

MOST IMPORTANT TOPICS

1. INDIA CRIME RATE 2022 REPORT  GS-2, GS-5, INTERVIEW
2. FIRST ASIAN RANGERS FORUM  GS-5, PRELIMS, INTERVIEW
3. SPECIAL INQUIRY COMMITTEES OF PARLIAMENT  GS-2, INTERVIEW
4. GARBA DANCE  PRELIMS, INTERVIEW

PRELIMS PRACTICE QUESTION

Q. Tipra Motha is

- (A) A political party
- (B) A hydroelectric project in Arunachal Pradesh
- (C) A wildlife sanctuary in Bihar
- (D) A salt water lake in Sundarbans, West Bengal

INDIA CRIME RATE 2022 REPORT



CONTEXT

- In the latest **India Crime Rate 2022** report by the **National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB)**, **Assam** witnessed a **significant drop** in the **crime rate** since **2021**.

CRIME RATE STATISTICS

- According to the data, the **crime rate (per lakh population)** has dropped from 341 in 2021 to **194.2** in **2022** in **Assam**.
- The national crime rate is 407.6. (per lakh population).
- The year **2022** holds a **special significance** in **Assam's history**, as for the first time since **1979**, our State witnessed a **overall decline** in **crime**.

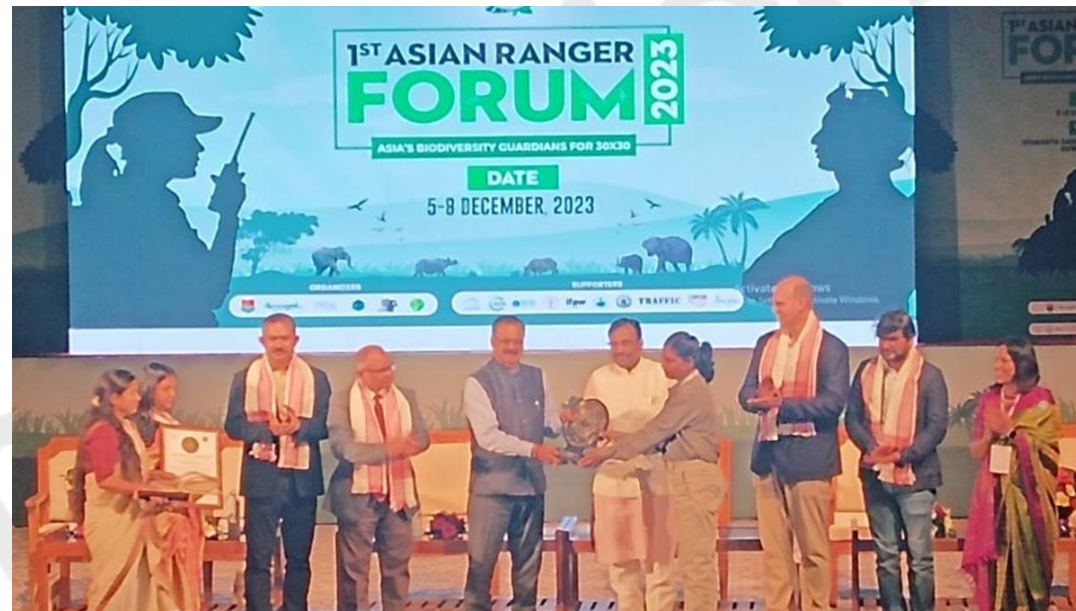
ENSURING WOMEN AND CHILDREN SECURITY

- After a long period, **Assam** is **not** amongst the **top five states** in respect of **crimes** against **women**.
- **Crime** against **children** reported in 2022 is 4084 which reflects **significant reduction**, compared to crime reported in 2021 (Down by 23%) (Murder, Murder with Rape/POCSO, Abetment of Suicide of Child, Attempt to Commit Murder, Infanticide, Foeticide, etc).



- Similarly, the chief minister said that **action** against **corruption** and **corrupt officials** in Assam is clearly visible in **NCRB** released data as cases under **Prevention of Corruption Act** & related Sections of **IPC** reported in 2022 is 57, which reflects **significant increase** compared to 16 reported in 2021.

FIRST ASIAN RANGERS FORUM



CONTEXT

- The **first Asian Ranger Forum** (ARF) meet commenced in **Guwahati** from 5th December, 2023, strengthening a global community of conservation practitioners.
- A total of 146 participants from 20 countries are attending the global event from December 5 to 8, organised by the **Assam Forest Department**, **Aaranyak**, **International Ranger Federation** (IRF), the **Ranger Federation of Asia** (RFA), and the **Universal Ranger Support Alliance** (URSA) in collaboration with other NGO partners.

