

Govt proposes a range of bills to boost economy, job creation

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New Delhi: Govt has proposed a range of transformative bills in ongoing winter session of Parliament, focusing on economic growth, modernisation, job creation and sustainability. As per govt sources, these legislative proposals cover oilfields, shipping, railways, aviation and disaster management. They are not just updates; they aim for a strategic overhaul to align India with global standards and foster development.

For instance, Oilfields (Regulation & Development) Bill, 2024, marks a significant shift from colonial practices by modernising terminology and opening up unconventional hydrocarbon exploration. Likewise, Merchant Shipping Bill, 2024, along with Lading Bill, 2024, is designed to streamline maritime laws, making them more efficient and in line with international norms.

Merchant Shipping Bill removes criminal penalties for minor infractions, signalling a move towards a less punitive, more supportive regulatory framework, which should boost the maritime sector and enhance India's global trade capabilities.

"This reflects PM Narendra Modi's vision to free India from outdated colonial laws, promoting self-reliance and innovation in en-

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ergy sectors," a senior govt official said. Although the first week of the winter session has seen no business due to opposition protests, govt sources are optimistic about smoother proceedings starting next week.

He emphasised that these bills were more than legislative changes; they were "blueprint for India's future". "They aim to erase colonial legacies, empower critical sectors for economic growth, boost job creation and pledge sustainable practices," he said.

Railways (Amendment) Bill, 2024, is expected to bring about a significant transformation in the sector by simplifying legal structures and enhancing operational efficiency, which could lead to job opportunities in infrastructure and maintenance. Coastal Shipping Bill, 2024, complements this by reducing logistics costs, making Indian exports more competitive and generating jobs in shipping and related fields.

Disaster Management (Amendment) Bill introduces urban disaster management authorities, focusing on local response systems,

thereby enhancing safety and creating jobs in hazard monitoring and emergency services.

Govt sources said Bharatiya Vayuyan Vidheyak (Aircraft Bill) aims to establish India as an aerospace hub. "By centralising aviation governance, this bill is expected to promote manufacturing, maintenance and innovation, in line with the 'Make in India' initiative. The emphasis on international conventions in both shipping and aviation sectors positions India as a forward-thinking player in global trade," the official said.

He pointed to environmental considerations in these legislative efforts, with the Oilfields Bill encouraging green energy projects, and the Merchant Shipping Bill including provisions for ship recycling and pollution prevention. "This dual focus on economic and environmental health is crucial in addressing climate change," he added.

A key aspect of these laws is the effort towards decriminalisation, especially in the maritime sector, aiming to lessen the regulatory burden on businesses. "By substituting punitive measures with fines and simplifying administrative processes, these laws aim to create a more business-friendly environment, in sync with global standards for ease of doing business," the official said.