



Bureau of Police Research & Development
Ministry of Home Affairs
Government of India

Advisory on Women and Children Safety

Preface

The safety, dignity, and rights of women and children constitute the bedrock of a just and progressive society. Recognizing that crimes against women and children require not only stringent laws but also sensitive, time-bound, and coordinated institutional responses, this Compendium/ Advisory on Crimes against Women and Children has been formulated by the Committee to consolidate and operationalize the existing legal, procedural, and institutional framework. It also seeks to inform concerned stakeholders about the Government framework, remedial mechanisms, and support systems available in this regard.

This Advisory is intended to serve as a comprehensive reference for all stakeholders, including State Governments, Union Territory Administrations, law enforcement agencies, legal services authorities, civil society organizations, and the general public.

It is imperative that all functionaries internalize the contents of this Advisory in letter and spirit. The dignity of a woman or child in distress must not be compromised by delay, apathy, or lack of awareness. This Advisory, therefore, calls upon all duty-holders to act with urgency, empathy, and accountability and implement the legal provisions to ensure access to justice. It is hoped that this Advisory will strengthen the criminal justice response and further the constitutional mandate of securing justice, liberty, and dignity for every woman and child in India.

Disclaimer:

"This Advisory is intended to guide States and Union Territories in strengthening institutional mechanisms for prevention, investigation, prosecution, victim protection, and rehabilitation. It does not create any enforceable legal right overriding any statutory provisions, judicial direction or State law."

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Advisory on Women and Children Safety

Schemes and Steps to address crime against Women and Children

A. Introduction

In accordance with Article 15(3) of the Indian Constitution, ensuring the safety, security, and dignity of women and children constitutes an essential obligation of the State and is integral to the creation of a safe, just and inclusive society. Crimes against women and children not only cause grave physical, psychological and social harm to victims and their families, but also undermine public confidence in the criminal justice system and adversely affect social development. Recognising their heightened vulnerability and the need for a sensitive, coordinated and time-bound institutional response, the Ministry of Home Affairs has, from time to time, issued advisories to States/Union Territories to strengthen prevention, prompt reporting, lawful and professional police response, effective investigation, victim protection, rehabilitation and inter-agency coordination. The present advisory seeks to consolidate and reinforce these efforts by providing an updated framework for ensuring a safer environment for women and children across physical, institutional, workplace and digital spaces.

Earlier advisories issued by MHA (All Advisories are accessible through mha.gov.in → Division of MHA → Women Safety Division → Vulnerable Group Welfare Section):

1. **Advisory on Crime against Women** — Measures needed to curb; dated 4th September 2009
2. **Advisory on Crime against Children;** dated 14th July 2010
3. **Advisory on missing children** — measures needed to prevent trafficking and trace the children; dated 31st January 2012

4. **Advisory on Hon'ble Supreme Court's direction to file FIR in case of Missing Children;** dated 25th June 2013
5. **Advisory on Compulsory Registration of FIR u/s 154 Cr.P.C. when the information makes out a cognizable offence;** dated 5th February 2014
6. **Advisory on comprehensive approach towards crimes against women;** dated 12th May 2015
7. **Advisory on Deployment of Special Mahila Police Volunteers (MPVs) - safety and security of women;** dated 22nd June 2016
8. **Advisory on W.P. (C) 75/2012 Bachpan Bachao Andolan Vs Union of India regarding missing children;** dated 23rd December 2016
9. **Advisory on Measures to be taken in cases of missing adolescent girls;** dated 25th September 2018
10. **Advisory on measures to be taken in cases of kidnapping of minors;** dated 30th October 2018
11. **Advisory on Failure to record information under sub-section (1) of Section 154 Cr.P.C. punishable under Section 166A of IPC;** dated 16th May 2019
12. **Advisory on Suo motu Writ Petition (Criminal) No. 1/2019 regarding "Alarming rise in the number of reported child rape incidents";** dated 3rd December 2019
13. **Advisory on Mandatory action by Police in cases of crime against Women;** dated 9th October 2020
14. **Advisory on protection of vulnerable sections of society such as women, children, senior citizens and Scheduled Castes / Scheduled Tribes etc;** dated 19th May 2021
15. **Advisory on *Two-finger Test* or per vaginum examination is not prescribed as one off the procedures to be adopted while examining survivors of sexual assault and rape- Order dated 31.10.2022 of the Hon'ble Supreme Court of India in Criminal Appeal No.1441 of 2022;** dated 20th April 2023

The above mentioned advisories have provided important guidance for strengthening State/UT response to crimes against women and children. The enactment of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, 2023, the Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita, 2023, and the Bharatiya Sakshya Adhiniyam, 2023 has introduced an updated criminal justice framework, including strengthened procedural safeguards,

electronic reporting and evidence-related provisions, time-bound investigation requirements and enhanced accountability. Simultaneously, changing crime patterns, including cyber harassment, online sexual exploitation, deepfakes and technology-enabled abuse, trafficking networks, workplace vulnerabilities, crimes affecting women in night-shift and informal employment, and emerging risks to children in digital spaces, require a revamped approach. It is, therefore, necessary to update and consolidate the existing advisories so that States/UTs may align their institutional mechanisms, operational practices, preventive measures and victim-support systems with the new laws and evolving crime scenarios.

Several judgments of the Hon'ble Supreme Court have further strengthened the law on protection of women and children from crime, especially sexual offences. These judgments include, *inter alia*, the following:-

S.No.	Judgment	Key directions
1.	Bachpan Bachao Andolan vs. Union of India and Others WP (C) No. 75 of 2012 Order dated 10.05.2013 Supreme Court of India	The Supreme Court directed that every missing child complaint be treated as a cognizable offence, with mandatory FIR registration and investigation, presuming kidnapping or trafficking unless proved otherwise. Further, it mandated the deployment of Para Legal Volunteers (PLVs) in all police stations for cases involving missing children.
2.	Bachpan Bachao Andolan vs. Union of India & Ors., (2023) 9 SCC 133 Order dated 18.08.2023 Supreme Court of India	The Supreme Court mandated the institutional appointment of Support Persons in all POCSO cases.
3.	Just Rights for Children Alliance & Anr. vs. S. Harish & Ors., (2024) SCC OnLine SC 2611 Judgment dated 23.09.2024 Supreme Court of India	The Supreme Court held that the possession, downloading, viewing, or storage of Child Sexual Exploitation and Abuse Material (CSEAM), even for private use, constitutes a punishable offence.

4.	Society for Enlightenment and Voluntary Action & Anr. vs. Union of India & Ors., (2024) SCC OnLine SC 2922 Judgment dated 18.10.2024 Supreme Court of India	The Supreme Court directed the Union and States to implement coordinated legal, institutional, preventive, and rehabilitative measures for the effective eradication of child marriage.
5.	Pinki vs. State of Uttar Pradesh and Anr. 2025 INSC 482 Judgment dated 15.04.2026 Supreme Court of India	The Supreme Court declared child trafficking an organized crime and directed strengthened investigation, inter-State coordination, victim protection, and expeditious completion of trafficking trials within six months.
6.	Prajwala vs. Union of India & Ors. 2026 INSC 609 Judgment dated 29.05.2026 Supreme Court of India	The Supreme Court held that victims of human trafficking have a fundamental right to rehabilitation under Articles 21 and 23 of the Constitution.

