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INDIAN EXPRESS

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QUESTION HOUR IN PARLIAMENT

(Syllabus: GS Paper 2 – Polity)

EXPLAINED LAW & POLICY

Questions in Parliament

Why do questions asked by MPs matter? What is the procedure for MPs to ask questions, and what do's and don'ts must they follow? What are the various categories of questions, and how are they answered?

ALIND CHAUHAN
NEW DELHI, OCTOBER 20

ON OCTOBER 26, the Ethics Committee of Lok Sabha will hear "oral evidence" from BJP MP Nishikant Dubey on his allegation that TMC MP Mahua Moitra had accepted "bribes" to ask questions in Parliament targeting the Adani Group. Moitra has denied the allegation.

On Thursday, Darshan Hiranandani, CEO of the Hiranandani Group, one of India's biggest real estate developers, claimed that Moitra had given him "her Parliament login and password so that I could post the questions directly on her behalf when required".





MPs Mahua Moitra and Nishikant Dubey in Parliament. *X/@sansad_tv, PTI*

When and how can an MP ask a question in Parliament?

When in session, Lok Sabha generally starts with Question Hour – a period of an hour that is provided to MPs to ask questions of Ministers, and to hold them accountable for the functioning of their ministries.

The procedure for raising questions is governed by Rules 32 to 54 of the *Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in Lok Sabha*, and Directions 10 to 18 of the *Directions by the Speaker, Lok Sabha*.

To ask a question, an MP has to first give a notice addressed to the Secretary General of the House, intimating their intention to ask a question. Usually, the period of notice for a question is not less than 15 days.

The notice usually contains the text of the question, the official designation of the Minister to whom the question is addressed, the date on which the answer is desired, and the order of preference, in case the MP tables more than one notice of questions for the same day.

How many questions can an MP ask?

Question Hour in Lok Sabha, a document published by the Lok Sabha Secretariat, says: "A Member is allowed to give not more than five notices of questions, both for oral and written answers, in all, for any day. Notices received in excess of five from a Member for a day, are considered for the subsequent day(s) concerning that Minister(s) during the period of that session only."

The Lok Sabha Secretariat holds a ballot of questions received from MPs for a particular day. The questions selected in the ballot are then answered by the respective Ministries.

How are the notices for questions submitted?

There are two ways by which an MP can submit the notices of their questions. First, through an online 'Member's Portal', to access which they have to enter their ID and password. Second, through the printed forms available in the Parliamentary Notice Office.

The Lok Sabha Secretariat examines the notices of the questions in the light of laid-down rules, and decides whether a question, or a part thereof, is or is not admissible.

How is admissibility decided?

A set of rules govern the admissibility of a question raised by an MP. For example, questions shall not ordinarily contain more than 150 words. They should not contain arguments or defamatory statements, or refer to the character or conduct of any person except in their official or public capacity.

Questions that raise larger issues of policy are not allowed – the reason being it is not possible to enunciate policies within the limited compass of an answer to a question.

Also, a question is not admissible if its subject matter is pending judgment before any court of law or any other tribunal or body set up under law, or is under consideration before a Parliamentary Committee.

A question that seeks information, the free availability of which may weaken the unity and integrity of the country, is not allowed.

Are all questions answered in person by the concerned Minister in the House?

No. There are four types of questions: starred, unstarred, short-notice questions, and questions addressed to private Members.

A starred question is answered orally by the Minister in charge of the concerned department. Each MP is allowed to ask one starred question per day. Starred questions have to be submitted at least 15 days in advance, so that the Minister has the time to prepare the answers. On any day, only 20 questions can be listed for oral answers. When a question is answered orally, supplementary questions can be asked thereon.

An unstarred question receives a written reply from the Ministry. These questions too, need to be submitted at least 15 days in advance. Up to 230 questions can be listed for written answers in a day. No follow-up questions can be asked to an unstarred question.

According to a report by PRS Legislative Research, while starred questions are better suited to inquire about the government's views on issues and its policy inclination, unstarred questions are more conducive for getting answers to queries related to data or information. (*Engaging as a Parliamentarian: How to Intervene Effectively*, May 2019)

Short notice questions are those that pertain to a matter of urgent public importance. They can be asked with less than 10 days' notice, with reasons for the short notice. Like a starred question, they are answered orally, followed by supplementary questions.

