



6 March, 2024

Panchayat (Extension to Scheduled Areas) Act, 1996

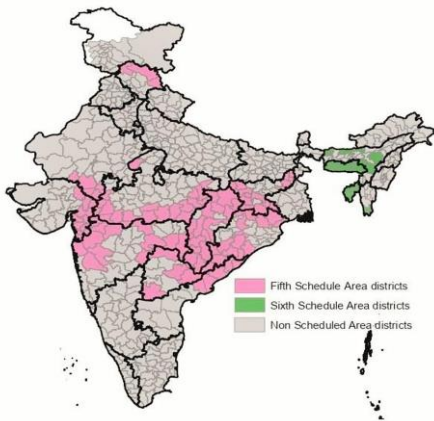
Context: Secretary of the Ministry of Panchayati Raj, delivered remarks at the closing session of the second Two-Day Regional Conference on Enhancing PESA Implementation in Ranchi, Jharkhand.

➤ Conference Highlights:

- Regional Conference was organized by the Ministry of Panchayati Raj, focusing on strengthening and effectively implementing the PESA Act.
- Held on March 4-5, 2024, the conference achieved its objectives, with active participation and insightful contributions from attendees.
- Garnered significant momentum towards successful implementation of PESA, paving the way for further progress in its execution.

➤ Key Discussions:

- Role of Non-Government Stakeholders: Engaging discussions on enhancing PESA implementation through the involvement of non-government stakeholders.
- Enforcement of Forest Rights Act: Highlighted discussions on enforcing the Forest Rights Act in PESA areas to facilitate knowledge-sharing and foster commitment towards PESA objectives.
- Case Studies and Success Stories: Inspiration and guidance provided by case studies and success stories from different regions, aiding participants in enhancing their own efforts.



➤ Overview of PESA Act 1996:

- Enacted in 1996 based on recommendations from the Duleep Singh Bhuriya Committee to extend Panchayati Raj provisions to Scheduled Areas.
- Aimed at promoting self-governance in Scheduled Areas through Gram Sabha.
- Currently applicable in 10 states with 5th schedule areas, including Andhra Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Gujarat, etc.

➤ Objectives of PESA Act 1996:

- Extension of Panchayati Raj provisions to Scheduled Areas with modifications.
- Establishment of self-rule for tribal populations.
- Empowerment of Gram Sabha as the centre of all activities.
- Development of administrative structures compatible with traditional practices.
- Protection of tribal traditions, customs, and cultural identity.
- Empowerment of Panchayats with specific powers beneficial to tribal communities.
- Preservation of the authority of Gram Sabha over higher-level Panchayats.

➤ Key Features of PESA Act 1996:

- State legislation in Scheduled Areas must align with tribal customary laws and traditions.
- Villages manage community affairs according to their customs and traditions.
- Each Gram Sabha maintains an electoral roll of eligible villagers.
- Gram Sabha responsible for approving development plans and identifying beneficiaries.
- Certification from Gram Sabha required for fund utilization in Panchayats.
- Reservation of seats in Panchayats proportional to tribal population.
- Mandatory Gram Sabha recommendation for concession of minor mineral exploitation.
- Challenges in Implementation of PESA Act:
- Legal difficulties include vague definitions and conflicts with existing laws.
- Political challenges arise from self-interest and lack of political will.

➤ Potential of PESA Act:

- Empowers tribal communities by recognizing their rights to natural resources.
- Enhances tribal engagement with governance and nation-building.
- Addresses historical neglect of tribal rights.
- Requires concerted action from the central government to address implementation challenges and loopholes.

Advisory of GenAI for elections

Context: An advisory has been issued by the Central government to all intermediaries and generative AI platforms utilizing artificial intelligence (AI) models, software, or algorithms in anticipation of the upcoming elections.

➤ Government Advisory on AI Systems:

- Platforms offering under-testing or unreliable AI systems or large language models (LLMs) to Indian

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users must obtain explicit permission from the Centre before deployment.

- They are required to label the potential fallibility or unreliability of the generated output.
- A traceability requirement must be added, enabling identification of the originator of misinformation or deepfakes.

➤ Key Points from the Advisory:

- Generative AI outputs should be labelled to inform users of potential fallibility.
- Unique metadata or identifiers must be embedded in AI-generated content to trace the creator or originator of misinformation or deepfakes.
- Platforms are instructed to ensure their computer resources do not compromise the integrity of the electoral process.

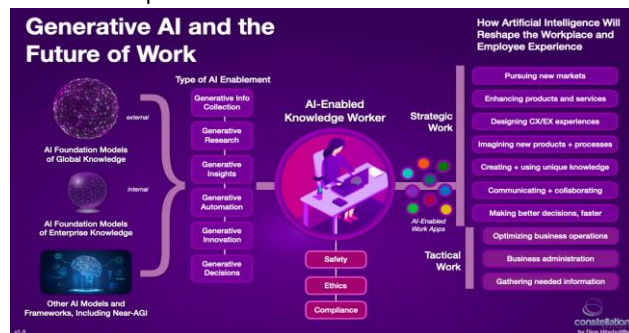
➤ Focus on Electoral Integrity:

- The advisory emphasizes safeguarding the electoral process, especially with the upcoming Lok Sabha elections.
- Chandrasekhar highlights the need for rigor and guardrails in AI product launches to prevent misinformation and deepfakes from influencing election outcomes.