B. Advisory on Women Safety

Women's safety must be operationalised across three interlinked dimensions: institutional safety parameters, physical safety, and economic security. Each reinforcing the other within a unified enforcement framework.

I. Institutional Safety Parameters

Institutional safety refers to the ability of systems—police, law enforcement agencies, workplaces, and administrative bodies—to respond fairly, promptly, and without bias.

1. Zero Tolerance for Procedural Lapses and FIR Registration:

Zero tolerance for procedural lapses and FIR registration must be ensured by State/UT Administrations and Law Enforcement Agencies. Police response may be guided by the statutory mandate under the Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita, 2023, and other legislation. All relevant and applicable sections of the law, including those under the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act (POCSO Act), Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, 2023, and any other special statutes attracted by the facts of the case, must be invoked at the time of FIR registration itself, to prevent dilution or under-reporting of the offence. The provision under Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita, 2023 for Zero FIR and time-bound investigation must be enforced through supervisory accountability. Any delay or refusal undermines not only the case but also public confidence in governance. BPR&D has prepared an SOP related to the same attached here for reference (Enclosed as Annexure I). Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, 2023, and Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita, 2023, read together, establish a mandatory reporting regime. Non-registration of an FIR by a police official invites action under Section 199(c) Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, 2023, thereby making registration of all offences against women and children compulsory rather than discretionary. Moreover, Section 33 and 34 of Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita, 2023, make it a duty of village level functionaries to report all crimes against women and children.

2. Legal Provisions:

Legal provisions for the protection of women constitute the foundation of an effective criminal justice response and responsive administrative action. These include:

- a. Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, 2023
- b. Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita, 2023
- c. Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act, 2013
- d. Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act, 2005
- e. Dowry Prohibition Act, 1961
- f. Indecent Representation of Women (Prohibition) Act, 1986

- g. Immoral Traffic (Prevention) Act, 1956
- h. Commission of Sati (Prevention) Act, 1987
- i. The Code on Social Security, 2020 (Maternity Benefit)
- j. The Code on Wages, 2019
- k. Pre-Conception and Pre-Natal Diagnostic Techniques (PCPNDT) Act, 1994
- l. Medical Termination of Pregnancy (MTP) Act, 1971
- m. Information Technology Act, 2000 read with the Information Technology (Intermediary Guidelines and Digital Media Ethics Code) Rules, 2021
- n. The Occupational Safety, Health and Working Conditions Code, 2020
- o. Surrogacy (Regulation) Act, 2021
- p. Bonded Labour System (Abolition) Act, 1976
- q. State-Specific Anti-Witchcraft and Anti-Superstition Laws:
 - i. Jharkhand Prevention of Witch (Daain) Practices Act, 2001
 - ii. Bihar Prevention of Witch (Daain) Practices Act, 1999
 - iii. Chhattisgarh Tonahi Pratadna Nivaran Act (2005)
 - iv. Rajasthan Prevention of Witch-Hunting Act (2015)
 - v. Odisha Prevention of Witch-Hunting Act (2013)
 - vi. Assam Witch Hunting (Prohibition, Prevention and Protection) Act (2015)
 - vii. Maharashtra Prevention and Eradication of Human Sacrifice and other Inhuman, Evil and Aghori Practices and Black Magic Act (2013)
 - viii. Karnataka Prevention and Eradication of Inhuman Evil Practices and Black Magic Act (2017), etc
 - ix. Drugs and Magic Remedies (Objectionable Advertisements) Act, 1954

- x. Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe (Prevention of Atrocities) Act, 1989, etc

3. Key Provisions under the Naveen Nyaya Sanhita:

a. **Chapter V of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, 2023 (Offences against Woman and Child)** is a newly organised chapter that shows the lawmaker's top priority to curbing offences against women and children. An overview of changes introduced in Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita and Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita, 2023 is attached as Annexure II.

b. **Some offences have been made gender neutral under the Naveen Nyaya Sanhita, such as:**

- i. Assault or use of criminal force to a woman with intent to disrobe- Section 76 Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita
- ii. Voyeurism- Section 77 Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita
- iii. Kidnapping- Section 137 Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita
- iv. Importation of girl or boy from a foreign country- Section 141 Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita and
- v. Harboring deserter- Section 164 Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita

Police officers shall ensure that the interpretation of gender-neutral offences does not diminish or restrict statutory protections available to women, children, transgender persons, or other vulnerable persons under any special law.

c. **Failure to Record FIR: Under section 199(c) Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita**, Whoever, being a public servant fails to record any information given to him under sub-section (1) of section 173 Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita, 2023, in relation to cognizable offence punishable under Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita section 64-68(Rape), section 70-71 (Gang Rape), section 74 (Assault or use of criminal force to woman with intent to outrage her modesty), section 76-77 (Disrobe-Voyeurism), section 79 (Word, gesture or act intended to insult

modesty of a woman), section 124 (Voluntary causing Grievous Hurt), section 143-144 (Trafficking) is punishable with rigorous imprisonment which may extend to imprisonment for life, and shall also be liable to fines. All information disclosing the commission of a cognizable offence against a woman or child shall be treated as requiring mandatory registration of an FIR in accordance with Section 173 of the Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita, 2023.

- d. **Sub-section 70(2) Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, 2023, (BNS)** makes gang rape of victims under eighteen years of age, punishable by up to the death penalty. Section 482(4) Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita, 2023, (BNSS) prevents such accused from obtaining anticipatory bail. A Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) for Investigation and Prosecution of Rape against Women prepared by BPR&D is attached in Annexure III. Investigations shall be victim-centric, trauma-informed and completed within the statutory timelines prescribed under the Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita and other applicable laws.
- e. **Provision of registration of e-FIR under section 173(1)(ii) Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita, 2023,** allows information regarding a cognizable offence to be given through electronic communication, provided it is signed by the informant within three days.
- f. **Strict adherence to time-bound investigation and trial processes on sexual offences** should be done as per Section 193(1) Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita, 2023,. Section 193(2) Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita, 2023, requires the investigation in relation to an offence under sections 64, 65, 66, 67, 68, 70, 71 of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, 2023 or under sections 4, 6, 8 or section 10 of the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act, 2012 to be completed within two months from the date on which the information was recorded by the officer in charge of the police station. Trials for rape offences should ideally be completed within two months from the date of filing the charge sheet (**Section 346 Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita, 2023**), and judgments must be pronounced immediately after the termination of the trial or at some subsequent time not later than forty-five days of which notice shall be given to the parties or their advocates [**Section 392(1) Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita, 2023**].
- g. **Mandatory forensic investigation** under Section 176(3) of the Bharatiya

Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita, 2023, mandates that, in cases involving offences punishable with imprisonment of seven years or more, the investigating officer shall ensure that a forensic team visits the crime scene to collect forensic evidence and video-records the entire process using a mobile phone or any other electronic device. Where adequate forensic facilities are unavailable within the State, the State Government is required to notify the utilisation of forensic facilities of another State until such facilities are established locally. States must ensure timely and on priority examination of forensic evidence, timely filing of charge sheets, and effective coordination between Police, Prosecution, Forensic Science Laboratories and Courts.

