

Ambiguity in Anti-conversion Laws in the Indian States - A Limitation to the Freedom of Religion Guaranteed under the Constitution of India

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Abstract : Abstract Nine out of twenty-eight states in India have enacted anti-conversion laws to regulate religious conversions by use of force, allurements, inducement, or fraudulent means. The vagueness of the definitions of the terms used in these laws makes them inconsistent with the provisions of the right to freedom of religion guaranteed by the Constitution. It is a critical question whether these laws protect the religious freedom of groups that are “vulnerable” to missionary inducements, or are they restricting the freedom of citizens to propagate their religion to others or change their religious identity? This article looks into the constitutionality of the anti-conversion laws passed in the Indian States and argues that these laws limit the freedom of religion guaranteed under Article 25 of the Constitution of India. The ambiguity in the anti-conversion laws passed in various states of India is brought out by critically analyzing multiple cases charged under anti-conversion laws.

Keywords : Freedom of Religion, Anti-conversion Laws, allurements, inducement, and fraudulent means.

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