

**THE MERCHANDISE MARKS ACT, 1889**

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**THE MERCHANDISE MARKS ACT, 1889**

**ACT NO. IV OF 1889**

[1st March, 1889]

**\*An Act to amend the Law relating to Fraudulent Marks on Merchandise.**

WHEREAS it is expedient to amend the law relating to fraudulent marks on merchandise; It is hereby enacted as follows:—

1. (1) This Act may be called the Merchandise Marks Act, 1889. Title, extent and commencement

(2) It extends to the whole of Bangladesh; and

(3) It shall come into force on the first day of April, 1889.

2. In this Act, unless there is something repugnant in the subject or context,— Definitions

(1) “trade mark” has the meaning assigned to that expression in section 478 of the Penal Code as amended by this Act:

(2) “trade description” means any description, statement or other indication, direct or indirect,—

(a) as to the number, quantity, measure, gauge or weight of any goods, or

(b) as to the place or country in which, or the time at which, any goods were made or produced, or

(c) as to the mode of manufacturing or producing any goods, or

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\* Throughout this Act, except otherwise provided, the words “Bangladesh”, “Government”, “Taka” and “Penal Code” were substituted, for the words “Pakistan”, “Central Government”, “rupees” and “Pakistan Penal Code” respectively by section 3 and 2nd Schedule of the Bangladesh Laws (Revision and Declaration) Act, 1973 (Act No. VIII of 1973).

- (d) as to the material of which any goods are composed, or
- (e) as to any goods being the subject of an existing patent, privilege or copyright;

and the use of any numeral, word or mark which according to the custom of the trade is commonly taken to be an indication of any of the above matters shall be deemed to be a trade description within the meaning of this Act;

- (3) “false trade description” means a trade description which is untrue in a material respect as regards the goods to which it is applied, and includes every alteration of a trade description, whether by way of addition, effacement or otherwise, where that alteration makes the description untrue in a material respect, and the fact that a trade description is a trade mark or part of a trade mark shall not prevent such trade description being a false trade description within the meaning of this Act:
- (4) “goods” means anything which is the subject of trade or manufacture: and
- (5) “name” includes any abbreviation of a name.

#### AMENDMENT OF THE PENAL CODE

**3.** [Repealed by section 2 and Schedule of the Repealing Act, 1938 (Act No. 1 of 1938).]

#### TRADE DESCRIPTIONS

Provisions supplemental to the definition of false trade description

**4.** (1) The provisions of this Act respecting the application of a false trade description to goods, or respecting goods to which a false trade description is applied, shall extend to the application to goods of any such numerals, words or marks, or arrangement or combination thereof, whether including a trade mark or not, as are or is reasonably calculated to lead persons to believe that the goods are the manufacture or merchandise of

some person other than the person whose manufacture or merchandise they really are, and to goods having such numerals, words or marks, or arrangement or combination, applied thereto.

(2) The provisions of this Act respecting the application of a false trade description to goods, or respecting goods to which a false trade description is applied, shall extend to the application to goods of any false name or initials of a person, and to goods with the false name or initials of a person applied, in like manner as if such name or initials were a trade description, and for the purpose of this enactment the expression false name or initials means as applied to any goods any name or initials—

- (a) not being a trade mark, or part of a trade mark, and
- (b) being identical with, or a colourable imitation of, the name or initials of a person carrying on business in connection with goods of the same description and not having authorised the use of such name or initials.

(3) A trade description which denotes or implies that there are contained in any goods to which it is applied more yards, feet or inches than there are contained therein standard yards, standard feet or standard inches is a false trade description.

5. (1) A person shall be deemed to apply a trade description to goods who—

- (a) applies it to the goods themselves, or
- (b) applies it to any covering, label, reel or other thing in or with which the goods are sold or are exposed or had in possession for sale or any purpose of trade or manufacture, or
- (c) places, encloses or annexes any goods which are sold, or are exposed or had in possession for sale or any purpose of trade or manufacture, in, with or to any covering, label, reel or other thing to which a trade description has been applied, or

Application of  
trade  
descriptions

- (d) uses a trade description in any manner reasonably calculated to lead to the belief that the goods in connection with which it is used are designated or described by that trade description.

(2) A trade description shall be deemed to be applied whether it is woven, impressed or otherwise worked into or annexed or affixed to the goods or any covering, label, reel or other thing.

(3) The expression "covering" includes any stopper, cask, bottle, vessel, box, cover, capsule, case, frame or wrapper, and the expression "label" includes any band or ticket.

Penalty for applying a false trade description

6. If a person applies a false trade description to goods, he shall, subject to the provisions of this Act, and unless he proves that he acted without intent to defraud, be punished with imprisonment for a term which may extend to three months or with fine which may extend to two hundred Taka, and in the case of a second or subsequent conviction with imprisonment which may extend to one year, or with fine, or with both.

