



21 May, 2024

Gujarat Land Grabbing (Prohibition) Act

Context: The Gujarat High Court has affirmed the constitutionality of the Gujarat Land Grabbing (Prohibition) Act, emphasizing the supremacy of legislative authority over judicial review.

➤ Important Features of the Gujarat Land Grabbing (Prohibition) Act

- **Retrospective Criminalization:** The law, effective from December 2020, criminalizes "land grabbing" of both public and private property retrospectively.
- **Burden of Proof:** It reverses the burden of proof, requiring the accused to prove their lawful entitlement to the land.
- **Minimum Sentence:** The Act prescribes a minimum sentence of 10 years imprisonment for violations, which can extend to 14 years, along with a fine equivalent to the jantri value of the property.
- **Comprehensive Legislation:** The law replaces proceedings under existing legislation like the Transfer of Property Act and the Public Premises (Eviction of Unauthorised Occupants) Act, 1971, consolidating the offence of land grabbing under a single special law.
- **Objective:** Introduced to ensure the "time-bound and speedy disposal of complaints" and to protect farmers and the common man from land mafia activities.
- **cope:** Applicable retrospectively and allows for both civil and criminal actions against land grabbing.
- **Reverse Burden Clause:** Section 11 imposes a reverse burden of proof, presuming the accused to be a land grabber unless they can prove otherwise.

➤ Court Ruling and Grounds of Challenge

- **Grounds for Challenge:**
 - **Procedural Violation:** Petitioners argued that the law required the assent of the President due to its repugnance to several central laws.
 - **Manifest Arbitrariness:** Petitioners claimed the law was vague and arbitrary, lacking a reasonable basis for classifying individuals and equating private encroachments with public land grabbing.
- **Presidential Assent Argument:**
 - Section 15's "overriding effect" clause was seen as potentially repugnant to central laws, necessitating Presidential assent under Article 254 of the Constitution.
 - The High Court applied the "doctrine of pith and substance," determining the law dealt primarily with Entry 18 of the State List (land-related matters), not requiring Presidential assent.
- **Arbitrariness Argument:** The broad definition of land grabbing and the undefined term "lawful entitlement"

were contested for their potential impact on established principles like adverse possession under the Limitation Act.

• High Court's Decision:

- The court held the law was not retrospective since land grabbing is a "continuous offence" as long as possession is maintained.
- The reversal of the burden of proof was upheld, emphasising the necessity for the accused to prove lawful entitlement to the disputed land.

Water for Shared Prosperity report

Context: Water is crucial for prosperity, but disparities in access, exacerbated by population growth, urbanisation, and climate change, threaten shared prosperity, per a new World Bank report.

➤ Overview

- Released at the 10th World Water Forum in Bali, Indonesia, the report "Water For Shared Prosperity" underscores the widening gap in access to water resources and services, affecting global human and economic development.
- Despite water's fundamental role in prosperity, millions lack safe drinking water and sanitation.

➤ Key Statistics

- In 2022, 2.2 billion people lacked access to safely managed drinking water services, and 3.5 billion lacked access to safely managed sanitation.
- Low-income countries have regressed, with 197 million more people lacking access to safe drinking water since 2000.
- Eight out of ten people without basic water and sanitation services live in rural areas.

➤ Regional Disparities

- Rural areas face the most severe access issues.
- The Democratic Republic of the Congo holds more than half of Africa's water resources.
- Water-stressed regions include the Sahel, Southeastern Africa, and South and Central Asia.

➤ Inequality in Access

- The report highlights disparities between high- and low-income countries, and within countries between the wealthiest and poorest individuals.
- Marginalized groups (based on gender, location, ethnicity, race, political beliefs, and other social identities) also face unequal access to water services.

➤ Impact of Climate Change

- Developing countries experience more severe droughts and longer-lasting floods, affecting nutrition, school attendance, and economic welfare.
- Over 800 million people are at high risk of drought, with twice as many living in flood-prone areas.

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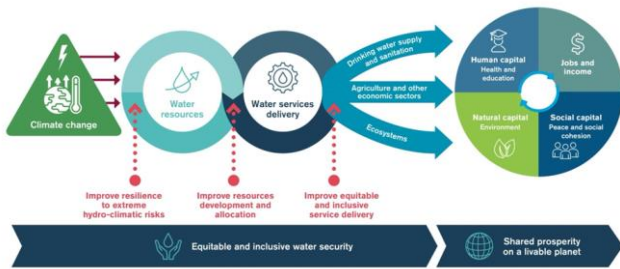


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➤ Components of Prosperity

- The report identifies four interconnected components of prosperity: health and education (human capital), jobs and income, peace and social cohesion (social capital), and the environment (natural capital).

