bill Summary

The National Accreditation Regulatory Authority for Higher Educational Institutions Bill, 2010

- The National Accreditation Regulatory Authority for Higher Educational Institutions Bill, 2010 was introduced in the Lok Sabha on May 3, 2010. The Bill was referred to the Standing Committee on Human Resource Development, which is scheduled to submit its report within two months.
- The Bill seeks to make it mandatory for every higher educational institution (other than institutions engaged in agricultural education) to be accredited by an independent accreditation agency in order to maintain academic quality.
- The Bill seeks to establish a National Accreditation Authority for Higher Education, which shall register accreditation agencies, lay down norms and policies for assessment of academic quality in higher education institutions, undertake audit on matters related to conflict of interest, disclosure of information and transparency, levy of fees, advise central and state government, and collect and disseminate information on accreditation of higher educational institutions.
- Only a registered accreditation agency can undertake accreditation of a higher educational institution. The Bill lays down eligibility criteria and the procedure of application for registration. There are provisions for suspension or revocation of registration in specified circumstances.
- An accreditation agency has to be a non-profit organization registered as a company registered under Section 25 of the Companies Act, a society or trust and controlled by the central or state government. One of its main objectives has to be to accredit higher educational institutions and should be professionally competent and financially sound. Agencies shall be penalized in case of contravention of any provision.
- The Authority shall consist of a Chairperson and four members (at least one of whom is a woman). They shall be appointed by the central government on recommendation of a Selection Committee. The Chairperson and members have to be at least 55 years old and have experience of 25 years in higher education and research. The Chairperson shall need to have the additional qualification of being a Vice Chancellor of a University or a Head of an institution of national importance. Each member should either be a professor of medical education or science and technology or social sciences or have experience in legal matters.
- The Bill states that if an accreditation agency fails to comply with its prescribed duties, it shall be liable to pay compensation to the higher educational institution, which shall be determined by the State Educational Tribunal
- Any accreditation agency that contravenes the Act shall be punishable with a fine of upto Rs 5 lakh. If any person resists or obstructs any officer of the Authority without reasonable cause he shall be penalised with imprisonment upto three months or fine of upto Rs 5 lakh or with both.
- The central government has the power to exempt any higher educational institution from the provisions of this law.

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