

## DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS (DCA)

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### Table of Content

- Finances of Panchayati Raj Institutions
- Uttarakhand's Draft on Uniform Civil Code
- Kerr Black Hole
- World Wetlands Day
- CBI and its Functioning

### NEWS IN SHORTS

- Floor Test
- Panel of Vice-Chairpersons
- Personally Identifiable Information (PII)
- Exercise Vayu Shakti-2024 15
- Acharya Shri Satya Narayana Goenka

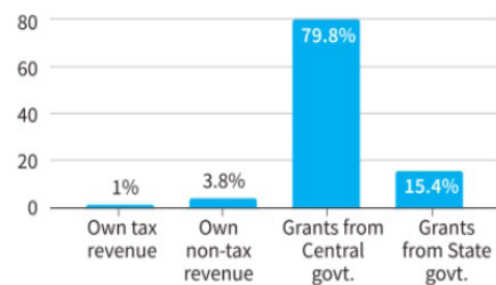
## FINANCES OF PANCHAYATI RAJ INSTITUTIONS

### Context:

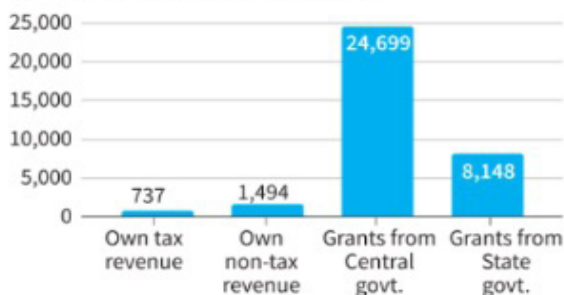
Recently, the **Reserve Bank of India** released a report on **Finances of Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs) for 2022-23** which presents an assessment of their finances and their role in India's socio-economic development.

### Key Findings of the Report

The chart shows revenue per Panchayat in percentage terms in 2022-23

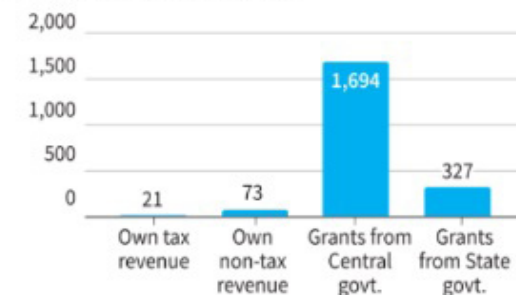


The chart shows the revenue receipts of panchayats in 2022-23. Figures in ₹ crore



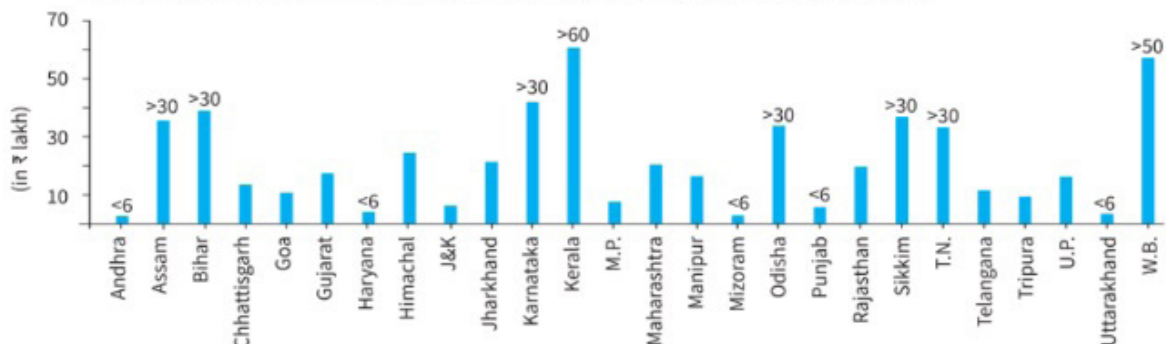
- About **1% of the revenue** of Panchayats was earned by them, with the rest being raised as **grants from the State (about 15%)** and the **Union Government (about 80%)**.
  - Panchayats had recorded a total revenue of ₹35,354 crore in 2022-23.
- In **2022-23**: Each panchayat earned just ₹21,000 as its own tax revenue and ₹73,000 as non-tax revenue.
  - Each panchayat earned about ₹17 lakh as grants from the Central government and more than ₹3.25 lakh as grants from the State governments.
- Panchayats earned ₹1,494 crore through non-tax revenue, which is mostly earnings from interest payments and Panchayati Raj programmes.
  - They earned ₹24,699 crore as grants from the **Union Government** and ₹8,148 crore as grants from the **State governments**.