FIGURE ES.1 Equitable and inclusive water security for shared prosperity on a livable planet



➤ Economic and Social Impacts

- Access to basic services like running water and sanitation improves educational outcomes across generations.
- In developing countries, water-intensive sectors are crucial for jobs and economic growth, with 56% of jobs in low-income countries being water-dependent compared to 20% in high-income countries.
- In Sub-Saharan Africa, 62% of employment is water-dependent, and low rainfall often leads to significant negative GDP growth.

➤ Water Management and Social Cohesion

- Effective and equitable water management fosters community trust, inclusivity, and cooperation, contributing to peace.
- Mismanagement of water resources can exacerbate existing conflicts or lead to new conflicts.

Bacterial Pathogens Priority List

Context: The WHO's updated Bacterial Pathogens Priority List identifies critical priority pathogens as major global threats due to their high burden, treatment resistance, and ability to spread resistance.

➤ **Background:**

- In 2017, WHO developed the first BPPL to guide investment in the research and development (R&D) of new antibacterials, listing 13 bacterial pathogens (phenotypes).
- The list was created using the multi-criteria decision analysis (MCDA) method, a scientific approach that evaluates alternatives based on multiple criteria to facilitate systematic and transparent decision-making in complex situations.

➤ **2024 Update:**

- The 2024 WHO BPPL expands to cover 24 pathogens across 15 families of antibiotic-resistant bacterial pathogens.

- It categorizes these pathogens into critical, high, and medium priority groups to guide R&D and public health interventions.

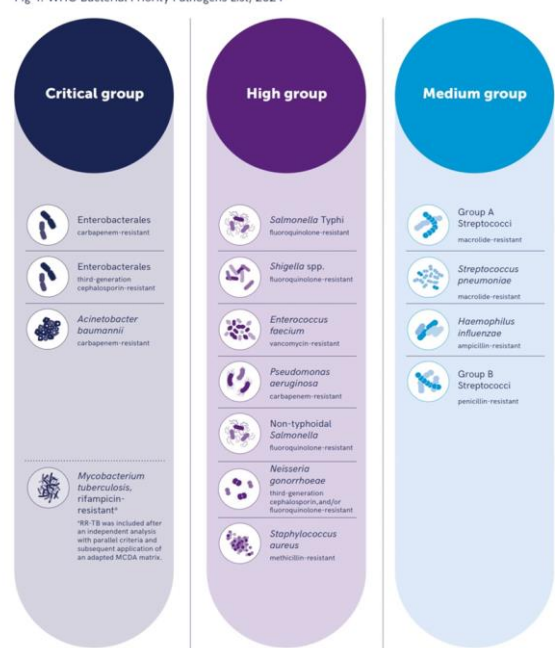
Box 1. Operational definitions of priority categories in the 2024 WHO BPPL



➤ **Significance:**

- The BPPL serves as a guide for prioritizing R&D and investments in AMR, emphasizing the need for regionally tailored strategies to effectively combat resistance.
- It targets developers of antibacterial medicines, academic and public research institutions, research funders, public-private partnerships investing in AMR R&D, and policy-makers responsible for developing and implementing AMR policies and programs.

Fig 4. WHO Bacterial Priority Pathogens List, 2024



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NEWS IN BETWEEN THE LINES

National

Anti-Terrorism Day



Anti-Terrorism Day is being observed across the nation today.

About National Anti-Terrorism Day:

- National Anti-Terrorism Day is observed in India on **May 21st** every year to remember the assassination of **former Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi** by a suicide bomber of the **Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE)** at Sriperumbudur, a village near Chennai in **1991**.
- It is **observed to educate people about the negative impact of terrorism and violence** on society and the nation.
- The theme for 2024 is **"United Against Terror: Building a Secure and Inclusive Future"**.

Attorney General of India

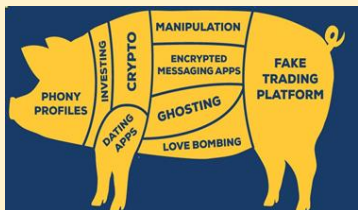


Recently, Attorney General of India R. Venkataramani highlighted global challenges in digital markets and the rising importance of privacy and data at the 15th Foundation Day of the Competition Commission of India in New Delhi.

