

Anti-Superstition Laws

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About Anti-Superstition Laws:

- As per the 2021 report of the National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB), six deaths were linked to human sacrifices, while witchcraft was the motive for 68 killings in the country.
- The maximum number of witchcraft cases were reported from Chhattisgarh (20), followed by Madhya Pradesh (18) and Telangana (11). Kerala saw two cases of human sacrifice.
- In 2020, India saw 88 deaths due to witchcraft and 11 died as part of 'human sacrifices', the NCRB report states.
- In India, there is no central law that exclusively deals with crimes related to witchcraft, superstition, or occult-inspired activities.
- In the absence of a nationwide legislation, a few States have enacted laws to counter witchcraft and protect women from deadly 'witch-hunting'.

State Laws:

- **Bihar:** Bihar was the first State to enact a law to prevent witchcraft, identification of a woman as a witch and "eliminate torture, humiliation and killing of women." The Prevention of Witch (Daain) Practices Act came into force in October 1999.

- Anyone who identifies a person as a “witch” and acts to aid this identification can face a jail term of up to three months, or a fine of ₹1,000, or both.
 - **Jharkhand:** A similar law was passed in Jharkhand in 2001 — the Prevention of Witch (Daain) Practices Act.
 - **Chhattisgarh:** The State enacted the Chhattisgarh Tonahi (witch) Pratadna Nivaran Act in 2005.
 - **Odisha:** The Odisha Prevention of Witch-Hunting Bill was passed by the Assembly in 2013. The bill provides penalties for a witch doctor, or a person claiming to be a black magician.
 - **Maharashtra:** In Maharashtra, the Maharashtra Prevention and Eradication of Human Sacrifice and other Inhuman, Evil and Aghori Practices and Black Magic Act, 2013 was passed after the murder of anti-superstition activist Dr. Narendra Dabholkar.
 - **Rajasthan:** Rajasthan enacted the Rajasthan Prevention of Witch-Hunting Act in 2015 to “provide for effective measures to tackle the menace of witch-hunting and prevent the practice of witchcraft.”
 - **Assam:** The Assam Witch Hunting (Prohibition, Prevention and Protection) Act, 2015, which received the President’s assent in 2018, prohibits witch hunting completely.
 - **Karnataka:** The latest law was passed in Karnataka where the Karnataka Prevention and Eradication of Inhuman Evil Practices and Black Magic Act, 2017 came into effect in January 2020.
 - The law bans several practices related to black magic and superstition, like forcing a person to walk on fire at religious festivals and the practice of piercing rods from one side of the jaw to the other.
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Source : [The Hindu](#)

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