- h. **Victim compensation** scheme must be operationalised through a proactive and facilitative approach, wherein victims of sexual offences, acid attack, etc. are provided written information by Police Officers ./SHOs regarding compensation procedures and assisted in accessing support through the District Legal Services Authority in a time-bound manner. **Section 396 Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita , 2023**, mandates that State Governments, in coordination with the Centre, prepare schemes for victim rehabilitation. The new framework strengthens the role of the District Legal Services Authority (DLSA) and mandates faster relief. The DLSA or State Legal Services Authority (SLSA) must complete an inquiry within two months of receiving an application or recommendation and award compensation [**Section 396(5) Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita, 2023**]. The procedure of victim compensation may be done through modern medium (Mobile, email, on-line VC interaction, on-line payment, NEFT, UPI etc.), as far as possible to minimize difficulties being faced by the crime victim. (Please refer <https://nalsa.gov.in/> for further information). States and Union Territories shall establish digital monitoring systems to ensure timely processing, sanction and disbursement of victim compensation. Non-disbursement or unreasonable delay in victim compensation shall be periodically reviewed by the State Legal Services Authority and the Home Department.
- i. **Statement of the victim shall be recorded through audio video means** by police [**Section 180(3) Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita**]. This is to provide more protection to the victim and ensure transparency in investigation related to an offence of rape. For offences under **Section 64-71, 74-**

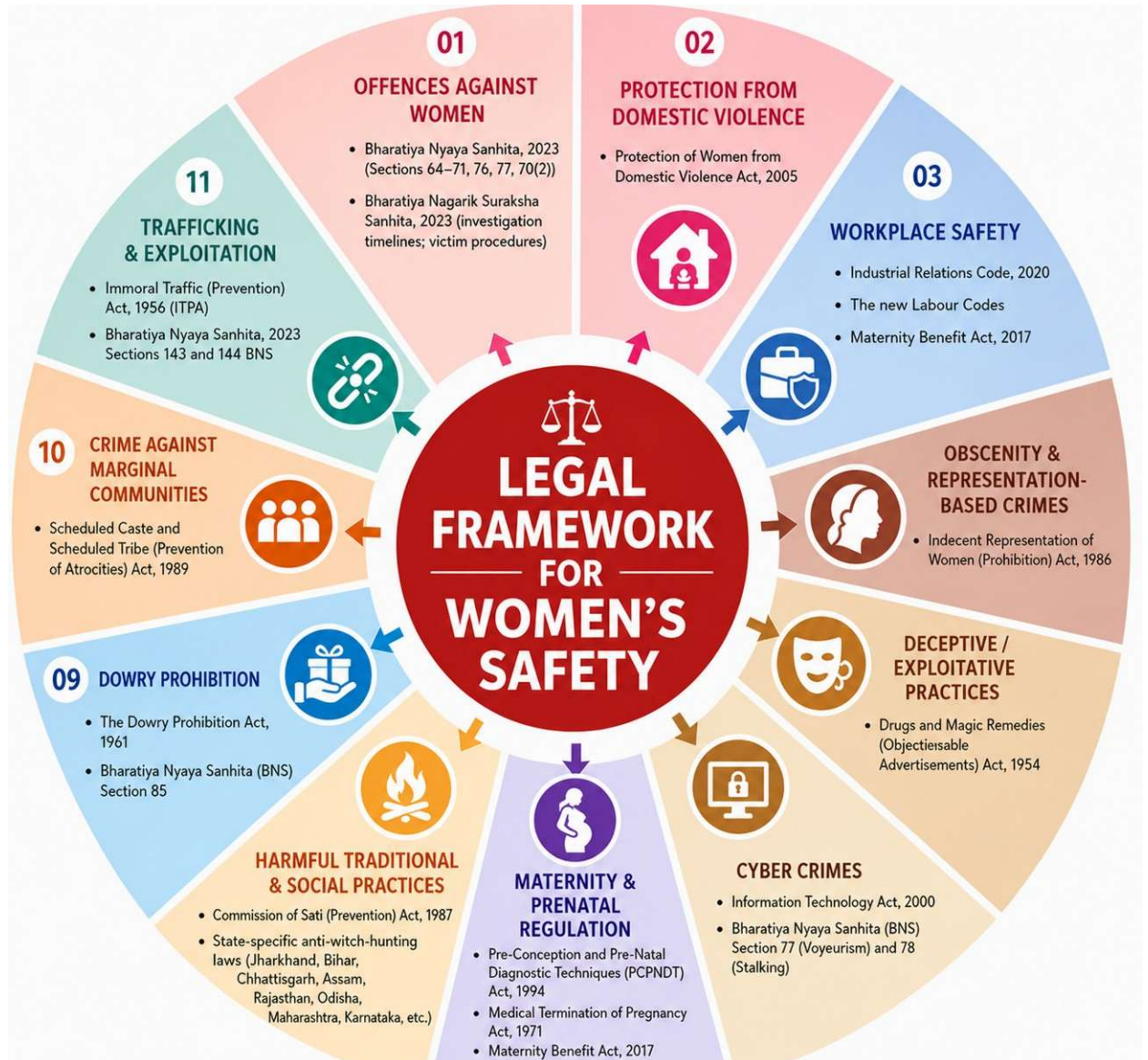
75, 76-79, 124 Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, 2023, statement of the victim is to be recorded, as far as practicable, by a woman Magistrate and in her absence a male Magistrate in the presence of a woman to ensure sensitivity and fairness, creating a supportive environment for victims [**Section 183(6)(a) Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita, 2023**]. If the person making the statement is temporarily or permanently, mentally or physically disabled, the Magistrate shall take the assistance of an interpreter or a special educator in recording the statement provided that the person making the statement is temporarily or permanently, mentally or physically disabled, the statement made by the person, with the assistance of an interpreter or a special educator, shall be recorded through audio-video electronic means preferably by mobile phone; a statement recorded under **clause (a) of 183(6) Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita, 2023**, a person, who is temporarily or permanently, mentally or physically disabled, shall be considered a statement in lieu of examination-in-chief, as specified in section 142 of the Bharatiya Sakshya Adhiniyam (BSA), 2023.

- j. ***In-Camera trial for offences of rape:*** As per **Section 366 Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita, 2023**, the inquiry into and trial of an offence under Sections 64, 65, 66, 67, 68, 70 and 71 of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, 2023, shall be conducted in camera and may, where practicable, be conducted by a woman Judge or Magistrate.
- k. **Prohibition on disclosure of identity of victims:** As per **Section 72 Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, 2023**, whoever prints or publishes the name or any matter which may make known the identity of any person against whom an offence under sections 64, 65, 66, 67, 68, 69, 70 and 71 of Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, 2023, is alleged or found to have been committed, shall be punished with imprisonment of either description for a term which may extend to two years and shall also be liable to fine. This restriction does not apply to disclosures made by or under the written authorisation of the police officer investigating the case acting in good faith for the purposes of investigation, or by or with the written authorisation of the victim, or by the next of kin where the victim is deceased or a minor, or of unsound mind, with the prior permission of the court, in which case such disclosure shall be made without disclosing the name and identity of the victim. This provision reinforces confidentiality throughout the criminal justice process, from investigation and in-camera trial to media

reporting, ensuring that survivors are not subjected to secondary victimisation through public identification.

