

Select Committee Report Summary

Jan Vishwas (Amendment of Provisions) Bill, 2025

- The Select Committee of Lok Sabha on the Jan Vishwas (Amendment of Provisions) Bill, 2025 (Chair: Mr. Tejasvi Surya) presented its report on March 13, 2026. The Bill amends 17 central Acts to decriminalise or rationalise offences and penalties. These include the Motor Vehicles Act, 1988, the Legal Metrology Act, 2009, the Apprentices Act, 1961, and the New Delhi Municipal Council Act, 1994. Key observations and recommendations of the Committee include:
 - **Decriminalising offences:** The Committee suggested decriminalising certain offences that were not originally covered under the Bill. For example, under the Delhi Municipal Corporation Act, 1957, wilful default in payment of property tax is punishable with imprisonment up to seven years and a fine of at least fifty percent of the tax evaded. The Committee recommended decriminalising this offence and instead imposing a civil penalty of fifty percent of the tax evaded or sought to be evaded.
 - The Bill introduces improvement notice for first instance of certain offences under the Legal Metrology Act, 2009. As per the Bill, the second and subsequent offences will be punishable with a criminal fine in such cases. The Committee recommended a more graded structure by replacing fines with civil penalties for second contraventions.
 - **Revising fines and penalties:** The Committee recommended further increasing the amounts of penalties and fines in certain cases. For example, under the Motor Vehicles Act, 1988, contravention of licence condition by an aggregator is punishable with a criminal fine of Rs 5,000. The Bill instead imposes a civil penalty, but keeps the amount unchanged. The Committee recommended enhancing the penalty to range between Rs 50,000 and one lakh rupees.
 - **Adjudication and appeal:** The Committee recommended specifying timelines for filing and disposal of appeals in certain cases, and prescribing the qualifications of officers under some laws.
 - **Retaining certain offences:** The Bill removes certain offences from the Acts it amends. The Committee recommended retaining some of these provisions. For example, under the Reserve Bank of India Act, 1934, failure to produce books or documents is punishable with a fine of up to one lakh rupees. The Bill proposes to remove this provision, however, the Committee recommended retaining it.
- Under the Drugs and Cosmetics Act, 1940, selling or manufacturing ayurvedic, siddha, or unani drugs in contravention of certain provisions is punishable with imprisonment and fine. The Bill removes imprisonment in such cases. The Committee recommended retaining imprisonment term in view of public health impact, except for the offence of non-disclosure of place where drug is being manufactured or kept.
- **Removal of provisions:** The Committee has also recommended removal of certain provisions from these Acts. For example, the Bill removes the mandate on providing information of births and deaths from the Delhi Municipal Corporation Act, 1957 for individuals, but retains for hospitals. The Committee recommended also removing it for hospitals as this is covered under another law.
- **Decriminalisation across additional Acts:** The Committee examined 65 additional Acts. It recommended a broader review of proposals for decriminalisation across these Acts. These include the Railways Act, 1989, the National Highways Act, 1956, the Patents Act, 1970, the Indian Forest Act, 1927, the Food Safety and Standards Act, 2006, and the Bureau of Indian Standards Act, 2016.
- **General principles to guide decriminalisation:** The Committee outlined certain principles to guide decriminalisation. These include: (i) ensuring that fines and penalties are proportionate to the gravity of the offence and the profile of the offender, (ii) specifying minimum and maximum penalties in the Act itself instead of Rules, (iii) introducing a tiered compliance framework in certain cases where first or second offences attract civil penalty, and subsequent offences are punishable with stricter fines, (iv) a simplified compounding procedure for minor offences, and (v) clearly elaborating adjudication and appellate processes within each Act.
- **Centralised regulatory management system:** The Committee recommended creating a unified digital platform for regulatory compliances across ministries. It would enable data sharing, reduce duplication of administrative effort, enable regulators to track compliance history, and improve transparency and traceability in regulatory enforcement.

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