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EDITORIAL ANALYSIS

Jan Vishwas 2.0 Is All About Trust-Based Compliance

 THE HINDU9 April 2026 · **GS2** **GS3**

CURATED & WRITTEN BY

**Bharat Choudhary**

UPSC Educator & Content Creator

 [linkedin.com/in/epicbharat](https://www.linkedin.com/in/epicbharat)

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Jan Vishwas 2.0 Is All About Trust-Based Compliance

 The Hindu

9 April 2026

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CONTEXT

The **Hindu editorial** examines the **Jan Vishwas (Amendment of Provisions) Bill, 2026**, which decriminalises 717 provisions for Ease of Doing Business and 67 for Ease of Living across 79 Central Acts administered by 23 Ministries. The bill builds on the **Jan Vishwas Act, 2023** (183 provisions in 42 laws) and signals a systematic shift from coercive criminal enforcement to a compliance-based governance architecture.

THE EDITORIAL ARGUMENT

1. From Punitive to Compliance-Based Regulation

The editorial argues that India's regulatory framework inherited colonial-era logic where imprisonment was the default enforcement tool — even for technical/procedural lapses with no mens rea (criminal intent). The Jan Vishwas framework corrects this structural anomaly: genuine criminals face criminal law; procedural mistakes face proportionate civil penalties.

2. The MSME Case

India has approximately 6.3 crore MSME units, predominantly operated by first-generation entrepreneurs with limited legal resources. The previous regime created **inspector raj** dynamics — procedural violations became tools for rent-seeking, not compliance. Decriminalising 784 provisions removes the criminal threat that disproportionately burdened MSMEs relative to large corporates with legal teams.

3. Judicial Backlog Relief

Indian courts carry an estimated **4.5 crore pending cases**. A significant portion involves criminal complaints for technical regulatory violations — factory documentation, company filing deadlines, environmental issues for small units. Shifting these to civil/administrative adjudication reduces docket pressure on the criminal justice system.

4. What Remains Criminal

The editorial notes that the framework prudently retains criminal prosecution for **wilful fraud, deliberate evasion, and serious repeat violations**. This preserves deterrence where criminal intent exists — the reform is targeted, not blanket.

5. Limits of the Reform

The editorial cautions that decriminalisation alone is insufficient without:

- **Robust civil enforcement mechanisms** — fines must be actually collected, not ignored
- **Clear guidance on “technical” vs. “wilful”** — ambiguity will be exploited
- **Judicial review access** — to challenge arbitrary penalties even if non-criminal

KEY LEGISLATIVE PARAMETERS

PARAMETER	DETAIL
Jan Vishwas Act 2023	183 provisions in 42 Central Acts
Jan Vishwas Bill 2026	784 provisions in 79 Central Acts (23 Ministries)
EoDB provisions (2026)	717
EoL provisions (2026)	67
Lok Sabha passage	April 1, 2026
Rajya Sabha passage	April 2, 2026
Replacement tools	Monetary penalties, warnings, improvement notices

UPSC RELEVANCE

GS Paper 2 — Polity & Governance

- Legislative process — omnibus amendment bills, concurrent jurisdiction
- Regulatory reform — from **punitive** to compliance-based governance
- MSMEs — compliance burden, inspector raj, ease of doing business



GS Paper 3 — Economy

- MSME competitiveness — regulatory compliance costs as a structural barrier
- World Bank B-READY index — India’s rank and regulatory quality metrics

Mains Angle

“The Jan Vishwas framework represents a fundamental reorientation of India’s regulatory philosophy — from fear-based compliance to trust-based governance. Critically examine the legislative design and its limitations.”
(GS2 + GS3)

FACTS CORNER

ITEM	FACT
Jan Vishwas 2.0 scope	784 provisions; 79 Acts; 23 Ministries
Jan Vishwas 2023	183 provisions; 42 Acts
EoDB: EoL split	717: 67
Lok Sabha passage	April 1, 2026
Rajya Sabha passage	April 2, 2026
India’s MSME units	~6.3 crore registered units
Pending court cases (India)	~4.5 crore (including criminal regulatory complaints)
Criminal retention	Wilful fraud, deliberate evasion, serious repeat violations

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