1. **Immediate first-aid or medical benefits must be provided free of cost at all hospitals:** Section 396(6) Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita, 2023, states that the State or the District Legal Services Authority, as the case may be, to alleviate the suffering of the victim, may order for immediate first-aid facility or medical benefits to be made available free of cost on the certificate of the police officer not below the rank of the officer in charge of the police station or a Magistrate of the area concerned, or any other interim relief as the appropriate authority deems fit. Further, under Section 397 of Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita, 2023, All hospitals, public or private, whether run by the Central Government, the State Government, local bodies or any other person, shall immediately, provide the first-aid or medical treatment, free of cost, to the victims of any offence covered under section 64, section 65, section 66, section 67, section 68, section 70, section 71 or sub-section (1) of section 124 of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, 2023 or under sections 4, 6, 8 or section 10 of the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act, 2012, and shall immediately inform the police of such incident. In case of Contravention of this provision, under section 200 of Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, 2023, Whoever, being in charge of a hospital, public or private, whether run by the Central Government, the State Government, local bodies or any other person, contravenes the provisions of section 397 of the Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita, 2023, shall be punished with imprisonment for a term which may extend to one year, or with fine, or with both.
- m. **Every state government may formulate and notify a witness protection scheme** to ensure adequate protection of witnesses, as provided under Section 398 of the Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita, 2023, and the same should be intimated to the Ministry of Home Affairs.

Brief Overview of Legal Provisions for Crimes against Women



4. Women Protection Resources as Force Multipliers:

a. National Bodies and Commissions

- i. National Commission for Women (NCW) (Website: www.ncw.gov.in), further most states have their own State Commission for women, such as- Gujarat State Commission for Women, Assam State Commission for Women, etc.
- ii. National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) (website: <https://nhrc.nic.in>), further all states have their State Human Rights Commission (SHRC), such as Andhra Pradesh Human Rights Commission, Punjab Human Rights Commission, etc.
- iii. National Commission for Minorities (NCM) (website <https://ncm.nic.in>) – covers for women belonging to minority women. Further many states have established their own State Minorities Commissions, such as- Rajasthan State Minorities Commission, Bihar State Minority Commission, etc.
- iv. National Commission for Scheduled Castes (web site <https://ncsc.nic.in/>) - Some states have established their own Commission for Scheduled Castes, such as Punjab State Scheduled Castes Commission, Madhya Pradesh State Scheduled Castes Commission, etc.
- v. National Commission for Scheduled Tribes - Most states with significant tribal populations have established State Commissions for Scheduled Tribes (SCSTs), such as Jharkhand State Commission for Scheduled Tribes (STs), etc.
- vi. National Commission for Backward Classes (NCBC) (website: www.ncbc.nic.in) - a constitutional body under Article 338B safeguarding the interests of Socially and Educationally Backward Classes (OBCs), including women belonging to these communities. Several states have their own Commissions for Backward Classes, such as the Karnataka State Commission for Backward Classes, Bihar State Backward Classes Commission, etc.

b. Emergency Response Support Systems (ERSS) (Accessible from all Telephone and Mobile)

- i. Emergency Response Support System- ERSS (112) – Rapid police response:
- ii. Women Helpline (181) – Immediate assistance
- iii. Women Helpline (1091) – Distress calls and police response, etc.
- iv. Cyber Crime Helpline (1930) – toll-free helpline for reporting financial and cyber offences

States and Union Territories shall ensure interoperability between ERSS (112), Women Helplines, Women Police Helplines, Police Control Rooms, Women Help Desks, One Stop Centres, Cyber Crime Units and other emergency response mechanisms to facilitate coordinated, victim-centric and time-bound interventions.

c. Legal and Judicial Bodies

- i. As per the Legal Services Authorities Act, 1987
 - 1. National Legal Services Authority (NALSA) (website <https://nalsa.gov.in/>) : Apex body that formulates policies, allocates funds, and oversees implementation of legal aid and compensation across India.
 - 2. State Legal Services Authority (SLSA): Implements NALSA policies at the state level and delivers legal aid services to eligible persons.
 - 3. District Legal Services Authority (DLSA): Executes legal aid programs at the district level and organizes Lok Adalats.
 - 4. Taluk Legal Services Committee (TLSC): Grassroots-level body ensuring access to legal aid and dispute resolution at the sub-district level.
- ii. Fast Track Special Courts (FTSCs)/ Special Courts – For rape and POCSO cases, etc.
- iii. Family Courts – For matrimonial disputes, maintenance, and custody
- iv. Mahila Courts / Women's Courts – Available in various states
- v. Lok Adalats – Out-of-court settlements in women-related cases, etc.

- vi. Office of District Magistrate- the District Magistrate is identified as a quasi-judicial body under various laws.

d. Support and Redressal Mechanisms

- i. One Stop Centres (OSCs) – Integrated support for women affected by violence (State Government in assistance of the Central Government, Ministry of Women & Child Development: <https://wcdhry.gov.in/schemes-for-women/onestop-centre/>)
- ii. SHe-Box Portal – Online complaint registration for sexual harassment at workplace (website: <https://shebox.wcd.gov.in/>)
- iii. Protection Officers (under the Domestic Violence Act, 2005)
- iv. Vulnerable Witness Deposition Complexes – child and vulnerable witness-friendly courtroom facilities for recording testimony during trial
- v. Workplace Mechanisms – Internal Complaints Committee (IC) and Local Committee (LC) under the POSH Act, or Grievance Redressal Committees under the new Labour Code, etc.

e. Government Schemes and Portals

- i. Nirbhaya Fund – Umbrella funding for women's safety projects
- ii. Mission Shakti (M/o WCD) – Integrated scheme covering Sambal and Samarthya sub-schemes
- iii. Beti Bachao Beti Padhao (BBBP) – Addressing gender bias and girl child welfare, etc. (web site: <https://wcd.gov.in/women/beti-bachao-beti-padhao>)
- iv. Shakti Sadan - an Integrated Relief and Rehabilitation Home for the women in distress situations and difficult circumstances. The resident of Shakti Sadan is provided with shelter, food, clothing, counselling, primary health facilities and other daily requirements.

- v. PMMVY (Pradhan Mantri Matru Vandana Yojana) which provides financial support for pregnant and lactating mothers.

f. **Community and Outreach Platforms**

- i. Mahila Police Volunteers (MPVs) – Community-level liaison with police
- ii. Community Policing and Outreach – Engagement with Self-Help Groups (SHGs), women's groups, and educational institutions for awareness, early reporting, and last-mile connectivity., etc.