A question to a private Member is addressed to the Member. It is asked when the subject matter pertains to any Bill, Resolution or any matter relating to the Business of the House for which that MP is responsible.

Why is the raising of questions in Parliament important?

Asking questions is an "inherent and unfettered" parliamentary right of an MP, according to *Question Hour in Lok Sabha*. The exercise acts as a parliamentary device to practise legislative control over executive actions.

The government, on its part, can use these questions to gauge the public reaction to its policies and administration. At times, questions lead to the formation of a Parliamentary commission, a court of inquiry or even the enactment of legislation.

Context: Recently, the Trinamool Congress MP, **expressed her willingness to answer questions** from the **Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI)** and the Lok Sabha Ethics **Committee regarding the 'cash for query'** allegations against her.

Question Hour in Parliament

- **About:** The first hour of every parliamentary sitting is slotted for the Question Hour. Question Hour serves as the **designated time for addressing significant queries** at the start of each Parliamentary session, ensuring government accountability.
- **Constitutional provision:** The **Constitution does not explicitly reference Question Hour**; instead, it is outlined in the Rules of Procedure for both houses of Parliament.
- **Other info:** The **relevant Minister is obliged to provide** either an oral or written **response to Parliament.**
  - Questions during **Question Hour aren't exclusively directed at ministers**; private members who are not part of the government can also pose queries.
  - **Written notices for questions must be submitted at least 15 clear days** before the designated date.

Types of Question in Question Hour

- **Starred Question:** Asked by an MP and answered orally by the Minister-in-charge.
- **Unstarred Questions:** It receives a written reply from the Ministry.
- **Short Notice Questions:** They can be asked with less than 10 days' notice, with reasons for the short notice. Like a starred question, they are answered orally, followed by supplementary questions.
- **Question to Private Members:** are those which are asked to members who are not ministers. These questions are related to private member's bills, parliamentary committees, private member resolutions.

PIB

Oct 20

AYUSHMAN BHARAT

(Syllabus: GS Paper 2 – Government Schemes)

26 crore Ayushman Cards created under Ayushman Bharat Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (AB PM-JAY)

Context: Recently, Ayushman Bharat Pradhan Mantri - Jan Arogya Yojana (AB PM-JAY) achieved the milestone of issuing **26 crore Ayushman cards nationwide**.

PM-JAY

- **About:** PM-JAY is the **largest health assurance scheme in the world**, covering over 10 crore families (approximately 50 crore beneficiaries) that form the bottom 40% of the Indian population.
- **Implemented by**: The National Health Authority (NHA).
- **Coverage**: 5 lakhs per family per year for secondary and tertiary care hospitalization.
- The beneficiaries can avail of cashless and paperless treatment at any of the empanelled hospitals across the country.
- **Criteria:** The **scheme is based on the Socio-Economic Caste Census** 2011 (SECC 2011) data, which ensures that no eligible beneficiary is left out.
- **Comonents:** The other component of Ayushman Bharat is the **Health and Wellness Centres (HWCs)**, which are being established by transforming the existing Sub Centres and Primary Health Centres.
  - These centres provide comprehensive **primary health care services, including maternal and child health**, non-communicable diseases, free essential drugs and diagnostic services, and health promotion and prevention.
- **Except for Delhi, Odisha, and West Bengal**, the AB PM-JAY is being implemented in 33 states and union territories.

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MERI MAATI MERA DESH

(Syllabus: GS Paper 2 – Government Scheme)

As part of 'Meri Maati, Mera Desh', Railways plans special trains to

S. Vijay Kumar
CHENNAI

The Indian Railways will operate special trains to transport volunteers carrying *mitti* (soil) from State capitals and other major stations across the country to reach New Delhi on October 29.

The initiative is part of the 'Meri Maati Mera Desh' [My soil, my country] campaign being organised by the Ministry of Culture as "a tribute to the Veers and Veeranganas [bravehearts] who have made the supreme sacrifice for the country". Around 20,000 volunteers with *kalash* (urn) containing the soil in their possession will reach Delhi to participate in events culminating in the year-long *Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav*.