ABOUT

- The **ARF** offers a platform for **rangers** to share knowledge, create partnerships, and build capacity through plenary sessions, workshops, training, and other activities related to the theme of “**Asia’s biodiversity guardians for 30x30**”.



GUWAHATI DECLARATION

- The **Guwahati Declaration**, a declaration by **rangers for rangers**, will be announced during the forum.
- The Declaration emphasises the crucial role of **rangers** in **nature conservation**, the **importance** of **promoting inclusivity** and **diversity** in the **ranger workforce** and outlines recommendations to support and empower Asian rangers in carrying out their duties effectively and responsibly.
- The **Guwahati Declaration** is expected to influence the upcoming **10th IRF World Ranger Congress** in 2024 (**October 2024, France**).

ABOUT IRF

- **International Ranger Federation** (IRF) is a worldwide, **non-profit membership**-based organisation established to develop, advance, and promote the ranger profession.
- The **IRF** recognises rangers, whether state, regional, communal, indigenous, or private that are responsible for **safeguarding nature** and **cultural** and **historical heritage** among other rights.



INTERNATIONAL
**RANGER
FEDERATION**

- The **Universal Ranger Support Alliance** (URSA) is a **time-bound initiative** that supports, promotes, and advises the IRF to establish a pathway for the ranger occupation to be recognised as a skilled, trusted, and respected profession that is at the forefront of protecting nature, people, and the planet.
- The **Ranger Federation of Asia** (RFA) works to address the **key challenges** faced by **rangers** during the course of their duties throughout **Asia**.

SPECIAL INQUIRY COMMITTEES OF PARLIAMENT



CONTEXT

- The **ethics committee** of the **Lok Sabha** is believed to have recommended the **expulsion** of Trinamool Congress Member of Parliament (MP) Mahua Moitra from the Lok Sabha for her “**unethical conduct**” and “**breach of privileges**”.



ROLE OF ETHICS COMMITTEE

- The **ethics committee** was constituted in **2000**, to **oversee** the **moral** and **ethical conduct** of **members** and examine cases of 'unethical conduct' referred to it.
- The **Committee** examines **complaints** filed against **members** of the House by other members; outsiders through a member; or referred by the **Speaker**.

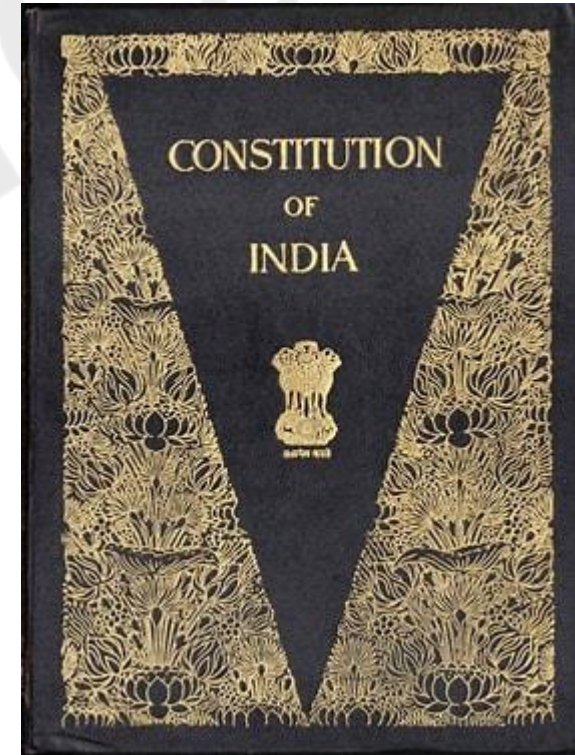
- The **Committee** makes a **prima facie inquiry** before deciding to examine a complaint and presents its report to the **Speaker**, who places it before the **House** for consideration.
- It must be noted that the term '**unethical**' is **not defined**.
- It is left to the **Committee** to decide whether any act is unethical or not.

PRIVILEGES COMMITTEES

- The **privileges committee** or special inquiry committee examines the more **serious accusations** against a **member**.
- In 1951, a special committee found a member guilty of promoting a business interest by putting questions in return for financial benefits.