5. **Governance, Oversight, and Accountability:**

- a. **Supervisory oversight must be institutionalised through structured and periodic review mechanisms** at both district and State levels. Monthly reviews at the district level must be conducted by the Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP)/Superintendent of Police (SP) and District Magistrate (DM) to assess the status of cases, identify operational gaps, and ensure timely intervention. At the State level, quarterly reviews may be undertaken by the Director General of Police (DGP) and the Home Department to evaluate overall performance, inter-district coordination, and systemic challenges. All cases must be treated as sensitive in nature and handled with due diligence, impartiality, and strict adherence to the applicable legal provisions and established procedures, ensuring that every matter receives appropriate legal scrutiny and timely action.
- b. **Monitoring must be based on clearly defined performance indicators** adherence to investigation timelines, timely filing of charge sheets, disbursal of victim compensation, timely FSL reporting, and instances of acquittals arising from procedural or investigative lapses as per the New Laws. Such data-driven review mechanisms are essential to ensure accountability, improve efficiency, and strengthen the overall criminal justice response.
- c. Utilize existing digital platforms, including **ICJS, CCTNS, ITSSO, e-Prosecution, e-Forensics, and e-Courts**, to establish an integrated real-time monitoring mechanism for crimes against women. The system should track compliance with statutory timelines at every stage of the criminal justice process, including FIR registration, investigation, forensic examination, filing of charge

sheets, cognizance, framing of charges, recording of evidence, and trial proceedings. Automated alerts and dashboards should be developed to identify delays, facilitate supervisory oversight, enable timely corrective interventions, and strengthen accountability of all stakeholders to ensure the speedy investigation and trial of offences against women.

- d. **Prevention of female foeticide, honour crimes, forced marriage and other harmful practices:** Special steps may be taken by police in collaboration with Health and Family Welfare Departments, district administration and local authorities to prevent female foeticide and to ensure effective enforcement of laws relating to sex selection and related offences. States/UTs may take focused measures to prevent so-called honour crimes (Advisory of MHA dated 31.05.2018 may be referred), forced marriages, child marriages (Advisory of MHA dated 5.05.2025 may be referred), and other forms of violence arising from social practices, local pressures or community-level coercion. Early warning inputs from field units, community networks, schools, health workers and local bodies may be acted upon promptly.
- e. **Public Disclosure and Transparency** through periodic publication of anonymised, aggregate data on case pendency, conviction rates, and compensation disbursal (subject to confidentiality safeguards under POCSO/juvenile justice law), to enhance public accountability without compromising victim identity.
- f. **Institutionalize capacity building** through regular, structured training of police personnel (particularly Special Juvenile Police Units (SJPU) and Child Welfare Police Officers (CWPO)), prosecutors, forensic personnel, and judicial officers on the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, 2023, Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita, 2023, Bharatiya Sakshya Adhiniyam, 2023 (BSA), the POCSO Act and Rules, victim-sensitive investigation practices, and forensic evidence collection and handling. Training completion and competency assessments should be monitored and incorporated as key performance indicators for the respective departments.

6. Technological Intervention

- a. **Inter-operable Criminal Justice System (ICJS)** is a flagship initiative of the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) aimed at strengthening the effectiveness of the justice delivery system through integration of the principal pillars of the criminal justice ecosystem, namely Police (CCTNS), Courts (e-Courts), Prisons (e-Prisons), Forensic Laboratories (e-Forensics), and Prosecution (e-Prosecution). It is designed to ensure a secure, seamless, and standardised exchange of data across these pillars, ensuring end-to-end digital integration to facilitate investigation of cases, enhance operational efficiency, reduce procedural delays, and promote transparency and accountability in the administration of justice.
- b. **Crime and Criminal Tracking Network and Systems (CCTNS)** is a national programme aimed at establishing a common and integrated application software to inter-link all police stations across the country. Utilizing CCTNS ensures a centralised monitoring/State-level digital dashboards that reflect real-time improvements of cases, facilitate inter-agency coordination, and support evidence-based decision-making at all levels of administration. Monitoring may be anchored in key performance indicators, including reduction in delays in FIR registration, decrease in case pendency and timely filing of charge sheets. Such data-backed oversight mechanisms are critical for enhancing transparency, improving efficiency, and ensuring accountability in the justice delivery system.
- c. **E-Sakshya** application has been designed to support Investigating Officers in the collection, preservation, and management of primary digital evidence during criminal investigations. The platform enables secure capture of evidentiary material through videography and photography at crime scenes, as well as recording of witness statements, as required. All digital evidence collected through the application is securely stored in a centralised evidence locker, ensuring integrity, authenticity, and availability of evidence for investigation and prosecution purposes.
- d. **E-Forensics** is an online case registration and tracking system developed under the Inter-operable Criminal Justice System (ICJS) project. The platform is intended to facilitate streamlined case management and enable forensic examiners to generate expeditious, accurate, and reliable forensic reports,

thereby supporting timely investigation, enhancing inter-stakeholder coordination, and strengthening the overall efficiency and credibility of the criminal justice system.

- e. **E-Summons** refers to the service of court summons and judicial notices through electronic modes, including designated digital platforms and electronic communication channels, as a legally recognised alternative to physical service. The initiative has been introduced to address logistical, jurisdictional, and time-related constraints associated with conventional modes of service, while aligning criminal justice procedures with ongoing digital transformation efforts. By enabling timely, verifiable, and efficient service of summons, e-Summons strengthens procedural compliance, reduces avoidable delays, and enhances the overall efficiency of criminal proceedings.
- f. **National Automated Fingerprint Identification System (NAFIS)** is designed to enable the digitisation, storage, and automated searching of fingerprint data through seamless integration with the Crime and Criminal Tracking Network and Systems (CCTNS) and the Inter-operable Criminal Justice System (ICJS). The system is intended to enhance the speed, accuracy, and reliability of criminal investigations. Conceptualised on a cloud-based architecture, NAFIS facilitates fingerprint digitisation at the district level, with secure transmission to the Central Fingerprint Bureau at the National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB). NAFIS in second phase is being extended to all Police Stations.
- g. **Criminal Procedure Identification (CrPI)** system, enables the systematic collection, storage, and management of biometric, biological, and demographic data of offenders for strengthening criminal investigation and identification processes. The system is being implemented across multiple locations nationwide, including police units, prisons, and central investigating agencies such as the National Investigation Agency (NIA), Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI), and Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB). CrPI provides a centralised biometric database with integration of face, iris, and DNA engines, and ensures secure interoperability with NAFIS, ICJS, and CCTNS to support technology-driven, coordinated, and efficient law enforcement operations. CrPIS in second phase is being extended to all Police Stations.

- h. **Investigation Tracking System for Sexual Offences (ITSSO)** is an online monitoring and analytical tool launched to track and review the progress of investigations in cases of sexual offences. The system enables regular and structured supervision by States and Union Territories to ensure adherence to the mandated two-month investigation period and to facilitate timely corrective interventions wherever delays are identified.
- i. **Crime Multi Agency Centre (Cri-MAC)** facilitates real-time sharing of information on heinous crimes and strengthens coordination in cases involving inter-State and organised offences. The platform enables generation of automated alerts relating to serious crimes, major seizures, jailbreaks, human trafficking, and release of high-risk offenders from prisons, thereby supporting timely inter-agency coordination and rapid operational response. Cri-MAC also facilitates seamless transfer of FIRs, including Zero FIRs, and enables translation of FIRs into multiple Indian languages, contributing to improved accessibility, investigative efficiency, and crime prevention outcomes.
- j. **NIDAAN** portal serves as a centralised repository of data relating to offenders involved, directly or indirectly, in offences under the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (NDPS) Act, 1985. The platform enables systematic collation and analysis of information on narcotics-related offences, thereby supporting intelligence-led investigations, inter-agency coordination, and enforcement actions for effective control of drug-related crimes.
- k. **National Database of Sexual Offenders (NDSO)** has been established by the Ministry of Home Affairs as a secure database accessible exclusively to law enforcement agencies. The database is intended to support investigation and tracking of sexual offenders. NDSO enables Investigating Officers to identify and monitor habitual offenders and to initiate preventive and surveillance measures in accordance with law, thereby strengthening investigation processes and contributing to the prevention of sexual offences.
- l. **National Database of Human Trafficking Offenders (NDHTO)** portal enables law enforcement agencies to access and analyse comprehensive profiles of traffickers, including crime history, personal particulars, movement details, court proceedings, appeals, and visitor information. Drawing upon data maintained by various Central and State agencies, the portal supports

prevention, detection, and investigation of human trafficking offences through integrated and standardised data access. The platform also provides analytical dashboards with smart data visualisation across multiple parameters such as State-wise distribution of traffickers (within and outside the State), offender status (convicted or under trial), age profiles, and offence categories, thereby facilitating intelligence-led policing and targeted enforcement measures.