According to official sources, volunteers would collect the soil from every household as a mark of respect to the people who had sacrificed their lives for the nation. In cases where the soil was not available, people can contribute a grain of rice. The soil that gets collected would be used in the 'Amrit Vatika', a special garden being created in Delhi along with an 'Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav' memorial.



Fair share: Government school students in Lucknow contributing to the Meri Maati Mera Desh campaign. SANDEEP SAXENA

To facilitate the movement of the volunteers, the Ministry of Railways would operate special 'Amrit Kalash Yatri' trains, add additional coaches in scheduled trains and facilitate release of berths from Emergency Quota depending upon the demand. These trains would have halts at major stations for meet and greet with local Members of Parliament, celebrities and officials. In the return journey from the national capital, the special trains would run from Delhi to the respective destinations on November 1.

No representation from some States

The sources said a total of 16,258 people had enrolled to carry 4,869 urns with the soil sourced from almost all the States in the country. However, there was no representation from Tamil Nadu, West Bengal, Telangana, Bihar and Himachal Pradesh. The maximum participation was from Uttar Pradesh, followed by Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan.

Asked why there were no participants from Tamil Nadu and a few other States, a senior railway spokesperson said the pro-

Context: The **Indian Railways** will operate **special trains to transport volunteers** carrying mitti (soil) from State capitals and other major stations across the country to reach New Delhi.

- The **initiative is part of the 'Meri Maati, Mera Desh'** [My soil, my country] campaign being organised by the **Ministry of Culture.**

Meri Maati, Mera Desh

- **About:** The 'Meri Mati Mera Desh' campaign is an initiative launched to honor the brave hearts who sacrificed their lives for the freedom of the country.
  - It involves installing special inscriptions in panchayats across the nation in memory of these heroes.
- **Organised by**: Ministry of Culture.
- **The 'Amrit Kalash Yatra':** It is a part of the **'Meri Mati Mera Desh' campaign.** During this yatra, 7,500 pots carrying soil from different parts of the country will be brought to the national capital along with saplings.
  - These pots will be used **to create an 'Amrit Vatika' near the National War Memorial,** symbolizing **'Ek Bharat Shresth Bharat.'**

DTE Oct 20

KMGBF
(Syllabus: GS Paper 3 – Env and Eco)

SBSTTA-25: Delegates move forward on recommendations to implement Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework

Context: Recently, **the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice (SBSTTA-25) concluded** with recommendations to transition from "agreement to action" following the adoption of the **Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (KMGBF)**.

Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (KMGBF)

- **Adoption of the KMGBF**: The 15th Conference of Parties (COP15) to the UN Convention on Biological Diversity adopted the "Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework" (GBF).
- **Four Goals & 23 Targets**: The GBF comprises four overarching goals and 23 specific targets to be achieved by 2030.
- **Location**: COP15 took place in Montreal, Canada.
- **Protecting 30% of the Planet:** Through the KMGBF, participating countries committed to safeguarding 30 percent of the **planet's biodiversity by 2030**.
- **Ecosystem Restoration;** Countries vowed to attain the 23 GBF targets aimed at reversing ecosystem degradation, securing the survival of the natural world.
- **Subsidy Reduction**: Under the GBF, countries also agreed to reduce harmful government **subsidies by 2025** and to increase international financial flows from developed to **developing countries, aiming for at** least $20 billion by 2025 and $30 billion by 2030.

Key Points

- The **latest IPBES report** pointed out the role **invasive species play in the extinction** of plants and animals.
- **SBSTTA-25 also pointed out that work** of other multilateral agencies such as the World **Health Organization** and the **Food and Agriculture Organization** should be used to enrich the scientific and technical advice towards implementation of the KMGBF.
- **Findings from IPCC AR6**, which suggested that climate change is the main driver of the **loss of biodiversity and that biodiversity** provides capacity to ature to support climate adaptation, resilience, mitigation and disaster risk reduction were discussed too.

Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice (SBSTA)

- The SBSTA is a **subsidiary body of the United Nations** Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) Conference of the Parties (COP).
- It meets at **least twice a year to advise the COP** on matters of science, technology and methodology.

