

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA.**  
**LEGISLATIVE DEPARTMENT.**  
**THE INDIAN EXPLOSIVES ACT, 1884.**  
**ACT NO. IV OF 1884.**  
**RANGOON, SATURDAY, MARCH 22ND, 1884.**

The following Act of the Governor General of India in Council received the assent of His Excellency the Governor General on the 26th February, 1884, and is hereby promulgated for general information:-

An Act to regulate the manufacture, possession, use, sale, transport and importation of Explosives.

WHEREAS it is expedient to regulate the manufacture, possession, use, sale, transport and importation of explosives; It is hereby enacted as follows:-

Short title.

1. (1) This Act may be called the Indian Explosives Act, 1884; and

**Local extent.**

(2) It extends to the whole of British India.

Commencement.

2. (1) This Act shall come into force on such day as the Governor General in Council, by notification in the Gazette of India, appoints:

(2) Provided that any notification or rule may be made under this Act at any time after the passing thereof, but, except in the case of a notification under section 18, sub-section (2), shall not taken effect until the Act comes into force.

Repeal of portions of Act XII of 1875.

3. On and from the day on which this Act comes into force, section seven, clause (o), and sections twenty-eight to thirty-four (both inclusive), of the Indian Ports Act, 1875, shall be repealed.

Definitions.

4. In this Act, unless there is something repugnant in the subject or context,-

(1) **“explosive”-**

(a) means gunpowder, nitro-glycerine, dynamite, gun-cotton, blasting powders, fulminate of mercury or of other metals, coloured fires and every other substance, whether similar to those above-mentioned or not, used or manufactured with a view to produce a practical effect by explosion, or a pyrotechnic effect; and

(b) includes fog-signals, fireworks, fuzes, rockets, percussion-caps, detonators, cartridges, ammunition of all descriptions, and every adaptation or preparation of an explosive as above defined:

(2) **“manufacture”** includes the process of dividing into its component parts, or otherwise breaking up or unmaking, any explosive, or making fit for use any damaged explosive, and the process of re-making, altering or repairing any explosive:

(3) **“vessel”** includes every ship, boat and other vessel used in navigation, whether propelled by oars or otherwise:

(4) **“carriage”** includes any carriage, wagon, cart, truck, vehicle or other means of conveying goods or passengers by land, in whatever manner the same may be propelled:

(5) **“master”** includes every person (except a pilot or harbour-master) having for the time being command or charge of a vessel: provided that, in reference to any boat belonging to a ship, “master” shall mean the master of the ship;

(6) **“import”** means to bring into British India by sea or land.

Power to make rules as to licensing of the manufacture, possession, use, sale, transport and importation of explosives.

5. (1) The Governor General in Council may for any part of British India, and each Local Government, with the previous sanction of the Governor General in Council, may for any part of the territories under its administration, make rules consistent with this Act to regulate or prohibit, except under and in accordance with the conditions of a license granted as provided by those rules, the manufacture, possession, use, sale, transport and importation of explosives, or any specified class of explosives.

(2) Rules under this section may provide for all or any of the following, among other matters, that is to say:-

(a) the authority by which licenses may be granted;

(b) the fees to be charged for licenses, and the other sums (if any) to be paid for expenses by applicants for licenses;

(c) the manner in which applications for licenses must be made, and the matters to be specified in such applications;

(d) the form in which, and the conditions on and subject to which, licenses must be granted;

(e) the period for which licenses are to remain in force; and

(f) the exemption absolutely or subject to conditions of any explosives from the operation of the rules.

(3) The authority making rules under this section may by the rules impose penalties on all persons manufacturing, possessing, using, selling, transporting or importing explosives in breach of the rules, or otherwise contravening the rules:

Provided that the maximum penalty which may be imposed by any such rules shall not exceed-

(a) in the case of a person so importing or manufacturing an explosive, a fine which may extend to three thousand rupees;

(b) in the case of a person so possessing, using or transporting an explosive, a fine which may extend to one thousand rupees;

(c) in the case of a person so selling an explosive, a fine which may extend to five hundred rupees; and

(d) in any other case, two hundred rupees.