The chart shows the average revenue per panchayat in 2022-23. Figures in ₹ thousand



- State Wise Performances: In Kerala**, the average revenue raised by each panchayat was over ₹60 lakh in 2022-23.
  - West Bengal** came a close second with an average revenue of ₹57 lakh per panchayat.
  - The revenue was **over ₹30 lakh per panchayat** in Assam, Bihar, Karnataka, Odisha, Sikkim, and Tamil Nadu; and **less than ₹6 lakh** in Andhra Pradesh, Haryana, Mizoram, Punjab, and Uttarakhand.

The chart shows the average revenue per panchayat across States in 2022-23. Figures in ₹ lakh



- The revenue receipts of panchayats formed **just 0.1%** of the State's own revenue in **Andhra Pradesh**.
- The revenue of panchayats in **Uttar Pradesh** formed **2.5%** of the State's own revenue, the **highest among States**.

### Functions and Finances of the PRIs in India

- Until 1992, the responsibilities of the PRIs were primarily focused on sanitation efforts, conservancy services, building and maintaining fair-weather roads, access to domestic water supply, and street lighting.
- In **1992, the 73rd Amendment** introduced a significant change, **specifying 29 subjects** (outlined in the **Eleventh Schedule of the Constitution**) for which **Panchayats** were entrusted with the responsibility of devising and executing plans aimed at fostering local economic development and social justice.
  - ♦ It empowers the local self-governing institutions viz. PRIs.

### Fundings of PRIs

- PRIs have **their own resources of tax and non-tax revenue** (e.g., fair tax, building tax, fees, rent on land and buildings, water reservoirs, etc.) and capital receipts from the sale of land.
- They receive **funds from the Union and State Government** in the form of grants-in-aid/loans for general administration, implementation of developmental schemes/works, and creation of infrastructure in rural areas, etc.
- Funds are also provided under the recommendations of the **State Finance Commission**.

### Challenges and Constraints highlighted in the report

- **Limited Own Revenues:** Panchayats rely on limited sources like property taxes, fees, and fines, which constitute a minor share of their revenue.
  - ♦ Own revenues, generated through local taxes, contribute only about 1.1% to their total revenue in 2022-23.
- **Low Expenditure:** The revenue expenditure of panchayats is less than 0.6% of the gross state domestic product for all states.
- **Grant Dependency:** Approximately 95% of Panchayats' revenues come in the form of grants from higher government levels, limiting their financial autonomy.
- **Inter-State Variations in Devolution:** There are significant variations in the devolution of powers and functions to Panchayats across states.

- ♦ States with higher devolution levels show improved socio-economic outcomes.
- **Inconsistency in Data:** The assessment of the fiscal health of Panchayati Raj Institutions is hindered by inconsistent data on their finances.
- **Challenges in Local Tax Revenue Generation:** Panchayats face challenges in generating local tax revenue due to a limited tax base, administrative infrastructure shortages, lack of trained staff, and unclear guidelines.

### Way Forward and Conclusion

- The RBI report suggests several measures to improve the fiscal position of PRIs, such as boosting revenue-generating capabilities, effectively implementing **Article 243 (I)** for fair revenue sharing through established Finance Commissions, strengthening local administrative skills for better financial management, and promoting decentralisation.
- PRIs bridge the gap between the rural population and the higher levels of government. They are the **most appropriate institutions for grassroots development**.
  - ♦ These need to devise innovative approaches for generating adequate revenue.
- The recommendations of the **Finance Commissions** and the recent digital initiatives have **collectively enhanced transparency and accountability at the Panchayat level**, thereby contributing significantly to the empowerment of Panchayats.
- According to **Mahatma Gandhi**, 'Independence must begin at the bottom. Thus, every village will be a Republic or Panchayat having full powers'.