BUSINESS STANDARD

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VIENNA CONVENTION

(Syllabus: GS Paper 2 – IR)

CANADA WITHDRAWS 41 DIPLOMATS

No violation of Vienna Convention rules: India

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
Toronto/New Delhi, 20 October

The Ministry of External Affairs on Friday rejected Canada's attempt to "portray" the withdrawal of 41 Canadian diplomats from the country as a violation of international norms. India asserted that ensuring two-way diplomatic parity is fully consistent with the provisions of Vienna Convention on diplomatic relations.

We reject any attempt to portray the implementation of parity as a violation of international norms," the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) said in a statement.

Hours after India's statement, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau said New Delhi's crackdown on Canadian diplomats was making normal life very difficult for millions of people in the two countries.

Canada has withdrawn 41 diplomats from India after it threatened to strip them of their diplomatic immunity by Friday, Foreign Affairs Minister Melanie Joly has said, amid a diplomatic row over the killing of a Sikh separatist.

Canada has also announced that it will be "pausing" all in-person services at its consulates in Chandigarh, Mumbai, and Bengaluru and was directing all Canadians in India to the High Commission in New Delhi.



THE CANADIAN EMBASSY IN NEW DELHI UPDATED ITS TRAVEL ADVISORY HOURS AFTER ITS FOREIGN AFFAIRS MINISTER'S STATEMENT URGING ITS CITIZENS TO "EXERCISE A HIGH DEGREE OF CAUTION" IN AND AROUND BENGALURU, CHANDIGARH, AND MUMBAI

Tensions flared between India and Canada last month following Prime Minister Justin Trudeau's explosive allegations of the "potential" involvement of Indian agents in the killing of Khalistani extremist Hardeep Singh Nijjar on June 18 in British Columbia. India had designated Nijjar as a terrorist in 2020.

India has rejected Trudeau's allegations as "absurd" and "motivated".

"The state of our bilateral relations, the much higher number of Canadian diplomats in India, and their continued interference in our internal affairs warrant a parity in mutual diplomatic presence in New Delhi and Ottawa," it said.

The MEA said it has been engaged with the Canadian side on the issue over the last month in order to work out the details and modalities to ensure implementation of parity in diplomatic presence.

"Our actions in implementing this parity are fully consistent with Article 11.1 of the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations," the MEA statement said.

In Ottawa, Foreign Minister Joly said that India has formally conveyed its plan to "unilaterally remove diplomatic immunities for all but 21 Canadian diplomats and dependents in Delhi by tomorrow, October 20.""

The Canadian Embassy in New Delhi updated its travel advisory hours after Joly's statement, urging its citizens to "exercise a high degree of caution" in and around Bengaluru, Chandigarh and Mumbai.

Joly said that in their "unreasonable" request for diplomatic parity, India would only allow 21 diplomats and their families to maintain their diplomatic status, putting the others at risk of having their protections stripped arbitrarily, leaving them vulnerable to reprisal or arrest.

"This means 41 Canadian diplomats and their 42 dependents were in danger of having immunity stripped on an arbitrary date, and this would put their personal safety at risk," she said at a news conference in Ottawa.

Calling India's action "contrary to international law," and in violation of the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations, Joly accused India of escalating the bilateral tensions, but Canada will not be reciprocating.

Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Minister Miller, who announced the shrinking of Canada's footprint in India to one-third of what it was, said it will impact the level of service delivery Canada will be able to provide in the country.

The Canadian Embassy in New Delhi in its travel advisory said that," exercise a high degree of caution in and around Bengaluru, Chandigarh and Mumbai. Consular services in-person are temporarily unavailable in those cities or surrounding areas."

Context: The **Ministry of External Affairs recently** asserted that ensuring two-way diplomatic parity is fully consistent with the provisions of the **Vienna Convention on diplomatic relations** while rejecting **Canada's attempt to "portray"** the **withdrawal of 41 Canadian diplomats** as a violation of international norms.

Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations

- **Adoption and Ratification**: The Convention, **adopted on April 14, 1961**, during the United Nations Conference on Diplomatic Intercourse and Immunities in Vienna, Austria, has been ratified by India.
- **Entry into Force**: This international treaty **became effective on April 24, 1964**, and is almost universally ratified, with Palau and South Sudan as the notable exceptions.
- **Privileges and Immunities**: The Convention outlines special rules, granting privileges and immunities to diplomatic missions.
- These provisions allow them **to operate without fear of coercion** or harassment by local authorities and to maintain secure communication with their sending Governments.
- **Mission Withdrawal**: The treaty also provides mechanisms for the withdrawal of diplomatic missions, which may occur for reasons of economic or physical security.
- **Receiving state: Article 22 underscores** the absolute security of mission premises, prohibiting any entry by the **receiving State's law enforcement officers.**
    - The **term "receiving State,"** defined by the Vienna Convention, pertains to the host nation where a diplomatic mission is situated.

