

20– 03 – 2023

News: ICC issues arrest warrant against Russian President Vladimir Putin and a second Russian official.

- ICC issued an arrest warrant against Russian President Vladimir Putin for the alleged war crime of unlawfully deporting and transferring children from occupied areas of Ukraine to the Russian Federation.
- This is the first time that the ICC has issued an arrest warrant against one of the five permanent members of the United Nation Security Council.

International Criminal Court (ICC)

- International Criminal Court (ICC) is an intergovernmental organisation and international tribunal that sits in Hague, Netherlands to prosecute individuals for the international crimes of genocide, crimes against humanity, war crimes and crime of aggression.
- ICC began operations on 1st July 2002, upon the entry into force of the Rome Statute, a multilateral treaty that serves as the court's foundational and governing document.
- Since it has no retroactive jurisdiction, the ICC deals with crimes committed on or after this date.

- Rome statute was adopted on 17th July, 1998. As a commemoration of the adoption of Rome Statue, 17th July every year is celebrated as World Day for International Justice or Day of International Criminal Justice or International Justice Day.
- States which become party to Rome statute become members of ICC.
- As of 2019 November, there are 123 ICC member states, 42 states including India, China, Russia, Ukraine and US have neither signed nor become parties of Rome Statute.
- Each state party has one vote and “every effort” has to be made to reach decisions by consensus. If consensus cannot be reached, decisions are made by vote.
- The ICC is the first and only permanent international court with jurisdiction to prosecute individuals for the international crimes of genocide, crimes against humanity, war crimes, and the crime of aggression.
- The Assembly is presided over by a president and two vice-presidents, who are elected by the members to three-year terms.
- It does not have the capacity to arrest suspects and depends on member states for their cooperation.
- ICC judgments are binding, final and cannot be appealed.
- Recruiting Child Soldiers is considered a war crime under the Rome Statute.

- The Rome Statute, grants the ICC jurisdiction over four main crimes: The crime of Genocide, Crimes against Humanity, War crimes and Crime of Aggression.
- The ICC was established to prosecute the most heinous offenses only when a country's own legal machinery fails to act. Unlike the International Court of Justice (ICJ), which deals with countries and inter-state disputes, the ICC prosecutes individuals.

ICC and its jurisdiction in Russia

- As of March 2023, Russia is not a party to the Rome Statute, and therefore, the ICC has no jurisdiction over crimes committed on its territory.
- However, the ICC can investigate and prosecute crimes committed by individuals from other countries who committed the alleged crimes on the territory of a state party to the Rome Statute.
- Ukraine is also not a State Party to the Rome Statute, but it has twice exercised its options to accept ICC's jurisdiction over alleged crimes under the Rome Statute, occurring on its territory, under Article 12(3) of the Statute.
- Article 12(3) states that if the acceptance of a state that is not a party to the statute, the state may accept the jurisdiction of the court for a crime concerned, by making a declaration to the Registrar and cooperating without any delay or exception.