

2. Gujarat Control of Terrorism and Organised Crime (GCTOC) Bill

Prelims: State Legislature

Mains: GS-III Security challenges, Linkages of organized crime with terrorism

Why in News?

- Our honourable President Ram Nath Kovind has given his assent to the ‘Gujarat Control of Terrorism and Organised Crime (GCTOC) Bill’, a controversial anti-terror legislation which was passed by Gujarat assembly in 2015.

Key Provisions of the Bill:

1. **It defines ‘terrorist acts’**, as including “an act committed with the intention to disturb law and order or public order or threaten the unity, integrity and security of the State”, apart from economic offences.
2. **Inclusion of Economic offences:** The economic offences under GCTOC include Ponzi schemes, multi-level marketing schemes, and organised betting. It also includes extortion, land grabbing, contract killings, cybercrimes, and human trafficking.
3. **Special Courts:** It also provides for the creation of a special court as well as the appointment of special public prosecutors.
4. **Attachment of Properties:** It provides for attachment of properties acquired through organised crimes. Transfer of properties can also be cancelled.

Provisions of the Bill considered to be Controversial:

- The legislation makes offences under this Act as **Non-Bailable**.
- The Bill provides for admissibility of evidence collected through interception of mobile calls of an accused or through confessions made before an investigating officer, in a court of law. The bill empowers police to tap telephonic conversations and submit them in court as evidence.
- The act also provides for making confessions before police officers admissible in court. The Bill provides immunity to the State government from legal action.
- It extends period of probe from stipulated 90 days to 180 days before filing of charge sheet.

Background:

- The Bill was earlier named as the Gujarat Control of Organised Crime Bill.
- It failed to get the presidential nod thrice since 2004.
- So, GCTOC has finally become law after Sixteen years of first version of it was passed by the Gujarat Assembly.