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The VBSA Bill, 2025: A Paradigm Shift in Higher Education Governance in India

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The Viksit Bharat Shiksha Adhishtan (VBSA) Bill, 2025, represents a significant milestone in *Hon'ble Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi ji's* vision to reform and modernise India's higher education system. This historic reform promises to not only elevate academic standards but also to inspire a new era of innovation and inclusivity in the pursuit of knowledge across the nation.

The VBSA Bill, 2025, serves as a cornerstone for advancing the education pillar of Viksit Bharat, aiming to harness India's demographic dividend to bolster economic power by 2047. This transformative initiative aims to revolutionise higher education with enhanced autonomy for institutions, a dynamic credit system, and strong industry partnerships to develop essential skills and foster innovation. Ultimately, it aims to empower young people to make meaningful contributions to a prosperous India on the global stage.

The Bill is a significant reform in the governance and regulation of higher education in India. Aligned with the transformative vision of the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020, the Bill aims to revamp a regulatory system that has been criticised for its fragmentation, procedural rigidity, overlapping jurisdictions, and limited institutional autonomy. This legislation aims to establish a regulatory framework that is both streamlined and robust, embodying the principle of being "light but tight." This approach aims to strike a balance between flexibility and essential oversight, fostering an educational environment that encourages innovation while upholding quality and accountability. Proposing a unified, transparent, and outcome-oriented regulatory framework, the VBSA Bill seeks to modernise higher education governance, enhance academic quality, and improve the global competitiveness of Indian institutions in an increasingly knowledge-driven world.

One of the Bill's most notable features is the establishment of a single apex regulatory authority that will replace multiple existing bodies, such as the University Grants Commission (UGC), the All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE), the National Council for Teacher Education (NCTE), NAAC, NBA, and NCERT. This consolidation addresses long-standing concerns regarding regulatory duplication, inconsistent norms, and conflicting mandates that have often hindered institutional growth and innovation. A unified regulator is expected to streamline decision-making, reduce compliance costs, and create coherence in policy implementation across universities and colleges. Importantly, the Bill aims to balance consolidation with accountability, ensuring that regulatory authority is not excessively centralised.

To achieve this goal, the VBSA adopts a functional separation of responsibilities, operating through three distinct councils dedicated

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