Penalty for selling goods to which a false trade description is applied

7. If a person sells, or exposes or has in possession for sale or any purpose of trade or manufacture, any goods or things to which a false trade description is applied, he shall, unless he proves—

- (a) that, having taken all reasonable precautions against committing an offence against this section, he had at the time of the commission of the alleged offence no reason to suspect the genuineness of the trade description, and
- (b) that, on demand made by or on behalf of the prosecutor, he gave all the information in his power with respect to the persons from whom he obtained such goods or things, or
- (c) that otherwise he had acted innocently,

be punished with imprisonment for a term which may extend to three months, or with fine which may extend to two hundred Taka, and in case of a second or subsequent conviction with imprisonment which may extend to one year, or with fine, or with both.

UNINTENTIONAL CONTRAVENTION OF THE LAW RELATING TO  
MARKS AND DESCRIPTIONS

8. Where a person is accused under section 482 of the Penal Code of using a false trade mark or property mark by reason of his having applied a mark to any goods, property or receptacle in the manner mentioned in section 480 or section 481 of that Code, as the case may be, or under section 6 of this Act of applying to goods any false trade description, or under section 485 of the Penal Code of making any die, plate or other instrument for the purpose of counterfeiting a trade mark or property mark, and proves—

Unintentional  
contravention  
of the law  
relating to  
marks and  
descriptions

- (a) that in the ordinary course of his business he is employed, on behalf of other persons, to apply trade marks or property marks, or trade descriptions, or, as the case may be, to make dies, plates or other instruments for making, or being used in making, trade marks or property marks, and that in the case which is the subject of the charge he was so employed and was not interested in the goods or other thing by way of profit on commission dependent on the sale thereof, and
- (b) that he took reasonable precautions against committing the offence charged, and
- (c) that he had, at the time of the commission of the alleged offence, no reason to suspect the genuineness of the mark or description, and
- (d) that, on demand made by or on behalf of the prosecutor, he gave all the information in his power with respect to the persons on whose behalf the mark or description was applied,

he shall be acquitted.

## FORFEITURE OF GOODS

Forfeiture of  
goods

9. (1) When a person is convicted under section 482 of the Penal Code of using a false trade mark, or under section 486 of that Code of selling, or exposing or having in possession for sale or any purpose of trade or manufacture, any goods or things with a counterfeit trade mark applied thereto, or under section 487 or section 488 of that Code of making, or making use of, a false mark, or under section 6 or section 7 of this Act of applying a false trade description to goods or of selling, or exposing or having in possession for sale or any purpose of trade or manufacture, any goods or things to which a false trade description is applied, or is acquitted on proof of the matter or matters specified in section 486 of the Penal Code or section 7 or section 8 of this Act, the Court convicting or acquitting him may direct the forfeiture to Government of all goods and things by means of, or in relation to, which the offence has been committed or, but for such proof as aforesaid, would have been committed.

(2) When a forfeiture is directed on a conviction, and an appeal lies against the conviction, an appeal shall lie against the forfeiture also.

(3) When a forfeiture is directed on an acquittal and the goods or things to which the direction relates are of value exceeding fifty Taka, and appeal against the forfeiture may be preferred, within thirty days from the date of the direction, to the Court to which in appealable cases appeals lie from sentences of the Court which directed the forfeiture.

## AMENDMENT OF THE SEA CUSTOMS ACT, 1878

**10-11.** [Repealed by section 2 and Schedule of the Repealing Act, 1938 (Act No. 1 of 1938).]



STAMPING OF LENGTH OF PIECE-GOODS MANUFACTURED  
IN BANGLADESH.

12. (1) Piece-goods, such as are ordinarily sold by length or by the piece, which have been manufactured in premises which are a factory as defined in the <sup>1</sup>[Factories Act, 1934,] shall not be removed from those premises without having conspicuously stamped in English numerals on each piece the length thereof in standard yards, or in standard yards and a fraction of such a yard, according to the real length of the piece.

Stamping of length of piece goods manufactured in Bangladesh

(2) If any person removes or attempts to remove any such piece-goods from any such premises without the length of each piece being stamped in the manner mentioned in sub-section (1), every such piece, and everything used for the packing or removal thereof, shall be forfeited to Government, and such person shall be punished with fine which may extend to one thousand Taka.

SUPPLEMENTAL PROVISIONS

13. In the case of goods brought into Bangladesh by sea, evidence of the Port of shipment shall, in a prosecution for an offence against this Act or <sup>2</sup>[section 15 of the Customs Act, 1969,] be *prima facie* evidence of the place or country in which the goods were made or produced.

Evidence of origin of goods imported by sea

14. (1) On any such prosecution as is mentioned in the last foregoing section or on any prosecution for an offence against any of the sections of the Penal Code as amended by this Act, which relate to trade, property and other marks, the Court may

Costs of defence or prosecution

<sup>1</sup> The words, commas and figure "Factories Act, ~~1934,~~" were substituted, for the words, commas and figures "Indian Factories Act, 1881," by section 3 and 2nd Schedule of Bangladesh Laws (Revision and Declaration) Act, 1973 (Act No. VIII of 1973).

<sup>2</sup> The words, figure and commas "section 15 of the Customs Act, 1969," were substituted, for the words, figures and commas "section 18 of the Sea Customs Act, 1878, as amended by this Act," by section 3 and 2nd Schedule of the Bangladesh Laws (Revision and Declaration) Act, 1973 (Act No. VIII of 1973).