PIB Oct 20

EXERCISE MILAN
(Syllabus: GS Paper 3 – Security)

MID-PLANNING CONFERENCE FOR MULTILATERAL NAVAL EXERCISE (MILAN) - 24

Context: The **Eastern Naval Command (ENC)** recently conducted the Mid Planning Conference (MPC) **for MILAN 24, a multilateral naval exercise** scheduled for February **2024 in Visakhapatnam, India**, with the participation of friendly foreign Navies.

EXERCISE MILAN

- **About**: The Flagship event, MILAN, is a biennial multilateral naval exercise.
- **Initiated by**: The Indian Navy in 1995.
- Originally aligned with **India's 'Look East Policy,'** MILAN has expanded over the years to include participation from **Friendly Foreign Countries (FFCs)** due to the 'Act East policy' and PM of India **Security And Growth for All in the Region (SAGAR) initiative**.
- **MILAN 22 took place off Visakhapatnam** from 25 Feb - 04 Mar 22 and involved participation from 39 countries.

Other Naval Exercise

- **CORPAT -** India and Thailand**, JIMEX** - India and Japan, **Konkan Shakti** - India and UK, **Samudra Shakti** - India and Indonesia, **SIMBEX** - India and Singapore.

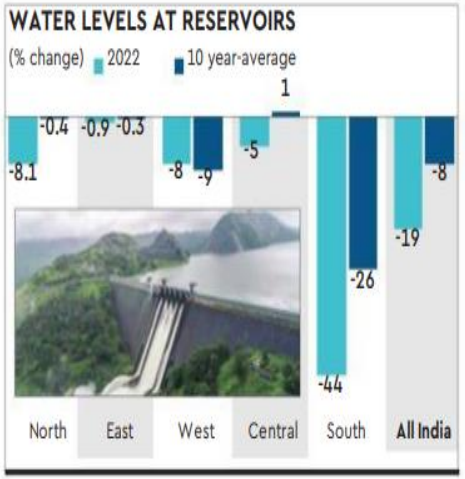
CENTRAL WATER COMMISSION

(Syllabus: GS Paper 2 – Polity & Governance)

MARGINAL IMPACT ON RABI SOWING

Water level in key reservoirs fall 19%

SANDIP DAS
New Delhi, October 20



WATER LEVELS IN India's 150 key reservoirs have fallen sharply, now standing at 19% below last year's level, due to deficient southwest monsoon rainfall and the sluggish progress of the north-eastern monsoon.

The water levels in these dams were 8% below the last 10-year average. However, lower water level is seen to have only a marginal impact on the rabi sowing, as most of the areas are covered under irrigation facilities. Officials said while water levels in reservoirs in north (10), east (23), western (49) and central (26) regions are below the last year's level, but the 42 reservoirs in southern regions currently hold water 44% below a year ago period and 26% below the last 10 year average.

Reservoirs in southern states are currently filled to only 48% of their total water holding capacity. The north-eastern monsoon is expected to arrive in Tamil Nadu in the next couple of days, which is expected to boost water reservoir levels.

According to the Central Water Commission (CWC), the overall water level of the country's reservoirs stood at 129.63 billion cubic metres (bcm) on Thursday – 75% of their combined capacity. A year ago, the water available in these reservoirs was 160.40 bcm, and the average of the last 10 years was 140.28 bcm. "Current water level of reservoirs was 81% of the live storage of the corresponding period of last year and 92% of storage of the average of the last 10 years," the CWC said.

Context: According to the **Central Water Commission**, in India, **water levels in 150 key reservoirs have recently fallen sharply**, now standing at 19% below last year's level, due to deficient southwest monsoon rainfall and the sluggish progress of the north-eastern monsoon.