- m. **National Database of Organised and Foreign Offenders (NDOFO)** portal functions as a centralised registry of foreign nationals involved in criminal activities in India, comprising details of both convicted and accused foreign offenders. The system provides a unified platform accessible to police stations and law enforcement agencies for systematic access to data relating to foreign criminals. By enabling structured monitoring and analysis through the portal, NDOFO supports investigation, prevention, and enforcement actions in cases involving offences such as visa fraud, illegal immigration, online frauds, and other cyber^[06]-enabled crimes, thereby strengthening public safety and crime prevention outcomes.
- n. **National Criminal Record Check (NCRC)** portal is a web-based application for antecedent verification that enables Central Government Ministries and Departments to submit applicant details for verification against records available across all police stations through seamless integration with CCTNS and ICJS. The platform facilitates time-bound and standardised verification processes, thereby supporting timely and informed decision-making. By enabling cross-jurisdictional searches, the portal addresses geographical limitations and assists in identifying criminal involvement beyond the local jurisdiction of the concerned police station, contributing to improved verification accuracy and inter-State information sharing.
- o. **National Cyber Crime Reporting Portal** (cybercrime.gov.in/1930) enables citizens to report cybercrimes, including online child sexual exploitation and abuse material (CSEAM), cyberstalking, and financial fraud, in a standardised format. The portal integrates with State police for the assignment and time-bound disposal of complaints and includes a dedicated reporting category for crimes against women and children, thereby enabling prompt action and coordinated inter-State investigation.

- p. **Artificial Intelligence (AI)/Machine Learning (ML)**-based enabled technologies are increasingly being leveraged to strengthen the prevention, detection, investigation, and prosecution of crimes against women. Such technologies support automated analysis of large volumes of criminal and digital evidence, identification of crime patterns and hotspots, facial recognition for identification of offenders and missing persons, behavioural and link analysis of repeat offenders, and intelligent analysis of CCTV footage and other digital evidence. AI-assisted tools are also being deployed globally for the detection and classification of Child Sexual Exploitation and Abuse Material (CSEAM), enabling faster identification of victims and perpetrators and supporting technology-driven investigations.
- q. **E-Prosecution** application has been developed to support Public Prosecutors in the effective discharge of their statutory role as representatives of the State before the Courts. The application aims to digitise and streamline prosecutorial workflows, facilitate systematic case management, and enhance coordination within the criminal justice ecosystem, thereby contributing to transparent court processes and expeditious conduct of trials.
- r. **Video Conferencing (VC)** in judicial proceedings refers to the conduct of court hearings and related legal processes through secure audio-visual electronic platforms, enabling virtual interaction between courts and concerned stakeholders to address delays arising from the physical non-availability of parties, advocates, witnesses, or accused persons, while ensuring continuity and efficiency of judicial processes. Enabled under the provisions of the Nyaya Sanhita, video conferencing facilitates the examination of complainants and witnesses, recording of evidence, hearings, and appellate proceedings across all stages of trials and inquiries. To operationalise these provisions, the Ministry has introduced the Nyaya Shruti application, an electronic court hearing facilitation platform that provides a real-time and secure communication interface between the judiciary and key criminal justice stakeholders, including police, prisons, prosecution, forensic laboratories, and other authorised entities, thereby promoting timely, coordinated, and technology-enabled delivery of justice.
- s. **E-Courts Project**, implemented by the Department of Justice, Ministry of Law and Justice, seeks to leverage information and communication technology to automate judicial processes and enhance transparency and accessibility of court-

related information for all stakeholders. Under the project, data relating to subordinate courts is made available up to the district level across States and Union Territories. With wide coverage across court complexes and courts, the e-Courts platform has contributed to improvements in judicial productivity and case management, thereby strengthening the justice delivery system by making it more accessible, cost-effective, predictable, reliable, and transparent.

- t. **E-Prisons** application is a cloud-based product developed to computerise and integrate all activities related to prison and prisoner management in jails and is deployed as a unified application across all States, wherein States are required to configure State-specific parameters. The application provides vital, real-time information relating to inmates lodged in prisons to courts, prison authorities, and other entities involved in the criminal justice system, and consists of components, namely e-Prisons Management Information System (MIS), the National Prisons Information Portal, Visitor Management etc.

7. Investigation–Prosecution Coordination

- a. **Coordination between investigating officers and prosecutors** should be institutionalized through regular review and consultation meetings to ensure legal preparedness, timely guidance, and consistency in case handling. Joint training programmes may also be conducted periodically to strengthen coordination and enhance the quality of time-bound investigation and prosecution, particularly in sensitive and complex cases involving women and children. The chargesheet must be filed within the statutory timeline prescribed under Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita, 2023, and Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act, 2012, as applicable. Cases returned by courts or prosecution due to procedural, legal, or evidentiary deficiencies should be systematically monitored and analysed to identify recurring gaps (for e.g., hostile witness, delayed FSL report, defective charge-sheet, procedural lapse under Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita, 2023, etc.) and strengthen future investigations. In accordance with Section 20 of the Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita, 2023, State Governments should establish a Directorate of Prosecution at the State level and a Directorate of Prosecution in every district, comprising a Director of Prosecution and such number of Deputy Directors of Prosecution as may be required. Special emphasis should be placed on the expeditious

disposal of pending court cases relating to women and children, as timely conviction of offenders not only delivers justice to victims but also serves as a significant deterrent, contributing to the reduction of crime.

