

Bill Summary

The Jan Vishwas (Amendment of Provisions) Bill, 2025

- The Jan Vishwas (Amendment of Provisions) Bill, 2025 was introduced in Lok Sabha on August 18, 2025. It seeks to amend 17 central Acts to mainly decriminalise or rationalise certain 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.
- **Decriminalising offences:** The Bill decriminalises several offences. For example, under the Motor Vehicles Act, 1988, driving by a person who is mentally or physically unfit to drive, is punishable with a fine. Similarly, under the Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority Act, 1985, contravening an order on export or import is punishable with imprisonment, a fine, or both. The Bill instead levies a monetary penalty for these offences.
- **Removal of imprisonment term:** In some cases, the Bill removes the imprisonment term for an offence. Under the Legal Metrology Act, 2009, if an owner of a government-approved test centre wilfully stamps any weight or measure in contravention of the Act, he will be liable for imprisonment up to one year, a fine, or both. Under the Electricity Act, 2003, non-compliance with an order or a direction is punishable with imprisonment up to three months, a fine, or both. The Bill removes imprisonment for these offences, and instead imposes only a fine.
- **Revision of fines and penalties:** The Bill revises the monetary value of fines and penalties for several offences. It further provides that fines and penalties specified by it will increase by 10% of the respective minimum amount every three years.
- **Removal of penalties for the first instance of an offence:** The Bill amends some Acts to provide for warnings in the first instance of an offence. For example, the Central Silk Board Act, 1948 penalises providing false information with imprisonment, a fine, or both. The Bill amends this to provide for issuance of a warning in case of the first offence, and levy of a monetary penalty for subsequent offences. Similar changes are also being made to the Tea Act, 1953.
- **Improvement notices:** The Bill introduces improvement notices under the Legal Metrology Act, 2009. Under this Act, several offences, such as manufacturing, using, or selling non-standard weights and measures, are punishable with fines. The Bill instead provides that an improvement notice may be issued in case of the first offence. Such notices require rectifying non-compliance within a specified time. Subsequent offences will be punishable with a fine.
- **Adjudication of penalties:** The Bill amends certain Acts to provide for the appointment of adjudicating officers to hold inquiries and adjudicate penalties. It also provides for appointment of appellate authorities to hear appeals against decisions of adjudicating officers.
- **Property tax and advertisement tax in New Delhi municipal area:** The Bill amends the New Delhi Municipal Council Act, 1994. The Act provides for the levy of property tax. The Bill specifies that property tax will consist of a building tax and a vacant land tax. It establishes a Municipal Valuation Committee to recommend base value for vacant lands and buildings, and manner of determining and revising property tax. The Bill sets up a Hardship and Anomaly Committee to address grievances regarding property tax. Following offences will be punishable with imprisonment term between one month and seven years, and a fine amounting to at least 50% of the tax evaded: (i) wilful default in payment of property tax, (ii) wilful failure in furnishing return of property tax in due time, and (iii) furnishing wrong information in return of assessment. The Bill also removes provisions for levying advertisement tax.
- **Manner of revision of fines under Jan Vishwas Act of 2023:** The Jan Vishwas (Amendment of Provisions) Act, 2023 provides for revision of fines and penalties specified by it every three years. The Bill adds that if any such Act already prescribes its own method of revision, the method in the Act will apply.

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