



Dr. Jitendra Singh Tables Public Examinations (Prevention of Unfair Means) Amendment Bill, 2026 in Rajya Sabha

Bill further strengthens legal framework to curb examination malpractices and safeguard interests of students and youth, says Dr. Jitendra Singh

Six Special Fast Track Courts Operational; More Planned for Speedy Disposal of Public Examination Cases: Dr. Jitendra Singh

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Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Science & Technology; Earth Sciences and Minister of State in the Prime Minister's Office, Personnel, Public Grievances and Pensions, Atomic Energy and Space, Dr. Jitendra Singh today moved the **Public Examinations (Prevention of Unfair Means) Amendment Bill, 2026**, as passed by the Lok Sabha, for consideration in the Rajya Sabha.

Initiating the discussion on the Bill, Dr. Jitendra Singh said the Amendment Bill is a natural extension of the Public Examinations (Prevention of Unfair Means) Act, 2024 and that the 2024 Act together with the present Amendment Bill constitute the country's first comprehensive legislative framework of their kind in independent India to prevent unfair means in public examinations. He said the legislation reflects the Government's commitment to safeguarding the interests of students and youth while ensuring merit, consistency, transparency and credibility in the public examination system.

The Minister said the Government remains open to constructive suggestions and has brought forward the amendments after taking into account recent experience and feedback, with the objective of making the law more stringent and effective. He said the amendments reaffirm the Government's policy of zero tolerance towards examination malpractices and paper leaks while ensuring that the genuine efforts of students are protected.

Highlighting the need for the legislation, Dr. Jitendra Singh said incidents of question paper leaks and examination-related malpractices have been reported across different parts of the country over the years, irrespective of the State or the agency conducting the examination, underscoring the need for a robust national legal framework.

The Minister informed the House that the Public Examinations (Prevention of Unfair Means) Bill was introduced in January 2024, enacted in February 2024, while the Act came into force and the Rules were notified in June 2024. He said the Act covers examinations conducted by major recruitment agencies,

including the Union Public Service Commission (UPSC), Staff Selection Commission (SSC), Railway Recruitment Boards (RRBs), Institute of Banking Personnel Selection (IBPS) and the National Testing Agency (NTA) for admissions to higher educational institutions.

Dr. Jitendra Singh said the objective of the legislation is to ensure greater consistency, credibility and transparency in public examinations so that sincere and deserving candidates are rewarded for their genuine efforts and their future is not jeopardised by organised examination-related crimes.

Explaining the salient features of the Amendment Bill, the Minister said the punishment for persons resorting to unfair means is proposed to be enhanced from imprisonment of three to five years to five to ten years, while the maximum fine is proposed to be increased from ₹10 lakh to ₹50 lakh. For service providers involved in such offences, the maximum fine is proposed to be increased from ₹1 crore to ₹5 crore and the period of debarment from conducting public examinations from four years to eight years. Punishment for directors and senior management of service providers is also proposed to be enhanced from three to ten years' imprisonment to five to ten years, with the maximum fine increased from ₹1 crore to ₹5 crore. The Bill further proposes to enhance punishment for organised crime from five to ten years' imprisonment to seven to ten years and increase the maximum fine from ₹1 crore to ₹10 crore.

The Minister said the Amendment Bill also provides for the establishment of Special Fast Track Courts for offences under the Act, completion of investigation within two months and completion of trial within three months from the date of filing of the charge sheet. It further provides for appointment of Special Public Prosecutors and insertion of a new provision enabling investigation by a Special Task Force or a Central agency, wherever required, to ensure swift and effective action against organised examination-related crimes.

Dr. Jitendra Singh informed the House that six Special Fast Track Courts have already been established across the country, with more such courts being planned to facilitate expeditious disposal of cases. He also referred to the high-level task force constituted by the Government to strengthen the public examination ecosystem and said substantial progress has already been made in implementing the recommendations of the expert committee, with 35 out of its 46 recommendations already implemented.

Seeking the support of the House for the Bill, Dr. Jitendra Singh said the proposed amendments would reinforce public confidence in the integrity, transparency and fairness of the country's public examination system while protecting the aspirations of millions of students and job aspirants.





NKR/AV

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