➤ Generative Artificial Intelligence (AI):

- **Definition:** Generative AI involves deep-learning models that can generate statistically probable outputs from raw data inputs.
- **Foundation Models:** These AI models, known as foundation models, are large and capable of multitasking, performing tasks like summarization, question answering, and classification.
- **Adaptability:** Foundation models require minimal training and can be customized for specific use cases with little example data.
- **Functioning of Generative AI:**
 - **Learning Patterns:** Generative AI uses machine learning models to understand patterns and relationships within human-created datasets.
 - **Content Generation:** Based on the learned patterns, the AI generates new content that aligns with the dataset.
 - **Training Approach:** The common training method involves supervised learning, where the model learns from a set of human-created content and corresponding labels.
- **Applications of Generative AI:**
 - **Enhanced Customer Interactions:** Generative AI improves chat and search experiences, enhancing customer interactions.
 - **Data Exploration:** It assists in navigating vast amounts of unstructured data through conversational interfaces and summarizations.

- **Task Automation:** Generative AI handles repetitive tasks such as responding to proposals, localizing marketing content, and checking customer contracts for compliance.



Women, Business and the Law 2024

Context: The World Bank analyzed the obstacles preventing women from entering the global workforce, limiting their potential to contribute to prosperity for themselves, their families, and their communities.

➤ Global Perspective:

- The report analyzes laws affecting women's economic opportunities in 190 economies.
- According to a new report by the World Bank Group, legal rights for women globally are lower than previously estimated.
- Women have less than two-thirds (64%) of the rights enjoyed by men, a decrease from earlier estimates of 77%.
- Eliminating discriminatory laws hindering women's participation in the workforce could lead to a more than 20% increase in global GDP, potentially doubling the rate of global growth in the next decade.

➤ Index Measurement:

- The report assesses legal frameworks across ten indicators, including safety, mobility, workplace, pay, marriage, parenthood, childcare, entrepreneurship, assets, and pension.
- Safety from violence and access to childcare services are highlighted as crucial indicators.

➤ Performance of India:

- India's rank has marginally improved to 113, with a score of 74.4%, although its ranking has declined over the years.
- Indian women have 60% of the legal rights compared to men, slightly below the global average of 64.2%.
- India outperforms South Asian counterparts, particularly in constraints on freedom of movement and marriage.

➤ Recommendations for India:

- India could improve laws impacting women's pay by mandating equal pay for equivalent work and

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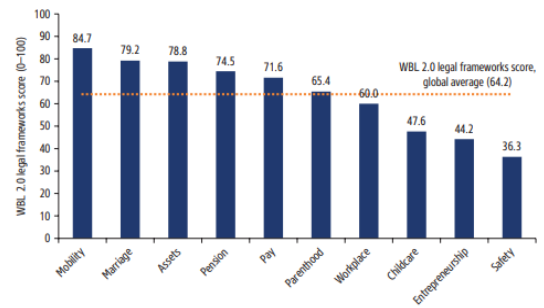
enabling women to work at night and engage in industrial jobs on an equal footing with men.

- Enhancing childcare frameworks, including creating a publicly accessible registry of childcare providers and implementing a well-defined application process, is recommended.

➤ Global Gaps:

- Globally, the report identifies a significant gap between legal reforms and actual outcomes for women.
- Only a fraction of countries have adopted measures addressing the pay gap, despite enacting laws mandating equal pay for women.

FIGURE ES.3 | SAFETY, ENTREPRENEURSHIP, AND CHILDCARE INDICATORS HAVE THE LARGEST LEGAL GAPS



Source: Women, Business and the Law 2024 database.
 Note: WBL = Women, Business and the Law

NEWS IN BETWEEN THE LINES

Sangeet Natak Akademi Awards



The President of India will confer Sangeet Natak Akademi Awards for the Years 2022 and 2023 to ninety-four eminent artists, besides the Akademi Awards, she will also bestow the Sangeet Natak Akademi Fellowship (Akademi Ratna) to seven eminent artists in the ceremony in New Delhi today.

About Sangeet Natak Akademi Award:

- The Sangeet Natak Akademi Award (**Akademi Puraskar**) is the **highest national recognition** in the performing arts, conferred **since 1952**.
- It is given to the eminent artists in the field of performing **arts, music, dance, drama, folk and tribal arts, puppetry** and allied theatre art forms.
- It carries a purse money of **one lakh rupees, a tamrapatra and an angavastram**.
- The Akademi oversees key national institutions and projects in performing arts including the **National School of Drama** (1959), **Jawaharlal Nehru Manipur Dance Academy** (1954), **Kathak Kendra** (1964) and **supports projects like Kutiyattam, Chhau dances, and Sattriya traditions**.