Source: **TH**

### UTTARAKHAND'S DRAFT ON UNIFORM CIVIL CODE

#### In News

- The Uttarakhand Cabinet has approved the final draft of the Uniform Civil Code (UCC)

#### About the draft

- It is set to focus on gender equality by introducing provisions that **treat men and women equally**, especially in matters pertaining to inheritance.

- It will also revoke practices governing marriage and divorce such as polygamy, iddat (mandatory period of waiting to be observed by women following the dissolution of a Muslim marriage) and triple talaq.

### About Uniform Civil Code

- **Overview :** UCC is part of Part IV of the Constitution which includes the Directive Principles of State Policy (DPSP).
  - ♦ Article 44 in DPSP states that “The State shall endeavour to secure for the citizens a uniform civil code throughout the territory of India”
- **Background :** The UCC can be traced back to the debates during the framing of the Indian Constitution.
  - ♦ Some members of the Constituent Assembly, including **Dr BR Ambedkar believed that a UCC was necessary** to promote gender equality, secularism, and national integration.
  - ♦ However, many other members including **Naziruddin Ahmad were against it, claiming** that the **religious laws of different communities** should not be tampered with, without their consent.
- **Purpose :** It aims to enforce a uniform legal framework to all citizens, irrespective of their religion.
  - ♦ Right now, matters including marriage, divorce and succession are governed by religion-based personal laws.

### Supreme Court's Observations

- Over the years, the Supreme Court has deliberated upon the UCC in several judgments, but refused to issue any directive to the government since law-making falls within the exclusive domain of Parliament.
- In its 1985 judgment in the **Shah Bano Begum case**, the Court observed that “it is a matter of regret that Article 44 has remained a dead letter” and called for its implementation.
  - ♦ Such a demand was reiterated in subsequent cases such as **Sarla Mudgal versus Union of India (1995)**, and **John Vallamattom versus Union of India (2003)** among others.

Source: [HT](#)

## KERR BLACK HOLE

### In Context

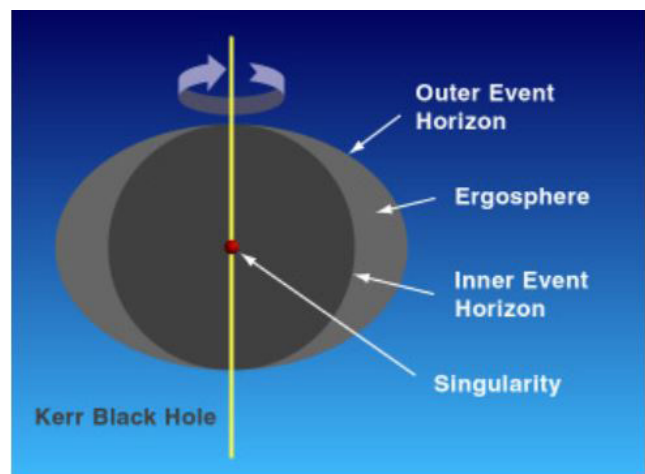
- **Rotating black holes (a.k.a. Kerr black holes)** have a unique feature: a region outside their outer event horizon called the ergosphere.

### What is a Black Hole?

- A black hole is an extremely dense object whose gravity is so strong that nothing, not even light, can escape it.
- A black hole does not have a surface, like a planet or star. Instead, it is a region of space where **matter has collapsed in on itself**.
  - ♦ This catastrophic collapse results in a **huge amount of mass being concentrated in an incredibly small area**.
- **Formation:** A black hole is formed when a **really massive star runs out of fuel** to fuse, blows up, leaving its core to implode under its weight to form a black hole.
  - ♦ The centre of a black hole is a **gravitational singularity**, a point where the general theory of relativity breaks down, i.e. where its predictions don't apply.
  - ♦ A black hole's great gravitational pull emerges as if from the **singularity**.

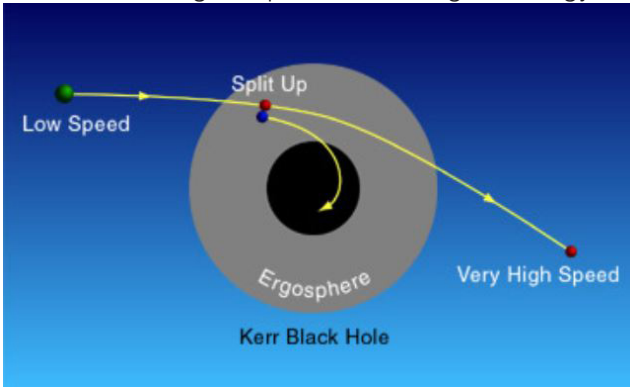
### Rotating Black Hole

- A rotating black hole is also called a **Kerr black hole**.