- **Reservoirs in southern states currently** fill up to only **48% of total water** holding capacity. The **north-eastern monsoon is likely to arrive** in Tamil Nadu in the next couple of days which is expected to boost water reservoirs levels.

Central Water Commission

- **About**: The Central Water Commission (CWC) serves as the apex Technical Organization for water resources management in India.
- **Nodal Ministry**: Ministry of Jal Shakti, Department of Water Resources, River Development and Ganga Rejuvenation.
- **Headquarters**: New Delhi
- **CWC's Responsibilities:** It operates as an attached office of the Union Ministry of Water Resources, River Development, and Ganga Rejuvenation.
  - CWC is entrusted with the **overarching responsibilities of initiating, coordinating**, and overseeing schemes related to the control, utilization, and conservation of water resources across the nation.

Three Key Wings of CWC

- River Management Wing (RM)
- Designs and Research Wing (D&R)
- Water Planning and Projects Wing (WP&P)

HINDUSTAN TIMES

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CENTRAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

(Syllabus: GS Paper 2 – Polity)

You cannot call yourself 'Republic of India' in pleas: SC pulls up CBI

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letters@hindustantimes.com

NEW DELHI: The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) cannot equate itself with the "Republic of India", the Supreme Court observed on Friday, taking umbrage at the federal agency filing petitions representing the republic.

"Why have you filed as the 'Republic of India'? You are not representing the Union or the Republic," a bench of justices AS Oka and Pankaj Mithal remarked as it came across a petition filed by the CBI as the "Republic of India".

Addressing additional solicitor general (ASG) Aishwarya Bhati, who was representing the agency in an appeal against the grant of bail in a CBI case, the bench said it is not proper for the agency to file petitions in the court as "Republic of India".

"You don't represent the Union of India? You cannot file your petitions like that," it told Bhati. The bench then directed that the cause-title of the case will be altered by the registry of the court, omitting the words "Republic of India". ASG Bhati conceded to the court's directive.

Under law, CBI is supposed to be an independent agency that can probe acts of illegalities in connection to instrumentalities or agencies of both Centre and state governments. In November 2021, the Centre had objected to a suit filed by West Bengal government making the Union of India, and not the CBI, party when the latter challenged the agency's jurisdiction to register FIRs and conduct investigations in the state in several cases. The Centre maintained that it has no authority to rattle the autonomy of the CBI to conduct investigations, adding that the CBI is an "autonomous body" with the government having no control over it.



The bench was hearing CBI's appeal in a multi-crore scam. PTI

According to the Supreme Court website, there are more cases filed by the CBI in the capacity as the "Republic of India", appealing against the grant of bail, quashing of charges, and some interim orders in cases registered and investigated by the federal agency. The bench was hearing CBI's appeal against the grant of bail to Subhra Kundu, a former actress and wife of Gautam Kundu – the owner of the chit fund company Rose Valley, in connection with an alleged multi-crore scam that Enforcement Directorate is also investigating.

The ₹17,000 crore Rose Valley scam is reportedly the biggest in Bengal in terms of the money involved. In 2014, the Supreme Court asked CBI to investigate the scam and the role of influential people in money laundering in West Bengal. The group had allegedly floated a total of 27 companies for running the alleged chit-fund operations out of which only half a dozen were active.

In August 2022, the Orissa high court granted Subhra Kundu bail, which was challenged by CBI in the top court. The bench, however, noted that she was arrested in January 2021 and had been incarcerated since.

The bench proceeded to dismiss CBI's appeal, stating it finds no ground to interfere with the impugned order of Orissa HC.

Context: The Supreme Court recently observed that the **Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) cannot** equate itself with the **"Republic of India,"** expressing concern over the federal agency filing petitions on behalf of the republic.

- **Under the law**, the **CBI is supposed to be an independent agency** that can probe acts of illegalities in connection to instrumentalities or agencies of both Centre and state governments.

Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI)

- **About**: It is the premier i**nvestigative agency of India**.
- **Establishment**: In 1963 by the Indian government as a result of the recommendation of the Santhanam Committee.
  - CBI is **not a statutory body**. It derives its power to investigate from the Delhi Special Police Establishment Act, 1946.
- **Composition**: There shall be a director of CBI who **heads the department.**
  - The union government shall appoint the Director based on the recommendation report given by a **three-member committee** (Prime minister, leader of the opposition party in Lok Sabha, and CJI of India).