Sangeet Natak Akademi Fellowship:

- Sangeet Natak Akademi Fellowship (**Akademi Ratna**) is the **highest honour** given to eminent artists in the field of performing arts for their exceptional contribution to their performing art form.
- It is a most prestigious and rare honour, which is restricted to **40** at any given time.
- The honour of Akademi Fellow carries a purse money of **three lakh rupees**.

The National Investigation Agency



Recently, the National Investigation Agency (NIA) conducted raids at multiple locations in seven states as part of its investigations in the Bengaluru Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) Prison radicalisation case.

About the National Investigation Agency:

- The National Investigation Agency (NIA) is **India's primary law enforcement agency for combating terrorism**.
- It was established after the **2008 Mumbai terror attacks** with the enactment of the National Investigation Agency Act 2008.
- It is responsible for **investigating any offenses that threaten India's sovereignty, security and integrity**.
- The National Investigation Agency (NIA) Act of 2008 allows both the Central and State governments to establish **special courts**.
- This Act also creates special procedures for trials that differ from the ordinary law on criminal procedure.

Indian Pharmacopeia



Recently, Nicaragua has become the first nation in the Spanish-speaking world to recognise Indian Pharmacopeia.

About Indian Pharmacopeia:

- Indian Pharmacopeia (IP) is the **official book of standards for drugs in India**, legally recognized under the **Drugs & Cosmetics Act, 1940**.
- It is published by the Indian Pharmacopoeia Commission (IPC), an autonomous institution of the **Ministry of Health and Family Welfare**.
- It has been recognized as a book of standards by five nations: **Afghanistan, Ghana, Nepal, Mauritius and Suriname**.
- All drugs imported, manufactured and distributed in India must conform to the standards codified in the Indian Pharmacopeia.

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DELHI MUKHERJEE NAGAR: 9205274741, 42 | **LAXMI NAGAR** : 9205212500, 9205962002 | **RAJENDRA NAGAR**: 9205274743 | **UTTAR PRADESH** PRAYAGRAJ: 0532-2260189, 8853467068 | **LUCKNOW** (ALIGANJ): 0522-4025825, 9506256789 | **LUCKNOW** (GOMTI NAGAR): 7234000501, 7234000502 | **GREATER NOIDA**: 9205336037, 38 | **KANPUR**: 7887003962, 7897003962 | **GORAKHPUR** : 7080847474, 9161947474 | **ODISHA** BHUBANESWAR: 9818244644/7656949029



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India's First Underwater Metro Rail Service



The Prime Minister of India will inaugurate India's first underwater metro rail service in Kolkata today.

About:

- The new metro line, called the **Howrah Maidan-Esplanade section**, will be the country's first transportation tunnel beneath a major river.
- It passes beneath the **River Hooghly**, which separates Kolkata and Howrah cities on its east and west banks.
- The Howrah metro station, part of this new line, will hold the distinction of being **India's deepest metro station**.
- The Howrah Maidan-Esplanade stretch **covers 4.8 kilometers** and constitutes the second section of the **East-West Metro corridor**, connecting Howrah Maidan to the IT hub **Salt Lake Sector -5**.
- Out of 16.6 kilometers of the East-West Metro, **10.8 kilometers consist of an underground corridor** between Howrah Maidan and Phoolbagan, including the tunnel beneath the Hooghly River, while the remaining stretch is elevated.
- The project has been **dubbed as a marvel**, with trains traveling approximately 16 meters below the river's surface.

Place in News

France

Recently, France has become the first country in the world to enshrine abortion rights in its constitution.

France (Capital: Paris)

Location: France, officially the French Republic is a country **located in Western Europe**.

Boundaries:

France shares its border with **Switzerland** (East), the **Atlantic Ocean** (West), **Belgium**, **Luxembourg** and **North Sea** (North), **Germany** (Northeast), **Italy**, **Monaco** and the **Mediterranean Sea** (Southeast), **Andorra** and **Spain** (South), the English Channel (Northwest).

Physical Features:

- The highest point in France is **Mont Blanc**, located in the French Alps.
- France's major rivers include the Seine, Loire, Rhône, Garonne, Dordogne, Meuse, Marne, and Moselle.
- Important minerals found in France include **coal**, **iron ore**, **bauxite**, **uranium**, potash, salt, lead, zinc, and copper, contributing to its mineral resource base.

Parliamentary System:

- France has a **bicameral parliamentary system** consisting of the National Assembly (lower house) and the Senate (upper house), with the President as the head of state and a Prime Minister as the head of government.



POINTS TO PONDER

- Which country developed the Yars Missile, an intercontinental ballistic missile recently in the news? – **Russia**
- What is the MH 60R Seahawk, which has been recently in the news? – **Maritime variant of the Blackhawk helicopter**
- What sector is associated with the ADITI scheme, recently seen in the news? – **Defence Sector**
- Which ministry was honoured with the award for Best Performance in Accounts during the Financial Year 2023-24? – **Ministry of Information & Broadcasting**
- With which state is the Indiramma Housing Scheme, recently in the news, associated? – **Telangana**

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