Power for Governor General in Council to prohibit the manufacture, possession or importation of specially dangerous explosives.

6. (1) Notwithstanding anything in the rules under the last foregoing section, the Governor General in Council may, from time to time, by notification in the Gazette of India,
- (a) prohibit, either absolutely or subject to conditions, the manufacture, possession or importation of any explosive which is of so dangerous a character that, in the opinion of the Governor General in Council, it is expedient for the public safety to issue the notification; and
  - (b) cancel any notification under this section.
- (2) The officers of sea customs at every port shall have the same power in respect of any explosive with regard to the importation of which a notification has been issued under this section and the vessel containing the explosive as they have for the time being in respect of any article the importation of which is prohibited or regulated by the law relating to sea customs and the vessel containing the same; and the enactments for the time being in force relating to sea customs or any such article or vessel shall apply accordingly.
- (3) Any person manufacturing, possessing or importing an explosive in contravention of a notification issued under this section shall be punished with fine which may extend to three thousand rupees, and, in the case of importation by water, the owner and master of the vessel in which the explosive is imported shall, in the absence of reasonable excuse, each be punished with fine which may extend to three thousand rupees.

Power to make rules conferring powers of inspection, search, seizure, detention and removal.

7. (1) The Governor General in Council, or the Local Government with the previous sanction of the Governor General in Council, may make rules consistent with this Act authorizing any officer, either by name or in virtue of his office-
- (a) to enter, inspect and examine any place, carriage or vessel in which an explosive is being manufactured, possessed, used, sold, transported or imported under a license granted under this Act, or in which he has reason to believe that an explosive has been or is being manufactured, possessed, used, sold, transported or imported in contravention of this Act or of the rules made under this Act;
  - (b) to search for explosives therein;
  - (c) to take samples of any explosive found therein on payment of the value thereof; and
  - (d) to seize, detain, remove and, if necessary, destroy any explosive found therein.
- (2) The provisions of the Code of Criminal Procedure relating to searches under that Code shall, so far as the same are applicable, apply to searches by officers authorized by rules under this section.

Notice of accidents.

8. Whenever there occurs in or about, or in connection with, any place in which an explosive is manufactured, possessed or used, or any carriage or vessel either conveying an explosive or on or from which an explosive is being loaded or unloaded, any accident by explosion or by fire attended with loss of human life or serious injury to person or property, or of a description usually attended with such loss or injury, the occupier of the place, or the master of the vessel, or the person in charge of the carriage, as the case may be, shall forthwith give notice thereof to the officer in charge of the nearest police -station.

Inquiry into accidents.

9. (1) Whenever, in the opinion of a District Magistrate, Sub-divisional Magistrate or any other Magistrate specially empowered by the Local Government in this behalf, an enquiry is necessary into the cause of any accident of the description mentioned in section 8, he may either himself make the inquiry or direct a Magistrate subordinate to himself to make the inquiry.
- (2) Any Magistrate making an inquiry under this section shall, for the purposes of conducting the inquiry, have all the powers which he would have in holding an inquiry into an offence under the Code of Criminal Procedure.
- (3) The powers conferred on a Magistrate by this section may in a Presidency-town be exercised by the Commissioner of Police as well as by any Magistrate specially empowered in this behalf under sub-section (1).

Forfeiture of explosives.

10. When a person is convicted of an offence punishable under this Act or the rules made under this Act, the Court before which he is convicted may direct that the explosive, or ingredient of the explosive, or the substance (if any) in respect of which the offence has been committed, or any part of that explosive, ingredient or substance, shall, with the receptacles containing the same, be forfeited.

Distress of vessel.