- There are two **event horizons**, the **outer and the inner**.
- The region of **space in-between the two horizons is the ergosphere**.
  - ♦ Anything inside the ergosphere will be dragged by the black hole and rotate with it but it can still escape.

- ◆ However, anything inside the inner event horizon can never escape.
- **Scientific Significance:** We can extract **rotational energy** from a rotating black hole.
  - ◆ If something is sent inside of the ergosphere, and split it up into two parts, one goes in the black hole while the other comes out.
  - ◆ The part coming out can be made to have a much higher speed, hence higher energy.



#### Do You Know?

- Known black holes fall into **two classes**:
  - ◆ **Stellar mass:** 5 to tens of times the Sun's mass;
  - ◆ **Supermassive:** 100,000 to billions of times the Sun's mass;
  - ◆ **Middleweight** black holes may exist between these classes, but none have been found to date.
- **Spaghettification:** As objects approach the event horizon of a black hole, they're horizontally compressed and vertically stretched, like a noodle.
- **Sagittarius A\*:** Sagittarius A\* is more than 25,000 light years from Earth – nearest supermassive black hole, with an estimated mass millions of times that of Sun.
  - ◆ Often abbreviated by researchers to Sgr A\* (pronounced "Sagittarius A star"), it sits in the constellation of Sagittarius at the heart of the Milky Way.

Source: TH

## WORLD WETLANDS DAY

### In Context

- The Government organised a national event at Sirpur Lake, Indore to celebrate **World Wetlands Day (WWD) (February 2nd)**.

### About

- The day commemorates the signing of the **Ramsar Convention on Wetlands of International Importance** in 1971 and India has been a party to the Convention since 1982.
- The theme of WWD-2024 is **'Wetlands and Human Wellbeing'** which underscores the critical role wetlands play in enhancing lives.
- On the eve of WWD 2024, India has **increased its tally of Ramsar sites** (Wetlands of International Importance) **to 80** by designating **five more wetlands as Ramsar sites**.
  - ◆ Three of these sites, **Ankasamudra Bird Conservation Reserve, Aghanashini Estuary and Magadi Kere Conservation Reserve** are located in **Karnataka** whereas **two, Karaivetti Bird Sanctuary and Longwood Shola Reserve Forest** are in **Tamil Nadu**.
  - ◆ **Tamil Nadu** continues to have the maximum number of **Ramsar Sites (16 sites)** followed by **Uttar Pradesh (10 sites)**.
  - **Dhanauri Wetland:** It is located **15-km away from the Jewar Airport**. In the National Inventory of Wetlands, the Dhanauri wetland is mapped across around 98 hectares around Dankaur tehsil in **Gautam Buddha Nagar**.
    - ◆ The Environmentalists had filed a petition in the National Green Tribunal (NGT) seeking a stay on the construction till the wetland is granted protection.

### What is a Wetland?

- A wetland is a place in which the land is covered by **water—salt, fresh, or somewhere in between—either seasonally or permanently**. It functions as its **own distinct ecosystem**.
- **It includes water bodies** such as lakes, rivers, underground aquifers, swamps, wet grasslands, peatlands, deltas, tidal flats, mangroves, coral reefs, and other coastal areas as well.
- These wetlands can be classified into three segments such as **inland wetlands, coastal wetlands, and human-made wetlands**.
- **A wide variety of species live in wetlands**.
  - ◆ Birds, including ducks, geese, kingfishers, and sandpipers, use wetlands as pit stops during long migrations, providing them with protection and food.

- ♦ Mammals like otters, beavers, and even tigers rely on wetlands to find food and shelter.

### Wetlands in India

- India includes high-altitude wetlands of the Himalayas, floodplains of rivers such as Ganges and Brahmaputra, lagoons and mangrove marshes on the coastline, and reefs in marine environments.
- India has around **4.6%** of its land as wetlands, **80 Wetlands of India** covering an **area of 14,27,307** hectares are under the **List of Wetlands of International Importance**.
- Presently, India stands **first in South Asia** and **third in Asia in terms of number of designated sites**.