Functions of CBI

- Its primary objective **involves conducting investigations into violent crimes** using a robust system and advanced technology.
- Its role extends to **addressing and countering cybercrimes and crimes** related to social platforms.
- Its presence serves **to assist, oversee, and provide backing to law enforcement** agencies when handling complex and high-profile cases.
- The agency is **responsible for probing cases involving corruption**, bribery, misconduct, and misbehavior among federal government employees.
- It operates under the **supervision of the Central Vigilance Commission**.

THE WIRE Oct 20

GLOF
(Syllabus: GS Paper 3 – Env and Eco)

Glacial Lake Outburst Floods in Alaska and the Himalayas Show Evolving Hazards in a Warming World

Context: Recently, **glacial lakes in the Himalayas have become** more hazardous due to warming, leading to the potential for glacial lake outburst floods,

Glacial Lake Outburst Floods (GLOFs)

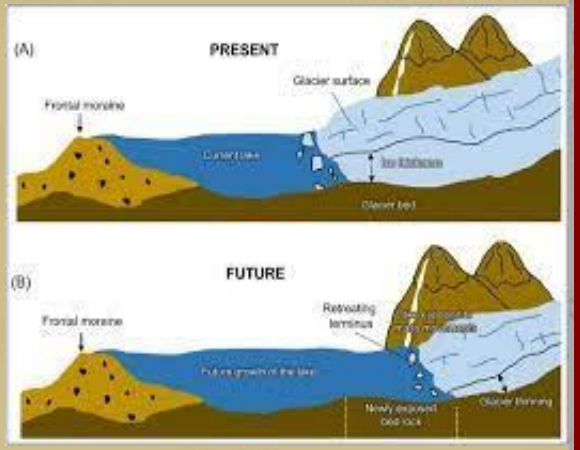
- **About**: Glacial Lake Outburst Flood (GLOF) is a type of flood that occurs when a glacier-contained water body is suddenly released.
- **Causes of GLOF**: GLOFs happen when the natural dam formed by a glacial lake fails, allowing the stored water to flow rapidly.
- **Formation of Proglacial Lakes**: Retreating glaciers, especially in regions like the Himalayas, often create proglacial lakes. These lakes are typically held in place by sediments and boulders.
- **Breaching Boundaries**: If the boundaries of these proglacial lakes are breached, a significant volume of water rushes into nearby streams and rivers. This rushing water picks up sediments, rocks, and other debris, causing downstream flooding.

Key GLOF Features

- They involve sudden and sometimes **cyclic water releases**.
- GLOFs are typically rapid events**, lasting for hours to days**.
- They result in a **substantial increase in downstream river discharge**, often by an order of magnitude.

Glacial Lake

- A glacial lake is characterized as a **body of water that exists in sufficient quantities**, with an open surface within, around, or in proximity to a glacier, forming as a consequence of glacier-related actions and/or glacier retreat.



Key GLOF Features

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TIMES OF INDIA

Oct 20

SAKHAROV PRIZE

(Syllabus: GS Paper 2 – IR)

Iran's Mahsa Amini Awarded EU's Top Human Rights Prize

Context: Recently, **Mahsa Amini, a Kurdish-Iranian** woman who died in police custody in Iran last year, was posthumously awarded the European Union's **Sakharov Prize for Freedom** of Thought.

Sakharov Prize for Freedom of Thought

- **Given by:** The **European Parliament presents** the Sakharov Prize for Freedom of Thought annually.
- **About:** The award, **named after Soviet physicist and dissident Andrei Sakharov**, comes with a **prize of 50,000 euros.**
- **Origin:** In 1988, **the Norwegian Helsinki Committee** established the Sakharov Freedom Award.
- **Aim:** To recognize those defending human rights and fundamental freedoms.
- **First recipient: Nelson Mandela from South Africa** and Russian dissident Anatoly Marchenko.

Mahsa Amini

- A Kurdish-Iranian woman who **died in Iranian police custody posthumously** received the European Union's Sakharov Prize for Freedom of Thought.
- Her passing **ignited extensive protests in Iran**, primarily led by women, who rallied under the banner **"Woman, Life, Freedom" to oppose the hijab law** and other discriminatory regulations.

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