11. Where the owner or master of a vessel is adjudged under this Act to pay a fine for an offence committed with, or in relation to, that vessel, the Court may, in addition to any other power it may have for the purpose of compelling payment of the fine, direct it to be levied by distress and sale of the vessel, and the tackle, apparel and furniture thereof, or so much thereof as is necessary.

Abetment and attempts.

12. Whoever abets, within the meaning of the Indian Penal Code, the commission of an offence punishable under this Act or the rules made under this Act, or attempts to commit any such offence and in such attempt does any act towards the commission of the same, shall be punished as if he had committed the offence.

Power to arrest without warrant persons committing dangerous offences.

13. Whoever is found committing any act for which he is punishable under this Act or the rules under this Act, and which tends to cause explosion or fire in or about any place where an explosive is manufactured or stored, or any railway or port, or any carriage, ship or boat, may be apprehended without a warrant by a Police-officer, or by the occupier of, or the agent or servant of, or other person authorized by the occupier of, that place, or by any agent or servant of, or other person authorized by, the railway administration or conservator of the port, and be removed from the place where he is arrested, and conveyed as soon as conveniently may be before a Magistrate.

Saving for manufacture, possession, use, sale, transport or importation by Government.

14. Nothing in this Act shall apply to the manufacture, possession, use, sale, transport or importation of any explosive-
- (a) by order of the Government, or
- (b) by any person employed under the Government in the execution of this Act, or as a keeper of a magazine, artizan, soldier, sailor, policeman or otherwise, or enrolled as a volunteer under the Indian Volunteers Act, 1869, in the course of his employment or duty as such.

Saving of Indian Arms Act, 1878.

15. Nothing in this Act shall affect the provisions of the Indian Arms Act, 1878:

Provided that an authority granting a license under this Act for the manufacture, possession, sale, transport or importation of an explosive may, if empowered in this behalf by the rules under which the license is granted, direct by an order written on the license that it shall have the effect of a like license granted under the said Indian Arms Act.

Saving as to liability under other law.

16. Nothing in this Act or the rules under this Act shall prevent any person from being prosecuted under any other law for any act or omission which constitutes an offence against this Act or those rules, or from being liable under that other law to any other or higher punishment or penalty than that provided by this Act or those rules:

Provided that a person shall not be punished twice for the same offence.

Extension of definition of "explosive" to other explosive substances.

17. The Governor General in Council may, from time to time, by notification in the Gazette of India, declare that any substance which appears to the Governor General in Council to be specially dangerous to life or property, by reason either of its explosive properties or of any process in the manufacture thereof being liable to explosion, shall be deemed to be an explosive within the meaning of this Act; and the provisions of this Act (subject to such exceptions, limitation and restrictions as may be specified in the notification) shall accordingly extend to that substance in like manner as if it were included in the definition of the term "explosive" in this Act.

Procedure for making, publication and confirmation of rules.

18. (1) An authority making rules under this Act shall, before making the rules, publish a draft of the proposed rules for the information of persons likely to be affected thereby.

(2) The publication shall be made in such manner as the Governor General in Council, from time to time, by notification in the Gazette of India, prescribes.

(3) There shall be published with the draft a notice specifying a date at or after which the draft will be taken into consideration.

(4) The authority making the rules shall receive and consider any objection or suggestion which may be made by any person with respect to the draft before the date so specified.

(5) A rule made under this Act shall not take effect if it is made by the Governor General in Council until it has been published in the Gazette of India, and if it is made by the Local Government until it has been published in the local official Gazette.

(6) The publication in the Gazette of a rule purporting to be made under this Act shall be conclusive evidence that it has been duly made, and, if it requires sanction, that it has been duly sanctioned.

(7) All powers to make rules conferred by this Act may be exercised from time to time as occasion requires.

THE INDIAN EXPLOSIVES ACT, 1884.  
D. FITZPATRICK,  
Secretary to the Government of India.