- b. **Victims and witnesses should be kept informed of court proceedings** by the investigating officer or prosecution, and provided pre-trial familiarisation with court procedures, wherever required, to facilitate their effective participation in the trial. Timely service of summons, witness scheduling, and other necessary logistical arrangements should be ensured to minimise adjournments arising from witness non-availability, while safeguarding the safety, dignity, and confidentiality of victims.
- c. **Inter-agency cooperation** builds credibility and effectiveness of institutions. Police stations must establish functional linkages with One Stop Centres [A project report on National Level Model For Victim Support & Assistance System (One Stop Centres) is attached in annexure IV(1)], Resident Welfare Associations (RWA), NGOs, psychologists, and social welfare officers. District Legal Services Authorities, and counselling services to ensure that survivors receive legal, medical, psychological, and financial support in a coordinated manner. Efforts may be made for online registration and required action thereupon on the victim's request to the concerned Agencies. Fragmented responses often discourage victims; integrated service delivery restores confidence. Details of one stop crime e.g. function, address, tele no. should be displayed in every WHDs/Police Station.
- d. **Effective utilisation of digital platforms** developed under the Inter-operable Criminal Justice System (ICJS), including CCTNS, e-Prosecution, e-Forensics, e-Sakshya, ITSSO, and e-Courts, should be ensured to facilitate seamless exchange of information between investigating officers and prosecutors, monitor case progress, identify procedural deficiencies, and support timely investigation and prosecution.
- e. **Anti-Human Trafficking Units (AHTUs) (please refer <https://www.mha.gov.in/en/divisionofmha/women-safety-division> for further details)** must be strengthened as specialised, intelligence-led units responsible for prevention, detection, and investigation of trafficking offences. These units should function at district and State levels with dedicated personnel, regular monitoring, and inter-agency coordination to identify trafficking

networks, conduct rescue operations, and ensure rehabilitation of victims in accordance with applicable laws and government advisories. A handbook published by BPR&D on Investigating Sex Trafficking is attached as Annexure-V. Further Order dated 22.5.2026 of the Hon'ble Supreme Court in the **G. Ganesh Versus State of Tamil Nadu & Ors.** may be referred in this regard.

8. Victim-Centric Protection and Rehabilitation

- a. **Quality of engagement with survivors must be trauma-sensitive** and must be institutionalized across all stages—from reporting to investigation. Survivors must be treated as rights-bearing individuals, not as evidentiary sources. Recording of statements by trained women officers, ensuring privacy, and avoiding secondary victimization are essential components of this framework.
- b. **Institutionalize monthly counselling and rehabilitation sessions** for victims in coordination with empaneled lawyers, psychologists, and civil society organisations, with a focus on psychological recovery, legal guidance, and long-term reintegration.
- c. **Victim protection measures** include provision of safe transport, temporary shelter, and police escort in sensitive cases, along with invocation of witness protection Scheme, 2018 wherever necessary. Efforts may be made to periodic online counseling of women's, children affected by crime.(Please refer hon'ble supreme court order dated 23.05.2026)
- d. **Victim compensation should be timely disbursed by the District Legal Services Authorities (DLSAs)**, in coordination with the police and District Child Protection Units, under the Victim Compensation Scheme at the earliest stage, ideally at the time of medical examination or FIR registration in serious cases, rather than being contingent on the outcome of the trial. The police should not treat the facilitation of compensation as incidental to the investigation; timely forwarding applications to the DLSA may be tracked as a distinct performance indicator during district-level monthly review meetings.
- e. **One Stop Centre (OSC) Integration at First Point of Contact:** Every police station/Women Help Desk should ensure that survivors are informed of, and where required physically facilitated to, the nearest One Stop Centre at the first point of contact, so that medical, legal, psychological, and shelter support commence in parallel with the investigation. Handover protocols between the

police station and OSC should be documented to avoid survivors having to repeat their account multiple times across agencies.

- f. **Particular attention should be given to the needs of vulnerable victims**, including women with disabilities, pregnant women, elderly women, victims belonging to Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, migrant women, and victims from other marginalised communities, by ensuring accessible services, medical services, reasonable accommodation, and appropriate support throughout the criminal justice process.

9. Prevention, Intelligence, and Capacity Strengthening

- a. **Prevention, detection, and prosecution of trafficking of women** is recognized as an organised and cross-border crime requiring specialized intervention. State/UT Administrations may strengthen the role of Anti-Human Trafficking Units (AHTUs) as nodal agencies for intelligence-led operations, rescue, and rehabilitation of victims under the Immoral Traffic (Prevention) Act, 1956 and relevant provisions of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, 2023. Police shall adopt a proactive approach, including identification of trafficking hotspots, surveillance of vulnerable transit points such as railway stations, bus terminals, and border areas, and close coordination with transport authorities, labour departments, and local administrations.
- b. **Integration of intelligence inputs and community policing** mechanisms may enable early identification of risk patterns and vulnerable zones. Additionally, the State/UT Administrations should strengthen intelligence-led policing through systematic analysis of data available on digital platforms such as CCTNS, NDSO, NDHTO, and Cri-MAC to identify repeat offenders, organised criminal networks, emerging crime trends, and geographical hotspots for targeted preventive interventions.
- c. **Special emphasis should be placed on prevention and investigation of cyber-enabled crimes against women**, including cyberstalking, cyberbullying, online harassment, non-consensual dissemination of intimate images, identity theft, financial fraud, and technology-facilitated sexual exploitation, through close coordination with cyber-crime units and timely action on complaints received through the National Cyber Crime Reporting Portal.

- d. **Standardised legal awareness material** may be developed in both print and digital formats, covering provisions of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, 2023 and the Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita, 2023, women's rights, and reporting procedures, and shall be disseminated during outreach programmes and public engagement initiatives. These materials should be made available in local, regional languages in WHDs, Women Police Stations, Schools, Colleges, Workplaces and other institutions and also placed on the website of the home/police department.
- e. **Regular, structured training of AHTU personnel, SJPU/CWPOs, and frontline police officers** on trafficking indicators, victim identification, rescue protocols, and the interplay between the Immoral Traffic (Prevention) Act, 1956, the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, 2023, and the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act 2015, may be institutionalised, with training completion tracked as a performance indicator at the district-level review.

II. Strengthening Safety Measures

Physical safety encompasses protection from violence in homes, workplaces, transit systems, and public spaces. While legal provisions exist, the operational gap lies in first response, accessibility, and environmental design.

1. **Women Help Desks (WHDs)** (Please refer <https://www.mha.gov.in/en/commoncontent/vulnerable-groups-welfare-section-vg-w>) are envisaged as the first institutional interface between the State and the survivor. Their role is vital, not clerical. It includes conversion of hesitation into reporting and reporting into justice. Every police station must ensure that WHDs function as professional, accessible, and confidential spaces, supported by trained personnel capable of handling cases with empathy and legal precision. Privacy is not optional; it is central to dignity and reporting. Each Women Help Desk (WHD) shall be operated by a designated Woman Help Desk Officer (WHDO) of the rank of Sub-Inspector, supported by woman constabulary staff, and function under the supervision of the Station House Officer. Oversight at the district level shall be ensured by a woman officer not below the rank of Deputy Superintendent of Police, while overall State/UT-level coordination shall be managed by a designated senior officer at the rank of Inspector General. An SOP prepared by BPR&D for Women Help Desks

(WHDs) is attached as Annexure VI.

2. Visible and responsive policing in public spaces must reinforce institutional presence and public confidence. States may adopt a hotspot-based policing model by identifying vulnerable locations such as poorly lit areas, transport hubs, areas outside schools and colleges, isolated workplaces, lonely stretches and other crime-prone zones. Patrolling may be intensified in such areas, with increased deployment of beat constables, women police officers and women personnel in mobile police units. Surveillance infrastructure, including CCTV networks, should be integrated and established especially for crowded places like railway Station, Bus Stand, Market, Colleges etc. with real-time monitoring and response systems. The concerned departments of the State Government may also strengthen basic safety infrastructure by setting up police help booths/kiosks in remote and isolated locations and ensuring adequate installation and regular maintenance of people-friendly street lights on roads, lanes, alleys and lonely stretches.

