

## **2. I-T Department to Conduct Surveys**

### **Why in News?**

- The Income Tax (I-T) Department has recently conducted surveys at the premises of the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) in Delhi and Mumbai.

### **Highlights**

- The Income Tax Department is conducting surveys at BBC offices using Section 133A of the Income Tax Act, 1961, which allows authorised officers to enter any business, profession, or charitable activity within their jurisdiction to collect hidden information.
- This provision was added to the Act through an amendment in 1964.
- During the survey, the officers can verify the books of account or other documents, cash, stock, or other valuable articles or things.
- The officers may impound and retain any books of account or other documents after recording reasons for doing so.
- The provisions for Impounding or seizing goods were introduced in the Finance Act, 2002.
- Search and survey are often used interchangeably, but they denote different things and have different consequences.
- Search, defined under Section 132, can take place anywhere within the jurisdiction of the authorised officer, and it's a more serious proceeding than a survey.
- A survey under Section 133A (1) can only be conducted within the limits of the area assigned to the officer or at any place occupied by a person under the officer's jurisdiction where a business or profession is carried out.
- Surveys are conducted only during working hours on business days, whereas a search can happen on any day after sunrise and continue until the procedures are completed.
- The scope of a survey is limited to the inspection of books and verification of cash and inventory, while in a search, the entire premises can be inspected to discover undisclosed assets, with the help of police.
- The consequences of a search are more severe, and the penalties are steeper than in a survey.