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order costs to be paid to the defendant by the prosecutor or to the prosecutor by the defendant, having regard to the information given by and the conduct of the defendant and prosecutor respectively.

(2) Such costs shall, on application to the Court, be recoverable as if they were a fine.

Limitation of prosecution

**15.** No such prosecution as is mentioned in the last foregoing section shall be commenced after the expiration of three years next after the commission of the offence, or one year after the first discovery thereof by the prosecutor, whichever expiration first happens.

Authority of the Government to issue instructions as to administration of this Act

**16.** (1) The Government may, by notification in the official Gazette, issue instructions for observance by Criminal Courts in giving effect to any of the provisions of this Act.

(2) Instructions under sub-section (1) may provide, among other matters, for the limits of variation, as regards number, quantity, measure, gauge or weight, which are to be recognized by Criminal Courts as permissible in the case of any goods.

Implied warranty on sale of marked goods

**17.** On the sale or in the contract for the sale of any goods to which a trade mark or mark or trade description has been applied, the seller shall be deemed to warrant that the mark is a genuine mark and not counterfeit or falsely used, or that the trade description is not a false trade description within the meaning of this Act, unless the contrary is expressed in some writing signed by or on behalf of the seller and delivered at the time of the sale or contract to and accepted by the buyer.

Savings

**18.** (1) Nothing in this Act shall exempt any person from any suit or other proceeding which might, but for anything in this Act, be brought against him.

(2) Nothing in this Act shall entitle any person to refuse to make a complete discovery or to answer any question or interrogatory in any suit or other proceeding, but such discovery or answer shall not be admissible in evidence against such person in any such prosecution as is mentioned in section 14.

(3) Nothing in this Act shall be construed so as to render liable to any prosecution or punishment any servant of a master resident in Bangladesh who in good faith acts in obedience to the instructions of such master, and on demand made by or on behalf of the prosecutor, has given full information as to his master and as to the instructions which he has received from his master.

**19.** For the purpose of section 12 of this Act and <sup>1</sup>[clause (f) of section 15 of the Customs Act, 1969,] the Government may, by notification in the official Gazette, declare what classes of goods are included in the expression 'piece-goods such as are ordinarily sold by length or by the piece'.

Definition of piece-goods

**20.** (1) The Government may make rules, for the purposes of this Act, to provide, with respect to any goods which purport or are alleged to be of uniform number, quantity, measure, gauge or weight, for the number of samples to be selected and tested and for the selection of the samples.

Determination of character of goods by sampling

(2) With respect to any goods for the selection and testing of samples of which provision is not made in any rules for the time being in force under sub-section (1), the Court or officer of Customs, as the case may be, having occasion to ascertain the number, quantity, measure, gauge or weight of the goods, shall, by order in writing, determine the number of samples to be selected and tested and the manner in which the samples are to be selected.

(3) The average of the results of the testing in pursuance of rules under sub-section (1) or of an order under sub-section (2) shall be *prima facie* evidence of the number, quantity, measure, gauge or weight, as the case may be, of the goods.

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<sup>1</sup> The words, brackets, letter, figures and commas "clause (f) of section 15 of the Customs Act, 1969," were substituted, for the words, brackets, letter, figure and commas "clause (f) of section 18 of the Sea Customs Act, 1878, as amended by the Act" by section 3 and 2nd Schedule of the Bangladesh Laws (Revision and Declaration) Act, 1973 (Act No. VIII of 1973).

(4) If a person having any claim to, or in relation to, any goods of which samples have been selected and tested in pursuance of rules under sub-section (1) or of an order under sub-section (2), desires that any further samples of the goods be selected and tested, they shall, on his written application and on the payment in advance by him to the Court or officer of Customs, as the case may be, of such sums for defraying the cost to the further selection and testing as the Court or officer may from time to time require, be selected and tested to such extent as may be permitted by rules to be made by the Government in this behalf or as, in the case of goods with respect to which provision is not made in such rules, the court or officer of Customs may determine in the circumstances to be reasonable, the samples being selected in manner prescribed under sub-section (1), or in sub-section (2), as the case may be.

(5) The average of the results of the testing referred to in sub-section (3) and of the further testing under sub-section (4) shall be conclusive proof of the number, quantity, measure, gauge or weight, as the case may be, of the goods.

(6) Rules under this section shall be made after previous publication.

Information as to commission of offence

**21.** An officer of the Government whose duty it is to take part in the enforcement of this Act shall not be compelled in any Court to say whence he got any information as to the commission of any offence against this Act.

Punishment of abetment in Bangladesh of acts done out of Bangladesh

**22.** If any person, being within Bangladesh, abets the commission, without Bangladesh, of any Act which, if committed in Bangladesh, would, under this Act, or under any section of that part of Chapter XVIII of the Penal Code which relates to trade, property and other marks, be an offence he may be tried for such abetment in any place in Bangladesh in which he may be found, and be punished therefor with the punishment to which he would be liable if he had himself committed in that place the act which he abetted.

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