

Bill Summary

The Advocates (Amendment) Bill, 2023

- The Advocates (Amendment) Bill, 2023, was introduced in Rajya Sabha on August 1, 2023. It amends the Advocates Act, 1961. The Bill repeals certain sections related to touts under the Legal Practitioners Act, 1879. The 1961 Act consolidates the law related to legal practitioners and constitutes Bar Councils and the All-India Bar. Key features of the Bill include:
 - **Touts:** The Bill provides that every High Court, district judge, sessions judge, district magistrate, and revenue officer (not below the rank of a district collector) may frame and publish lists of touts. Tout refers to a person who: (i) either proposes to procure or procures the employment of a legal practitioner in a legal business in return of any payment, or (iii) frequents places such as the precincts of civil or criminal courts, revenue-offices, or railway stations to procure such employment. The Court or judge may exclude from the premises of the Court any person whose name is included in the list of touts.
 - **Preparation of lists:** The authorities empowered to frame and publish the list of touts may order subordinate courts to hold an inquiry into the conduct of persons alleged or suspected to be touts. Once such a person is proven to be a tout, his name may be included by the authority in the list of touts. No person will be included in such lists without getting an opportunity of showing cause against his inclusion.
 - **Penalty:** Any person who acts as a tout while his name is included in the list of touts will be punished with imprisonment up to three months, a fine up to Rs 500, or both.

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