

Karnataka Hate Speech and Hate Crimes (Prevention) Bill, 2025

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Why in News?

The Karnataka Hate Speech and Hate Crimes (Prevention) Bill, 2025, set to be introduced in the upcoming legislative session.

Karnataka is the 1st state in India to introduce a Bill for targeting hate speech.

- **Aim** - To introduce a specific legal framework to curb the spread of hatred and disharmony.
- **Hate speech definition** - The Bill defines hate speech as expressions intended to cause harm or animosity based on categories such as religion, race, caste, sex, gender, sexual orientation, place of birth, residence, language, disability, or tribe.
- **Hate crimes** - These are defined as acts of making, publishing, circulating or promoting such hate speech or inciting, abetting, or attempting such speech.
- **Imprisonment and Penalty** -
 - **For first-time offenders** - The Bill proposes imprisonment from 1 to 7 years and a Rs.50,000 fine and
 - **For repeat offenders** - 2 to 10 years and a Rs.1,00,000 fine.
- Offenses are cognizable and non-bailable and they will be tried by a Judicial Magistrate First Class.
- **Collective liability for organizations** - Organizations can be held liable, with responsible individuals accountable unless they demonstrate lack of knowledge or due diligence.
- **Regulation of Online Hate Content** - A designated officer can direct the blocking or removal of online content promoting hate crimes.

- Executive Magistrates and senior police officers have preventive powers if a hate crime is deemed imminent.
- **Exemptions** - Exemptions exist for genuine works in science, literature, art, heritage, or bona fide religious practices.
- The state government views the Bill as necessary to strengthen social harmony and address a gap in national laws regarding the definition of hate speech.

Reference

[The Indian Express | Karnataka's new Hate Speech Bill](#)