About the Attorney General of India:

- The Attorney General (AG) of India is **the highest law officer** in the country, **appointed by the President of India under Article 76 of the Constitution**.
- He must be qualified to be **appointed as a Judge of the Supreme Court**, meaning he must have been a judge of a High Court for five years, an advocate of a High Court for ten years or an eminent jurist.
- He is a **part of the Union Executive** and **advises the union government** on all legal matters.
- He holds office **during the pleasure of the President** and **does not have a fixed term** and there are **no specified procedures for removal**.
- He has the right to speak and participate in both Houses of Parliament without voting rights and is entitled to audience in all courts in India.
- He is **not a government servant** and does not fall under the category of an office of profit.
- The Attorney General is **allowed to take up private practice**, provided it does not conflict with the duties of the office.

Pig Butchering Scam



Recently, the U.S. Department of Justice charged two Chinese nationals for running a pig butchering scam that laundered over \$73 million through shell companies.

About Pig Butchering Scam:

- A pig butchering scam, also known as **sha zhu pan scam** is a **type of online investment fraud** that involves scammers gaining victims' trust over time and then **stealing their money**.
- The term comes from the practice of **"fattening up"** a pig before slaughter and the scammers use this idea to **persuade victims** to invest more money into a fraudulent scheme.
- In a pig butchering scam, the **scammer creates a fake online persona** and **builds trust** with the victim through online communication.
- The scammer then convinces the victim to invest in a fraudulent **cryptocurrency scheme**, usually in increasing amounts.

Baobab trees



About Baobab trees:

- Baobab trees are easily recognizable due to their **contorted branches**, which resemble **inverted roots** and they are primarily **found in Madagascar**, parts of **Africa** and **Australia**.
- The baobab lineage traces its roots back to **Madagascar around 21 million years ago**.
- The dispersal of these trees was likely facilitated by **floating seed pods**, which traveled across long distances aided by ocean currents such as the **Indian Ocean gyre**, connecting Madagascar to Africa and Australia.
- They are **also called "upside down" trees** because their tops resemble an uprooted plant turned upside down.
- They play a crucial role in supporting wildlife by **providing food, shelter and nesting sites in dry savannah habitats**.
- They are also useful for humans, as their fruits offer nutrients like **vitamin C, potassium, magnesium**, iron and zinc and medicinal properties.
- The flowers of baobab trees attract **nocturnal pollinators** and **primates like lemurs in Madagascar and bush babies in Africa**.
- Baobab oil contains **linoleic acid**, an **omega-3 fatty acid** with anti-inflammatory properties, which may help with acne.

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Place in News

Taiwan

Recently, Lai Ching-te of Taiwan's ruling Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) was sworn in as the self-governing island's new President.

Taiwan (Capital: Taipei)

Location: Taiwan, officially the Republic of China, is a country in **East Asia** located at the juncture of the East and South China Seas.

Political Boundaries: It shares its borders with the **People's Republic of China (PRC)**, **Japan** and the **Philippines**.

Coastal Boundaries: It is surrounded by bodies of water, including the **Philippine Sea (East)**, the **East China Sea (North)**, the **Luzon Strait (South)** and the **South China Sea (Southwest)**.

Physical Features:

- The highest point in Taiwan is **Yu Shan**, also known as Jade Mountain.
- Taiwan's major rivers include the **Zhuoshui**, **Tamsui**, **Gaoping**, **Agongdian** and **Xindian** Rivers.
- Taiwan has limited mineral resources, with some deposits of coal, natural gas, **limestone**, **marble** and **small reserves of gold, copper**, and iron ore.



POINTS TO PONDER

- Which country was declared the host of the Women's World Cup 2027? – **Brazil**
- According to a recent NOAA report, how much of the world's coral reefs have bleached in the past year? – **60%**
- Where was the 'India's Progressive Path in the Administration of Criminal Justice System' conference recently held? – **Guwahati**
- Which bank received a \$500 million loan from the International Finance Corporation (IFC) to provide microloans to women in rural areas? – **HDFC Bank**
- What is a 'Dyson Sphere'? – **A hypothetical engineering project to harness a star's energy**

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