

**Bill No. VIII of 2021**

THE INDIAN PENAL CODE (AMENDMENT) BILL, 2021

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BILL

*further to amend the Indian Penal Code, 1860.*

BE it enacted by the Parliament in the Seventy-second Year of the Republic of India as follows:—

1. (1) This Act may be called the Indian Penal Code (Amendment) Act, 2021.

Short title and commencement.

5 (2) It shall come into force on such date as the Central Government may, by notification in the Official Gazette, appoint.

45 of 1860.

2. For section 295 of the Indian Penal Code, 1860, the following section shall be substituted, namely:—

Substitution of Section 295.

10 "295. Whoever destroys, damages or defiles any place of worship, or any object held sacred by any class of persons with the intention of thereby insulting the religion of any class of persons or with the knowledge that any class of persons is likely to consider such destruction, damage or defilement as an insult to their religion, shall be punishable with imprisonment of either description for a term which may extend to twenty years, or with fine, or with both."

Injuring or defiling place of worship with intent to insult the religion of any class.

## STATEMENT OF OBJECTS AND REASONS

India is a religious society. Religion plays an important role in each of our lives and forms an indispensable part of our society. It is the basis of our ceremonies, festivals and even harvest celebrations. Andhra Pradesh has unfortunately witnessed a spate of temple desecrations. These cowardly attacks need to be dealt firmly by the State in a manner which has a deterrent effect.

Data on attacks on temples in Andhra Pradesh shows that in 2020, about 228 cases of attacks on temples were registered, compared to 305 cases in 2019, 267 in 2018, 318 in 2017, 332 in 2016 and 290 in 2015. A stricter national law, hence, is the need of the hour.

Such acts of desecrations are a social evil and affect the sentiments within the society as well as create an environment of disharmony. Section 295 of the Indian Penal Code at present provides for just 2 years of imprisonment. Considering the harm caused to the society at large by incidents of desecration, the punishment under section 295 of the IPC therefore needs a revision to curb such acts.

Hence this Bill.

V. VIJAYASAI REDDY

ANNEXURE

EXTRACTS FROM THE INDIAN PENAL CODE, 1860

(45 OF 1860)

295. Whoever destroys, damages or defiles any place of worship, or any object held sacred by any class of persons with the intention of thereby insulting the religion of any class of persons or with the knowledge that any class of persons is likely to consider such destruction, damage or defilement as an insult to their religion, shall be punished with imprisonment of either description for a term which may extend to two years, or with fine, or with both.

Injuring or defiling place of worship, with intent to insult the religion of any class.

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*(Shri V. Vijayasai Reddy, M.P.)*