

PUNJAB VIDHAN SABHA

BILL NO.19-PLA-2025

**THE PUNJAB PREVENTION OF OFFENCES AGAINST HOLY
SCRIPTURES BILL, 2025**

A

BILL

to preserve religious and communal harmony and fraternity among people of diverse religious beliefs and faiths residing in the State of Punjab and to put in place a deterrence to curb incidence of sacrilege of Holy Scriptures and matters connected therewith or incidental thereto.

BE it enacted by the Legislature of the State of Punjab in the Seventy-sixth Year of the Republic of India, as follows:-

Short title, extent
and
commencement.

1. (1) This Act may be called the Punjab Prevention of Offences against Holy Scriptures Act, 2025.

(2) It shall extend to whole of the State of Punjab.

(3) It shall come into force on and with effect from the date of its publication in the Official Gazette.

Definitions.

2. (1) In this Act, unless the context otherwise requires,-

(a) 'Holy Scriptures' means any of the Scriptures considered sacred and held as 'Holy' by respective religious denominations and may include Sri Guru Granth Sahib or extracts thereof including Pothis and Gutka Sahib, Srimad Bhagavad Gita, Quran Sharif and Holy Bible;

(b) 'offence' means and includes any sacrilege, damage, destruction, defacing, disfiguring, de-colouring, defiling, decomposing, burning, breaking or tearing of any Holy Scripture, or part thereof; and

(c) 'State Government' means the Government of the State of Punjab in the Department of Home Affairs.

(2) The words and expressions used but not defined in this Act shall have the same meaning as, respectively, assigned to them in the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, 2023 (Central Act No. 45 of 2023).

Nature and
classification of
the offences.

3. The offence(s) punishable under this Act shall be cognizable, non-bailable and non-compoundable, triable by the Court of Session.

Investigation. 4. The investigation of the offence(s) punishable under this Act shall be conducted by the police officer not below the rank of Deputy Superintendent of Police.

Punishment. 5. (1) Any person who commits an offence under this Act shall be punished with imprisonment for a term which shall not be less than ten years, but which may extend to imprisonment for life, and shall also be liable to pay a fine of rupees five lacs which may extend upto rupees ten lacs.

(2) Any person who abets to commit an offence under this Act shall, if the act abetted is committed in consequence of the abetment, be punished with the punishment provided for the offence.

Explanation.- An act or offence is said to be committed in consequence of abetment, when it is committed in consequence of the instigation, or in pursuance of the conspiracy, or with the aid which constitutes the abetment.

(3) Any person who attempts to commit an offence under this Act shall be punished with imprisonment for a term which shall not be less than three years, but which may extend to five years, and shall also be liable to pay a fine which may extend upto rupees three lacs.

Act not in
derogation of
any other law.

6. The provisions of this Act shall be in addition to and not in derogation of the provisions of any other law for the time being in force.

Removal of
difficulties and
ambiguities.

7. For the purposes of removal of any difficulty in implementation of the provisions of this Act or to remove any ambiguity, the State Government may, by order published in the Official Gazette, make such provision(s) not inconsistent with the provisions of this Act, but no order shall be made under this section after the expiry of a period of two years from the date of commencement of this Act.

Act to override
other
enactments.

8. The provisions of this Act shall have effect notwithstanding anything inconsistent therewith contained in any other law for the time being in force or any instrument having effect by virtue of any law other than this Act.

STATEMENT OF OBJECTS AND REASONS

In the recent past there have been attempts to disturb peace and communal harmony in the State by committing sacrilege of Sri Guru Granth Sahib ji, Srimad Bhagwat Gita and holy Quran and any other holy scripture. Government is determined not to allow such incidents and ensure deterrent action against all those who commit such sacrilege. The proposed “The Punjab Prevention of Offences against Holy Scripture(s) Bill, 2025” aim to achieve this objective by providing punishment of life imprisonment for such acts of sacrileges.

BHAGWANT MANN,
Chief Minister, Punjab

CHANDIGARH:
THE 14TH JULY, 2025

R. L. KHATANA,
SECRETARY.

N.B. – The above Bill published in the Punjab Government Gazette (Extraordinary), dated the 14th July, 2025 under the proviso to rule 121 of the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in the Punjab Vidhan Sabha (Punjab Legislative Assembly).