



# Uttarakhand Freedom of Religion (Amendment) Bill 2025

## Why in News?

The Uttarakhand Cabinet has approved the **Uttarakhand Freedom of Religion (Amendment) Bill 2025**, introducing tougher penalties for forced, fraudulent, or coercive religious conversions.

- The new amendments include **life imprisonment**, **hefty fines**, and increased provisions for protecting victims of illegal conversions.

## Key Points

- **Stricter Penalties:**
  - The amended bill proposes **life imprisonment** for the gravest cases of forced conversions, alongside fines up to **₹10 lakh**.
  - **General offences** will carry **3 to 10 years** imprisonment, while **crimes involving sensitive classes** such as minors or women will face **5 to 14 years** imprisonment.
  - **Promotion through Digital Platforms:** The bill criminalizes promoting conversions through **social media, messaging apps**, and other online channels.
- **Expanded Definition of Inducement:** The bill broadens the definition of “**inducement**”, now including **gifts, cash, goods, employment offers**, promises of marriage, or portraying another religion negatively.
- **Protecting Victims:** The bill includes **provisions for victim protection, rehabilitation**, financial assistance for medical care and travel, as well as **legal aid** for victims of forced conversions.
- **Marriage and False Identity:** It criminalizes **marriage under false pretenses**, where an individual conceals their religion, with penalties of **3 to 10 years** in prison and fines of **₹3 lakh**.
- **Asset Seizure and Warrants:** Authorities will have the power to **seize assets** acquired through illegal conversions.
  - **Arrests** can be **made without a warrant** in these cases (**cognizable offenses**), and **bail** will only be granted if the accused is not found guilty or is not likely to repeat the offense.

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