### Importance of Wetlands

- **Biodiversity Hotspots:** Wetlands are among the most biologically diverse ecosystems on Earth, supporting a wide variety of plant and animal species.
- **Water Filtration and Purification:** Wetlands act as natural filters, trapping and removing pollutants and sediments from water.
- **Flood Control and Water Regulation:** Wetlands function as natural buffers against floods by absorbing and slowing down excess water during heavy rainfall or storm events.
- **Carbon Sequestration:** The waterlogged conditions in wetlands slow down the decomposition of organic matter, leading to the accumulation of carbon in the soil.
- **Recreation and Aesthetics:** Many wetlands offer recreational opportunities such as birdwatching, hiking, fishing, and boating.
- **Economic Benefits:** Wetlands support various economic activities, including fisheries, agriculture, and tourism. They provide valuable resources for local communities and contribute to the overall economy.
- **Education and Research:** Wetlands serve as living laboratories for scientists and researchers studying ecosystems, biodiversity, and environmental processes.

### Threats to Wetlands

- **Urbanization:** Wetlands near urban centres are under increasing developmental pressure for residential, industrial and commercial facilities.

- **Anthropogenic activities:** Due to unplanned urban and agricultural development, wetlands have been drained and transformed.
- **Agricultural activities:** Following the Green Revolution of the 1970s, vast stretches of wetlands have been converted to paddy fields.
  - ♦ Construction of a large number of reservoirs, canals and dams to provide for irrigation significantly altered the hydrology of the associated wetlands.
- **Deforestation:** Removal of vegetation in the catchment leads to soil erosion and siltation.
- **Pollution:** Unrestricted dumping of sewage and toxic chemicals from industries has polluted many freshwater wetlands.
- **Aquaculture:** Demand for shrimps and fishes has provided economic incentives to convert wetlands and mangrove forests to develop pisciculture and aquaculture ponds.
- **Introduced species:** Indian wetlands are threatened by exotic introduced plant species such as water hyacinth and salvinia.
- **Climate change:** Increased air temperature; shifts in precipitation; increased frequency of storms, droughts, and floods; increased atmospheric carbon dioxide concentration; and sea level rise could also affect wetlands.

### Government Initiatives to Preserve Wetlands

- **Wetlands of India Portal:** The Ministry of Environment, Forest & Climate Change (MoEF&CC) has launched the Wetlands of India Portal.
  - ♦ It is a dynamic knowledge repository for wetlands and provides a single point access system that synthesises information dissemination regarding wetland sites of the country, projects, initiatives, and training.
- **National Wetland Conservation Program (NWCP):** The NWCP was launched in **1986 by the MoEFCC**.
  - ♦ It aims to conserve wetlands in the country and is implemented through the State Wetland Authorities.
  - ♦ The program focuses on the identification, notification, and management of wetlands.
- **Integrated Development of Wildlife Habitats (IDWH):** The IDWH scheme, implemented by the MoEFCC, supports the conservation and management of wildlife habitats, including wetlands.

- **State Wetland Authorities:** Many states in India have established State Wetland Authorities to implement wetland conservation and management programs at the state level.
- **Wetland Conservation Rules:** The Ministry of Environment has notified the new Wetland Conservation Rules that prohibit setting up or expansion of industries, and disposal of construction and demolition waste within the wetlands.
- **Amrit Dharohar initiative:** It is a part of the 2023-24 budget announcement and was launched by MoEF&CC in 2023 to promote unique conservation values of the Ramsar Sites in the country while generating employment opportunities and supporting local livelihoods.
  - ♦ This initiative is to be implemented over three years in convergence with various Central Government ministries and agencies, State Wetland Authorities, and a network of formal and informal institutions and individuals, working together for a common cause.

### Conclusion

- Conserving and properly managing wetlands is crucial to maintaining the ecological functions and ensuring the continued provision of the services they offer to both the environment and society.
- Effective wetland conservation involves a collaborative approach, including the participation of local communities, NGOs, and other stakeholders.

Source: **PIB**

## CBI AND ITS FUNCTIONING

### Context

- Recently, the Department of Personnel and Training (DoPT) in its **Annual Report (2022-23)** highlighted the **manpower shortage and pending cases** before the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI).

### Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI)

- It is the premier **investigating police agency** in India. It plays a major role in preserving values in public life and ensuring the health of the national economy.
- It functions under the **Department of Personnel, Ministry of Personnel, Pension & Public Grievances**, Government of India.

- **Motto:** Industry, Impartiality, and Integrity

### History of the CBI

- It came into being during World War II, when the colonial government felt the need to probe cases of corruption in the War and Supply Department.
  - ♦ The CBI was established in 1963 and is governed by the **Delhi Special Police Establishment (DSPE) Act**.
  - ♦ It was established on the recommendations of **Santhanam Committee on Prevention of Corruption (1962–1964)**.
- The CBI is **not a statutory body** but derives its power to investigate from the **Delhi Special Police Establishment Act, 1946**.
- It was **established by a resolution** of the Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of India, dated April 1, 1963.
- It is **exempted** from the purview of the **Right to Information (RTI) Act**.

### Jurisdiction of CBI

- **Section 6 of the DPSE Act:** It authorises the central government to direct CBI to probe a case within the jurisdiction of any state on the recommendation of the concerned state government.
  - ♦ The courts can also order a CBI probe, and even monitor the progress of investigation.
- CBI can **suo-moto take up investigation** of offences only in the Union Territories.
- **The Lokpal Act 2013** prescribed that the CBI director shall be appointed on the recommendation of a committee comprising the Prime Minister, Leader of the Opposition in the Lok Sabha and Chief Justice of India or a judge of the Supreme Court nominated by him.

### Objectives & Functions

- **Mission:** To **uphold the Constitution of India and law** of the land through in-depth investigation and successful prosecution of offences; to provide leadership and direction to Police Forces and to act as the **Nodal Agency for enhancing interstate and international cooperation** in law enforcement.
- The CBI provides leadership and direction in fighting corruption like bribery and irregularities in public tenders, looting of arms and ammunition etc to the Police force across the country.

- Other key roles of CBI are preserving values in public life, ensuring the health of the national economy, and **coordination on behalf of Interpol Member Countries**.

### Challenges ahead of CBI

- **Shortage of Manpower:** The CBI is facing a shortage of 23% manpower, including in the posts of Special Director, Joint Directors and DIGs.
  - ♦ Till December 31, 2022, the total sanctioned strength of CBI was 7,295 against which 5,600 officers were in position and 1,695 posts were vacant.
  - ♦ In 2021, 1,533 and 1,374 posts were vacant in 2021 and 2020 respectively.
- **Pending of Cases:** The Annual Report found that there are **1,025 cases** (943 registered cases and 82 preliminary enquiries) – were **pending**.
  - ♦ 447 cases were pending under investigation for over a year, 60 were pending enquiries for over three months.
  - ♦ 23 Lokpal references were pending before the CBI.
- **Conviction Rate:** In 2022, the courts delivered judgments in 557 court cases of CBI. Of these, 364 cases resulted in conviction, 111 in acquittal, 13 in discharge and 69 cases were disposed of for other reasons.
  - ♦ The **conviction rate was 74.59%**. Around 10,732 court cases were pending under trial in various courts
- **Evolving Nature of Crime and Corruption:** As crime, corruption, and economic offences evolve, it is critical for the CBI to upgrade its skills and capabilities to meet both present challenges and prepare for the future.
- **Increasing Demand for CBI Investigation:** There is an increasing demand for CBI investigation, which is a proof of trust and faith of India.
  - ♦ This puts pressure on the agency to maintain its high standards of investigation.
- **Legal Challenges:** The CBI often faces legal challenges in its investigations.
  - ♦ For instance, there have been instances where the High Court has quashed criminal proceedings.
- **Resource Constraints:** The CBI needs to manage its resources effectively to handle the increasing number of cases referred to it by Constitutional Courts and State Governments.

- **Adapting to New Technologies:** The CBI has many specialised units such as Cyber Crime, Anti-Human Trafficking, Sports Integrity Unit, etc.
  - ♦ These units need to constantly update their knowledge and skills to keep up with the advancements in technology.
- **Maintaining Public Trust:** The CBI has gained the trust of constitutional courts and the general public over the years.
  - ♦ It is a challenge to maintain this trust while dealing with sensitive and high-profile cases.
- **Jurisdictional Issues:** The CBI requires the prior consent of the States for registering crimes that occurred within the jurisdiction of a State.
  - ♦ This can sometimes pose challenges in the investigation process.

