

**THE HIMACHAL PRADESH PREVENTION OF  
EXCOMMUNICATION ACT, 1955**

**ARRANGEMENT OF SECTIONS**

Sections:

1. Short title, extent and commencement.
2. Definition.
3. Excommunication not to be valid and of any effect.
4. Penalty.
5. Jurisdiction under this Act.
6. Mode of taking cognizance of offence.

**THE HIMACHAL PRADESH PREVENTION OF  
EXCOMMUNICATION ACT, 1955**

**(ACT NO. 8 OF 1955)<sup>1</sup>**

(Received the assent of the President on the 4<sup>th</sup> October, 1955, and as published in Hindi in the Rajpatra, Himachal Pradesh (Extra-ordinary), dated the 9<sup>th</sup> December, 1955, pp. 315-317, and in English in the Rajpatra, Himachal Pradesh, dated the 28<sup>th</sup> January, 1956, pp. 80-81).

**An Act to prohibit excommunication in the Himachal Pradesh.**

*Amended, repealed or otherwise affected by,-*

- (i) H.P. Act No. 25 of 1969<sup>2</sup> published in the Rajpatra, Himachal Pradesh (Extra-ordinary), dated 13<sup>th</sup> October, 1969, p. 883-887.
- (ii) The Himachal Pradesh Adoption of Laws (State and Concurrent Subjects) Order, 1973, published in the Rajpatra, Himachal Pradesh (Extra-ordinary), dated the 20<sup>th</sup> January, 1973, pp. 91-112, effective from 25<sup>th</sup> January, 1971.

It is hereby enacted in the Sixth Year of Republic as follows:

**1. Short title, extent and commencement.-** (1) This Act may be called the Himachal Pradesh Prevention of Excommunication Act, 1955.

(2) It extends to the whole of the State of Himachal Pradesh.

(3) It shall come into force at once.

**2. Definition.-** In this Act unless there is anything repugnant in the subject or context-

- 
1. Passed in Hindi by the Himachal Pradesh Vidhan Sabha. For Statement of Objects and Reasons see the Rajpatra, Himachal Pradesh, dated 30<sup>th</sup> March, 1955, p. 103.
  2. For Statement of Objects and Reasons, see the Rajpatra, Himachal Pradesh (Extra-ordinary), dated the 28<sup>th</sup> November, 1968, p. 1160.

- (a) "Community" means a group the members of which are connected together by reason of the fact that by birth, conversion or the performance of any religious rite they belong to the same religion or religious creed and includes a caste or sub-caste;
- (b) "excommunication" means the expulsion of a person from any community of which he is a member depriving him of rights and privileges which are legally enforceable by a suit of civil nature by him or on his behalf as such member.

*Explanation.-* For the purposes of this clause a right legally enforceable by a suit of civil nature shall include the right to office or property or to worship in any religious place or a right of burial or cremation, notwithstanding the fact that the determination of such right depends entirely on the decision of the question as to any religious rites or ceremonies or rule or usage of a community.

**3. Excommunication not to be valid and of any effect.-** Notwithstanding anything contained in any law, custom or usage for the time being in force, to the contrary, no excommunication of a member of any community shall be valid and shall be of any effect.

**4. Penalty.-** Any person who does any act which amounts to or is in furtherance of the excommunication of any member of a community shall, on conviction, be punished with fine which may extend to one thousand rupees.

*Explanation.-* When any person alleged to have committed an offence under this section is a body or an association of individuals, whether incorporated or not, if the offence is alleged to have been committed at a meeting of such body or association, any individual who has voted in favour of the decision regarding the excommunication shall be deemed to have committed the offence.

**5. Jurisdiction under this Act.-** Notwithstanding anything contained in the Code of Criminal Procedure, 1898 (5 of 1898), no court inferior to that of the Magistrate of the 1<sup>st</sup> Class shall try any offence punishable under section 4.

**6. Mode of taking cognizance of offence.-** No court shall take cognizance of an offence punishable under section 4-

- (a) after the expiry of one year from the date of which the offence is alleged to have been committed; and
- (b) without the previous sanction of the <sup>1</sup>[Government] of Himachal Pradesh or any officer authorised by <sup>2</sup>[it] not below the rank of the District Magistrate.

---

1. Substituted for the words "Lieutenant Governor" vide AO, 1973.

2. Substituted for the word "him" vide AO, 1973.