



CONSUMER

Assam's Coaching Regulation Law Raises the Bar for Advertising and E-Commerce Compliance

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Introduction

The Assam Coaching Institutes (Control and Regulation) Act, 2025 is a significant legislative intervention in India's education sector, aiming to bring transparency, student welfare, and accountability to the private coaching industry. Enacted by the Assam Legislature, the Act introduces enforceable standards for infrastructure, faculty qualifications, student safeguards, advertising ethics, and digital disclosures. While other states have introduced administrative guidelines or policy drafts, Assam's New Coaching Regulation Law has moved ahead with a full legislative model that could influence future policy directions across India.

Key Features of the Act

The Act applies to all coaching institutes operating in Assam and mandates their compulsory registration. It sets comprehensive compliance standards across academic, operational, safety, and ethical domains. Notable features include:

- **Mandatory Registration:** All coaching centres, including existing ones, must obtain registration from the district authority.
- **Regulated Infrastructure Standards:** Institutes must provide minimum one square metre per student, comply with fire and building safety codes, and offer basic amenities like ventilation, drinking water, and separate toilets.
- **Transparent Fee and Course Disclosures:** Coaching centres must publicly disclose fee structures, class schedules, faculty qualifications, and other relevant academic details on both their websites and premises.
- **Age and Admission Restrictions:** Students below the age of 16 or before completion of secondary school cannot be enrolled.
- **Faculty Qualifications:** Only tutors with a minimum qualification of graduation (non-government or retired teachers) may teach.
- **Mental Health & Student Support:** Mandatory counselling facilities and periodic workshops to support students' psychological well-being.
- **Inclusive and Disability-Friendly Facilities:** Institutes must provide equal access and infrastructure for students with disabilities, including compliance with the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2016.
- **Strict Advertising Norms:** False guarantees of results, misleading promotional materials, and exaggerated claims about success rates or faculty are prohibited.
- **Digital and E-Commerce Compliance:** Coaching institutes must maintain an updated website listing course details, fee structure, tutor qualifications, refund/exit policies, and prior student outcomes.

Prohibition of Misleading Advertisements: A Legal Benchmark

Under Sections 5(1)(ii) and (iv) of the Act:

- Coaching centres are prohibited from making misleading promises or guarantees regarding rank or academic success.
- Any participation in the publication of deceptive advertising about results, quality, or faculty is barred.

This aligns closely with the Consumer Protection (E-Commerce) Rules, 2020 under the Consumer Protection Act, 2019, which require:

- No false or misleading representations
- Transparent disclosures about service providers
- Prohibition of unsubstantiated claims

By legally codifying advertising ethics, Assam's Act significantly raises the regulatory bar for the coaching sector.

Implications for Digital Platforms and EdTech Players

Although the Assam Coaching Institutes (Control and Regulation) Act, 2025 is primarily directed at brick-and-mortar coaching centres, its implications extend meaningfully to digital platforms and EdTech companies operating in or targeting students in Assam. Hybrid EdTech providers with offline presence in the state, as well as digital marketers promoting coaching services, must ensure that only registered institutes are listed or featured on their platforms.

There is a heightened obligation to avoid exaggerated testimonials, unverifiable claims, and misleading success stories in advertisements or promotional campaigns. Furthermore, coaching institutes are mandated under Section 5(2) to maintain a regularly updated website with clear disclosures on fee structures, faculty credentials, refund policies, and student outcomes,

requirements that align with the disclosure norms set under Rule 6 of the Consumer Protection (E-Commerce) Rules, 2020. Any failure to comply with these obligations could expose platforms to reputational risk or regulatory scrutiny for aiding or abetting misleading practices.

Institutional Oversight and Enforcement

The Act establishes District Authorities comprising officials such as the District Commissioner and Superintendent of Police, with powers to:

- Inspect coaching centres and enforce compliance
- Investigate bogus claims and false advertisements
- Address mental health concerns and student grievances

The penalty framework includes:

- ₹1 lakh fine for first-time violations
- Suspension or cancellation of registration on repeat offences

How Assam’s Law Compares with Other States

While states like Rajasthan (Kota), Maharashtra, and Tamil Nadu have issued policy guidelines or floated draft bills, these remain largely administrative or advisory in nature. Assam, by contrast, has:

- Passed a codified statute with legislative force
- Included express advertising prohibitions
- Integrated student mental health and accessibility safeguards
- Mandated digital transparency through websites and disclosures

This makes Assam’s law one of the most structured and enforceable frameworks currently in force in India, though not necessarily the first attempt at regulation.

Conclusion

The Assam Coaching Institutes (Control and Regulation) Act, 2025 marks a strong evolution in the legal treatment of private coaching centres. It balances quality assurance, student protection, and institutional accountability with fair digital practices and ethical advertising. For coaching centre operators, EdTech platforms, and marketers, the Act signals a shift toward structured compliance, especially in how education is marketed and delivered in India.

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