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Anti-corruption Law Covers Deemed Universities

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Why in News

The **Supreme Court** has held that **bribery and corruption in a deemed university can be tried under the Prevention of Corruption Act, 1988.**

It has said that **individuals, authorities connected to a deemed university** come under the definition of **'public servant'** and can be tried and punished under the anti-corruption law.

Key Points

- The Supreme Court observed that the **officials of a deemed university do not perform any less of a public duty** than their counterparts in other universities.
- Deemed universities come within the ambit of the **term 'university' in Section 2(c)(xi) of the Prevention of Corruption (PC) Act, 1988.**
 - A deemed institution under the University Grants Commission (UGC) Act of 1956 has the **same common public duty like a university to confer academic degrees**, which are recognised in the society.
- The object of the PC Act was not only to prevent the social evil of bribery and corruption, **but also to make the same applicable to individuals who might conventionally not be considered public servants.**

Prevention of Corruption (PC) Act, 1988

Section 2(c)(xi) of the Prevention of Corruption Act states that a **"public servant"** includes "any person who is a vice-chancellor or member of any governing body, professor, reader, lecturer or any other teacher or employee, by whatever designation called, of any university.

Deemed University

- The status of deemed-to-be-university is awarded in accordance with the **Section 3 of the University Grants Commission (UGC) Act, 1956.**
- An Institution of Higher Education, other than universities, working at a very high standard in a specific area of study, can be declared by the **Central Government on the advice of the UGC** as an Institution 'deemed-to-be-university'.
- Institutions that are 'deemed-to-be-university' **enjoy academic status and privileges of a university.**

Source: TH