CONSTITUTIONAL PROVISIONS

- The Constitution under **Article 101** lists down the grounds for **vacation** of a **seat** by an **MP**.
- It includes **voluntary resignation**, **disqualification** and **continuous absence** from the House for **60 sittings**.
- **Expulsion** is not mentioned **explicitly** in the **Constitution**.



JUDGMENTS OF SUPREME COURT

The **Supreme Court** has provided **conflicting judgments** in this regard.

- In **Raja Ram Pal** versus Hon'ble Speaker (2007), it upheld the power of Parliament to expel its members for **breach** of **privilege** by interpreting **Article 101** to include **expulsion** as a **ground**.
- But in **Amarinder Singh** versus Special committee, Punjab Vidhan Sabha (2010), the **Supreme Court** held **expulsion** by the **State Assembly** as **unconstitutional**. It held that such scenarios would frustrate the objectives of **Parliamentary democracy**.

DISPROPORTIONATE PUNISHMENT?

- The **citizens** of the **constituency** would be left without a **representative** till **next elections** or a **bye-election**, in case of an **expulsion**.
- The privileges of the House developed in medieval Britain to protect the House of Commons from an authoritarian King.
- It is important to preserve the **dignity** and **privilege** of the House.

WAY AHEAD

- It is equally imperative, if not more in a **modern democracy**, to ensure that **democratic representation** is not **prejudiced** for political reasons.
- It must be noted here that **Parliamentary Committee proceedings** are not as detailed as a **judicial case** that is conducted as per the **Evidence Act**.

- It would be prudent to set up **fast track courts** to **conduct trials** for such cases in a **time bound manner** of say 60 days.
- If they are **convicted** in such a trial, it would result in their **disqualification** under the **Representation of the People Act, 1951**.
Otherwise, they should continue to be a member of the House.

PRELIMS PRACTICE QUESTION

Q. Which of the following statement is correct in case of a parliamentary form of government?

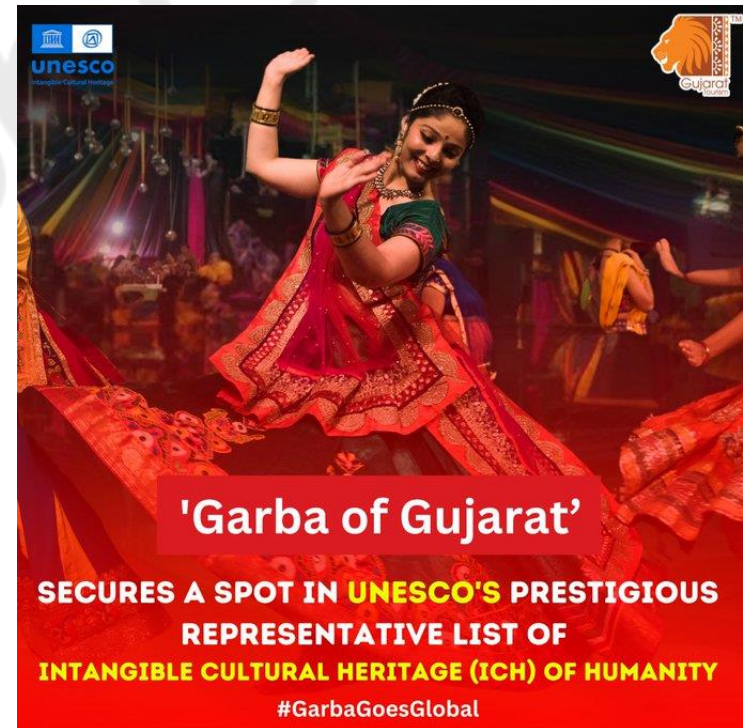
- a. A parliamentary government is always unitary in nature.
- b. A parliamentary government must have a written constitution.
- c. In a parliamentary government, the head of the state is the titular executive.
- d. None of the above.

GARBA DANCE



CONTEXT

- Gujarat's traditional dance form 'Garba' was on Wednesday included in the list of Intangible Cultural Heritage by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO).



- The popular dance form is the **15th cultural item** from **India** to make it to the **UNESCO list**.
- Kolkata's **Durga Puja** was the last one added two years ago

ABOUT THE INCLUSION

- The inclusion has been made under the provisions of the **2003 Convention** for the **Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage**.
- The international cultural body described the '**Garba**' as a **ritualistic** and **devotional dance** performed in India.

By the Officers,
For the Officers

Competition Care[®]