

Interpol's International Child Sexual Exploitation (ICSE) Database

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In news– The CBI, which is India's nodal agency for Interpol matters, recently joined the ICSE database making India the 68th country to connect to it.

About ICSE database-

- The ICSE database **uses video and image comparison to analyse Child Sex Exploitation Material (CSEM) and make connections between victims, abusers and places.**
- The **database avoids duplication of effort and saves precious time** by letting investigators know whether a series of images has already been discovered or identified in another country, or whether it has similar features to other images.
- **Using the image and video comparison software, the investigators attempt to identify locations** of markers visible in a piece of media.
- **This can be through the signage nearby, the kind of artwork, photos on a wall, etc.** The detectives in all **68 countries** of the grouping can further **exchange information across the world.**
- By analysing the digital, visual and audio content of photographs and videos, **victim identification experts can retrieve clues**, identify any overlap in cases and combine their efforts to locate victims of child sexual abuse.
- As of July 2022, over 30,000 victims of child abuse and over 13,000 criminals have been identified by the Interpol using this database and software.

Online child sexual abuse cases in India-

- According to Interpol data, **India reported over 24 lakh instances of online child sexual abuse from 2017 to 2020, with 80% victims being girls below the age of 14 years.**
- **More than 60% unidentified victims were prepubescent, including infants and toddlers.**
- **Around 65% of unidentified victims were girls, but severe abuse images were more likely to have boys, the Interpol said on its website.**
- **In 2019, the CBI set up a special unit called the 'Online Child Sexual Abuse and Exploitation Prevention/Investigation (OCSAE)',** for tracking and monitoring posting, circulation and downloads of CSEM online.
- Based on intelligence developed by the unit, the CBI started a country-wide operation against the alleged peddlers of online CSEM in India in 2021.
- Back in 2020, the cyber wing of the Maharashtra Police had acquired a software from Interpol to track child sex abuse captured on video and in photos.
- **In 2019, the National Centre for Missing and Exploited Children, a US-based non-profit organisation,** had started sharing tip-offs about child sex abuse with Indian agencies.

What is Interpol?

- its full name is the International Criminal Police Organization and it is an inter-governmental organization.
- Interpol is the **world's largest international police organisation with 195 member countries,** and is **headquartered in Lyon, France.**
- With 195 member countries, and it helps police in all of them to work together to make the world a safer place. **UN member states without membership are Micronesia,**

North Korea, Palau, Tuvalu.

- The General Assembly is the governing body and it brings all countries together once a year to take decisions.
- **It originated with the first International Criminal Police Congress in 1914**, which brought officials from 24 countries to discuss cooperation on law enforcement matters.
- **It was founded in 1923 as the International Criminal Police Commission (ICPC).**
- In 1946, after the end of World War II, the organization was revived as the International Criminal Police Organization (ICPO) by officials from Belgium, France, Scandinavia and the UK.
- **In 1956, the ICPC adopted a new constitution and the name INTERPOL.**
- India has been a member since 1956.
- **Each member country hosts an Interpol National Central Bureau** that connects their national law enforcement to it and in India, the CBI is that nodal agency.
- India maintains a NCB which serves as the national platform for cooperation between domestic law enforcement units and the international police community.

The role of INTERPOL is defined by the general provisions of its constitution. They are-

- To ensure and promote the widest possible mutual assistance between all criminal police authorities within the limits of the laws existing in the different countries.
- To establish and develop all institutions which contribute to the prevention and suppression of ordinary law crimes.
- It cannot undertake any intervention or activities of a

political, military, religious or racial character.

Different types of notices:

The Interpol facilitates information exchange, knowledge sharing and research between nations by issuing colour-coded 'notices' in four languages – English, Spanish, French, and Arabic.

- **Red Notice:** It is a request to locate and provisionally arrest an individual pending extradition. It is issued by the General Secretariat at the request of a member country or an international tribunal based on a valid national arrest warrant. However, the arrest of the fugitive is based on the rule of the member nation where he or she is located.
- **Yellow Notice:** It is issued to help locate missing persons, often minors, or to help identify persons who are unable to identify themselves. This is highly useful in cases of human trafficking or in case of missing persons due to calamities.
- **Blue Notice:** It is issued to collect additional information about a person's identity, location or activities in relation to a crime. This does not guarantee extradition or arrest of the person.
- **Black Notice:** It is a request to seek information on unidentified bodies in member nations.
- **Green Notice:** It is issued to provide warnings and intelligence about persons who have committed criminal offences and are likely to repeat these crimes in other countries.
- **Orange Notice:** It is issued to provide warnings about an event, a person, an object or a process representing a serious and imminent threat to public safety.
- **Purple Notice:** It is a request to seek or provide information on the modus operandi, objects, devices and concealment methods used by criminals.
- **The INTERPOL-United Nations Security Council(UNSC)**

Special Notice is issued for individuals and entities that are subject to sanctions imposed by the UNSC. Its principal function is to alert national law enforcement authorities that sanctions such as assets freeze, arms embargo and travel ban apply to designated individuals and entities.