### Conclusion and Way Forward: Steps to strengthen CBI

- **Increasing Conviction Rate:** The conviction rate in CBI cases has improved over the years, going up to 74.59% in 2022 from 68% in 2018.
  - ♦ This improvement is a result of meticulous follow-up during trials, harmonious and synergistic working of executive officers with law officers of the Directorate of Prosecution, and enhancing capabilities in terms of skills, resources, and coordination.
- **Enhancing Training:** The CBI Academy has joined the **Interpol Global Academy Network**, which supports academic collaboration among law enforcement training institutions across the world.
  - ♦ Additionally, CBI's training setup has been augmented with the establishment of **three Regional Training Centers (RTCs)** at Kolkata, Chennai, and Mumbai.
- **Improving Legal Support:** The Directorate of Prosecution, headed by the Director of Prosecution in the CBI, is responsible for conducting and supervising cases pending trial, appeal, and revision in courts.
  - ♦ Sub Directorates of Prosecution have also been established in Delhi, Mumbai, Kolkata, and Chennai to closely monitor the trial/appeal/revision petitions in the trial courts/high courts.
- **Addressing Jurisdictional Issues:** The Supreme Court has clarified that the **state government's consent is mandatory for a CBI investigation** in its jurisdiction.



- ◆ This clarification can help in addressing jurisdictional issues and improving the functioning of the CBI.
- **Addressing Corruption:** The CBI has been working to address corruption, and the conviction rate in corruption cases has been improving.

Source: **IE**

## NEWS IN SHORT

### FLOOR TEST

#### In News

- The newly formed Jharkhand government is facing a Floor test.

#### About Floor test

- A floor test is primarily taken to know whether the government still enjoys the confidence of the legislature.
- It is a **constitutional mechanism** under which a Chief Minister can be asked to prove majority on the floor of the Legislative Assembly of the state by the Governor.
  - ◆ **Article 174(2)(b)** of the Constitution gives powers to the Governor to dissolve the Assembly on the aid and advice of the cabinet.
  - ◆ Under **Article 175(2)**, the Governor can summon the House and call for a floor test to prove whether the government has the numbers
- This happens both in the parliament and the state legislative assemblies.

Source: **TH**

### PANEL OF VICE-CHAIRPERSONS

#### In Context

- **The Vice-President and Chairman Rajya Sabha**, Shri Jagdeep Dhankhar **reconstituted the panel of Vice-Chairpersons** comprising eight members.

#### About

- The Chairman, from time to time, **nominates from amongst the members** of the **House**, a panel of Vice-Chairmen.
  - ◆ In the absence of the Chairman and the

Deputy Chairman, **one of them presides over the House.**

- The first panel which was to consist of four members was nominated by the **Chairman in 1952.**
- **Nomination:** The Chairman gives consideration to the **strength of various parties** in the House and as per convention, selects some members from the **opposition parties** to the panel.
  - ◆ The Chairman may also **consult the leaders** of political parties/groups for the purpose before making a final choice.
- **Functions and Powers:** The Vice-Chairman, when presiding over a sitting of the House, has the same powers as the Chairman when so presiding.
  - ◆ He is, however, free to participate fully in all discussions in the House.
  - ◆ A Vice-Chairman while presiding over a sitting of the House **cannot vote in the first instance**, and has to exercise a **casting vote** in the case of an equality of votes.
- **Tenure:** A Vice-Chairman holds office **until a new panel of Vice-Chairmen is nominated.**
  - ◆ The same member may also be renominated.
  - ◆ If a Vice-Chairman resigns his office, another member may be nominated in his place.

Source: **PIB**

### PERSONALLY IDENTIFIABLE INFORMATION (PII)

#### Context:

- Recently, the Ministry of Corporate Affairs fixed a **critical vulnerability of exposing personal details, i.e. Personally Identifiable Information (PII)** in its online portal.

