

Bill Summary

The Rajasthan Advocates Protection Bill, 2023

- The Rajasthan Advocates Protection Bill, 2023, was introduced in the Rajasthan Legislative Assembly on March 15, 2023. It seeks to safeguard advocates against offences such as assault and criminal intimidation that obstruct their professional services. Key features of the Bill include:
 - **Prohibition of assault:** The Bill provides that any act of: (i) assault, (ii) grievous hurt, (iii) criminal force, and (iv) criminal intimidation against an advocate will be an offence. Such an offence must be in connection with the discharge of the advocate's duties in the court premises. An advocate must be enrolled under the Advocates Act, 1961, and practising in Rajasthan.
 - **Punishments:** The Bill prescribes varying punishments for such acts against advocates. For instance, assault against an advocate would result in imprisonment of up to two years and a fine of up to Rs 25,000. Causing grievous hurt to an advocate shall be penalised with imprisonment of up to seven years and a fine of up to Rs 50,000. The Court may order a certain amount of the fine to be paid to the advocate as compensation. In addition, the offender will also be liable to pay for medical expenses and property damages of an advocate, as determined by the Court.
- **Police protection:** If an advocate reports an offence committed against him, the police may provide him protection. The period and manner of protection will be prescribed in the Rules.
- **Prosecution of an advocate:** A report of a cognisable offence by the advocate during the discharge of his duties shall be registered only after an investigation. Such an investigation must be conducted by at least the Deputy Superintendent of Police within seven days. If such a case is registered, the Bar Council of Rajasthan shall be notified.
- **Misuse of law:** If an advocate misuses this law, uses it for malicious purposes, or makes a false complaint, he will be punished with imprisonment of up to three years, or a fine, or both.

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