

ACT No. VI OF 1907.

PASSED BY THE GOVERNOR GENERAL OF INDIA IN COUNCIL.

(Received the assent of the Governor General on the 1st November, 1907.)

An Act to make better provision for the prevention of public meetings likely to promote sedition or to cause a disturbance of public tranquillity.

WHEREAS it is expedient to make better provision for the prevention of public meetings likely to promote sedition or to cause a disturbance of public tranquillity; It is hereby enacted as follows :

1. (1) This Act may be called the Prevention of Seditious Meetings Act, 1907.

Short title and extent.

(2) It extends to the whole of British India, but shall have operation only in such Provinces as the Governor General in Council may from time to time notify in the Gazette of India.

2. (1) The Local Government may, by notification in the local official Gazette, declare the whole or any part of a Province, in which this Act is for the time being in operation, to be a proclaimed area.

Power of Local Government to notify proclaimed areas.

(2) A notification made under sub-section (1) shall not remain in force for more than six months, but nothing in this sub-section shall be deemed to prevent the Local Government from making any further notifications in respect of the same area from time to time as it may think fit.

3. (1) In this Act, the expression "public meeting" means a meeting which is open to the public or any class or portion of the public.

Definition.

(2) A meeting may be a public meeting notwithstanding that it is held in a private place and notwithstanding

notwithstanding that admission thereto may have been restricted by ticket or otherwise.

(3) A meeting of more than twenty persons shall be presumed to be a public meeting within the meaning of this Act until the contrary is proved.

4. (1) No public meeting for the furtherance or discussion of any subject likely to cause disturbance or public excitement or of any political subject or for the exhibition or distribution of any writing or printed matter relating to any such subject shall be held in any proclaimed area—

(a) unless written notice of the intention to hold such meeting and of the time and place of such meeting has been given to the District Superintendent of Police or the Commissioner of Police, as the case may be, at least three days previously; or

(b) unless permission to hold such meeting has been obtained in writing from the District Superintendent of Police or the Commissioner of Police, as the case may be.

(2) Any officer of Police, not below the rank of an Inspector, may, by order in writing, depute one or more Police-officers or other persons to attend any such meeting for the purpose of causing a report to be taken of the proceedings.

(3) Nothing in this section shall apply to any public meeting held under any statutory or other express legal authority or to public meetings convened by a Sheriff or to any public meetings or class of public meetings exempted for that purpose by the Local Government by general or special order.

5. The District Magistrate or the Commissioner of Police, as the case may be, may at any time by order in writing, of which public notice shall forthwith be given, prohibit any public meeting in a proclaimed area if, in his opinion, such meeting is

likely

Notice to be given of public meetings.

Power of Police to take report.

Exception.

Power to prohibit public meetings.

likely to promote sedition or disaffection or to cause a disturbance of the public tranquillity.

6. (1) Any person concerned in the promotion or conduct of a public meeting held in a proclaimed area contrary to the provisions of section 4 shall be punished with imprisonment for a term which may extend to six months, or with fine, or with both.

Penalties.

(2) Any public meeting which has been prohibited under section 5 shall be deemed to be an unlawful assembly within the meaning of Chapter VIII of the Indian Penal Code and of Chapter IX of the Code of Criminal Procedure, 1898.

XLV of 1860.
V of 1898.

7. Whoever, in a proclaimed area, in a public place or a place of public resort, otherwise than at a public meeting held in accordance with, or exempted from, the provisions of section 4, without the permission in writing of the Magistrate of the District or of the Commissioner of Police, as the case may be, previously obtained, delivers any lecture, address or speech on any subject likely to cause disturbance or public excitement or on any political subject, to persons then present, may be arrested without warrant and shall be punished with imprisonment for a term which may extend to six months, or with fine, or with both.

Penalty for delivery of speeches in public places.

8. (1) The Regulation of Meetings Ordinance, 1907, is hereby superseded.

Repeal.

(2) Nothing contained in this Act shall affect—

the previous operation of the said Ordinance or anything duly done or suffered thereunder; or

any obligation or liability incurred under the said Ordinance; or

any punishment incurred in respect of any offence committed against the said Ordinance; or

any investigation or legal proceeding in respect of any such obligation, liability or punishment as aforesaid;

and

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and any such investigation or legal proceeding may be instituted or continued and any such punishment may be imposed as if the said Ordinance had not been superseded or had not expired.

Duration of
Act.

9. This Act shall continue in force until the expiration of three years next after the passing thereof.