#### About the PII:

- PII is **any data or information** maintained by an organisation or agency that **can potentially be used to identify a specific individual.**
- It could include information such as Aadhaar, PAN, voter identity, passport, date of birth, contact number, communication address, and biometric information.
- **Not all personal data is considered PII**, and it **only refers to information that points to a particular person.**

**Types of PII:**

- **Direct identifiers:** Direct identifiers are unique to a person and include things like a passport number or driver's licence number.
- **Indirect identifiers:** Indirect identifiers are not unique, and they include more general personal details like race and place of birth.

**Threats arising from the leaked information:**

- India being one of the fastest growing economies of the world, ranked fourth globally in all malware detection in the first half of 2023.
- Nearly 45% of Indian businesses experienced more than a 50% rise in disruptive cyberattacks in 2022.
  - ◆ About 67% of Indian government and essential services organisations experienced over a 50% increase in disruptive cyberattacks.

**Challenges associated with the PII:**

- **No uniformity in regulations:** Different regulations set different standards for what kinds of data must be protected, complicating things further.
- These are related to privacy, data management and safety because of increased cyber attacks, and vulnerability to identity theft etc.

**Protecting The PII**

- To safeguard PII, organisations typically create data privacy frameworks that can take different forms depending on the organisation.
- Organisations or individuals can follow the **best practices** for web applications and browser security, email security, wireless security, USB security, and protection from Phishing etc.
- Digital Personal Data Protection Law;
  - ◆ Individual consent to use data and data principal rights;
  - ◆ Personal data breach;
- Cyber Laws of India;
  - ◆ Information Technology Act, 2000;
  - ◆ International Privacy Regulations;

Source: **TH**

**EXERCISE VAYU SHAKTI-2024****In News**

The Indian Air Force will be conducting Exercise Vayu Shakti-24 at the Pokhran Air to Ground Range, near Jaisalmer.

- The last edition was held on 16 February 2019.

**About Exercise Vayu Shakti-2024**

- It will be a demonstration of the **IAF's capability** to deliver weapons with long range, precision capability as well as conventional weapons accurately, on time and with devastating effect, while operating from multiple air bases.
- It will also exhibit joint operations with the army, which tri-services have been doing for some time ahead as they move towards proposed jointness.
  - ◆ Special operations by the IAF transport and helicopter fleets, involving the **Garuds and Indian Army** elements will also be on display,
- **Highlights :** This year, the exercise will see participation by 121 aircraft, including the indigenous **Tejas, Prachand and Dhruv**.
  - ◆ Other participating aircraft would include the Rafale, Mirage-2000, Sukhoi-30 MKI, Jaguar, Hawk, C-130J, Chinook, Apache and Mi-17.
  - ◆ Indigenous Surface to Air Weapon systems **Akash and Samar** will demonstrate their capability to track and shoot down an intruding aircraft.
- **Purpose and Importance :** The exercise aims to showcase the prowess of the IAF and also enhance coordination and synergy among various aircraft and systems.
  - ◆ The inclusion of indigenous platforms underscores the nation's commitment to self-reliance and the advancement of its defense capabilities.

Source: **PIB**

**ACHARYA SHRI SATYA NARAYANA GOENKA****Context:**

- Recently, the Prime Minister addressed the concluding ceremony of year-long celebrations of Acharya Shri S N Goenka's 100th birth anniversary.

**Acharya Shri Satya Narayana Goenka (1924 - 2013):**

- He was an Indian teacher of Vipassana meditation.
- Born in Burma to an Indian business family, he moved to India in 1969 and started teaching meditation.
- He is known for his significant contribution to the propagation of **Vipassana**, a form of meditation that involves self-observation and self-transformation.

**His Life and Teachings:**

- Goenka dedicated his life to the mission of Vipassanā and is remembered as a perfect example of **‘One Life, One Mission’**.
- His teachings have had a profound impact on many lives, and his influence continues to be felt today.

**Vipassana:**

- It is an ancient meditation technique that **originated in India** and is attributed to **Siddhartha Gautama, the Buddha**.
- It is a logical process of mental purification through self-observation.
  - ♦ It means ‘to see things as they really are’.
- It is deeply embedded in Buddhist traditions but has gained popularity globally as a secular technique for cultivating mindfulness and insight.
- It enables us to experience peace and harmony by purifying the mind, freeing it from suffering and the deep-seated causes of suffering.

Source: *IE*