These measures would enhance visibility, improve police accessibility, and strengthen deterrence. It may be ensured that response time of Police may be within reasonable limits. Telephone no./mobile no./ERSS(112) may be indicated in major places for contact of needy women & children to police personnel.

3. Periodic Review of Safety Infrastructure by incorporating the functionality of CCTV systems, maintenance of street lighting, staffing and operational status of WHDs, and operationalisation of women's help booths as measurable indicators within the district- and State-level review mechanisms outlined above. Such infrastructure should be subject to periodic monitoring and accountability, ensuring that its upkeep and functionality are reviewed with the same rigour as case-related performance indicators.

4. Transport safety remains a critical determinant of women's mobility and workforce participation. Measures such as GPS-enabled vehicles, panic buttons, transport services, verified drivers, and secure last-mile connectivity must be enforced through coordination between police, transport authorities, and employers. Safety advisories for night shifts should not remain discretionary but evolve into standardized compliance expectations across sectors.

5. **Strengthening reporting systems and community engagement** can help bring down underreporting. It still remains the most significant barrier to women's safety. Addressing this requires not only institutional reform but also social and behavioural change. Community policing initiatives should be strengthened through active engagement with Resident Welfare Associations, educational institutions, market associations, transport operators, youth groups, and civil society organisations to promote awareness, encourage timely reporting, identify vulnerable locations, and foster a shared responsibility for women's safety.

III. Economic and Workplace Safety

Women's safety at the workplace must be viewed as an integrated responsibility encompassing infrastructure, institutional mechanisms, and organizational culture, in alignment with the new labour codes and relevant legislation, including the Industrial Relations Code, 2020 and the Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act, 2013. Employers must move beyond mere formal compliance and adopt structured, accountable, and preventive systems to ensure dignity, safety, a secure working environment, and safe mobility for women from home to workplace and back, across all work settings.

1. **Workplace safety** must be treated as a shared responsibility between employers and the State, with clear accountability mechanisms. Employers are required to ensure safe working environments for all employees, irrespective of whether they are engaged on a permanent, temporary, contractual, outsourced, or fixed-term basis, including adequate lighting, surveillance, secure entry and exit systems, and transport facilities for women working late hours. These measures must not remain advisory but be subject to periodic safety audits and compliance verification.
2. **Internal Complaints Committee (IC)** must be established under workplace harassment laws and must be strengthened by ensuring functional independence and awareness among employees. Oversight by authorities is necessary to ensure that serious offences are not confined to internal

mechanisms but are escalated through formal legal channels where required.

3. **Grievance Redressal Committee (GRC)** under the Industrial Relations Code, 2020 must be set up for any organisation employing 20 or more workers. This mechanism must ensure adequate representation of women.
4. **Multiple reporting channels** such as digital portals, Mobile app, email, helplines, SMS and in-person systems must be provided, along with assured confidentiality, protection from retaliation, and defined timelines for resolution. Transparent communication, tracking systems, and escalation mechanisms are essential to build trust and accountability.
5. **Institutional accountability** shall be reinforced by prescribing clear enforcement consequences for non-compliance, particularly in cases of unsafe workplaces, failure to constitute Internal Complaints Committees under the Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act, 2013, and violations of mandated safety standards, thereby ensuring that regulatory frameworks translate into measurable and enforceable outcomes.
6. **Employment of women in night shifts** must be supported by safeguards such as informed consent, group deployment, adequate supervision, and continuous monitoring. Installation of emergency systems, availability of medical support, availability of safe transport system and regular safety drills are critical to ensuring a secure working environment during non-standard hours.
7. **Where employers provide residential accommodation, hostels, or dormitories for women employees**, adequate security arrangements, access control, lighting, grievance redressal mechanisms, emergency contact systems, and regular safety inspections should be ensured to provide a safe living environment.
8. **Zero-tolerance policies against harassment, discrimination, and intimidation** need to be reinforced. Regular sensitisation programmes, leadership-driven behavioural standards, and equitable employment practices including equal pay, career progression, and flexible work arrangements must be

institutionalised. Special attention must be given to maternity support, post-maternity reintegration, and protection from digital or online harassment through robust IT policies.

9. **The SHe-Box portal** (<https://shebox.wcd.gov.in/>) operated by the Ministry of Women and Child Development, Government of India is an accessible grievance redressal mechanism. All concerned institutions may be advised to ensure mandatory registration on the portal and to actively facilitate its use for reporting and monitoring complaints.
10. **Informal and gig economy** workers lack formal protections. Domestic workers, home-based workers, and platform-based workers often remain outside structured grievance systems. Therefore, State/UT Administrations may expand outreach, legal awareness, and simplified reporting mechanisms through website, email, Mobile app etc. to ensure that safety frameworks extend beyond formal employment.
11. **Equal wages, job security, and social protection** are also an essential aspect of economic safety, as financial dependence often inhibits reporting of abuse. While these aspects fall within labour governance, police and administrative systems must recognise their impact on vulnerability and integrate this understanding into their response strategies.
12. **Safety audits and compliance verification** of each workplace (government, private) may be done and governed as per ~~and~~ internal and external or government protocols/advisories. Compliance with labour codes and safety regulations must be regularly reviewed, with accountability fixed for non-compliance. Continuous improvement through policy updates and employee engagement is essential to sustain safe workplaces.
13. **Strengthening workplace safety:** Police and local authorities play a facilitative role in strengthening workplace safety. Awareness programmes, sharing emergency contact details, supporting reporting mechanisms, strengthening Women Help Desks, enhancing visibility of women police personnel, and promoting legal awareness can significantly improve reporting confidence and institutional trust, particularly in vulnerable and underserved

areas.

IV. Cyber Safety

The expansion of digital spaces has introduced new forms of violence, including cyber harassment, non-consensual image sharing, and online stalking. These offences require swift, technology-enabled responses, as delays can result in irreversible harm.

1. **Cyber safety measures (refer <https://i4c.mha.gov.in/> for further details)**

must be enforced in accordance with the provisions of the Information Technology Act, 2000, ensuring prompt registration and investigation of cyber offences against women and children. Such offences include cyber stalking, online harassment, non-consensual sharing of intimate images, morphing of photographs, identity theft, impersonation, and sextortion. Emerging threats involving artificial intelligence must also be addressed, including deepfake videos, AI-generated non-consensual imagery, voice cloning for fraud or harassment, and automated online abuse. Police authorities shall facilitate reporting through the National Cyber Crime Reporting Portal and ensure timely action for evidence preservation, content takedown, and victim assistance in coordination with specialised cybercrime units. Offline/online/material awareness programmes may be launched and conducted periodically by police to women & children. Cyber crime can be reported on the website <https://cybercrime.gov.in/>).

2. **Integration of cybercrime units with local police and all Police stations**

is essential to ensure that victims receive immediate assistance without procedural delays. As cybercrime incidents often have inter-State and pan-India dimensions, a coordinated policing infrastructure with a timely response mechanism should be developed and put in place to effectively combat cybercrime. The identity of victims, particularly victims of sexual offences, must be kept confidential, and this assurance should be widely publicized so that victims feel encouraged to approach the police without fear or hesitation. As far as possible, women police officers should be engaged in handling matters relating to girl children and women. Necessary training should also be imparted to police personnel, and it should be

ensured that at least 2–3 police personnel in each town or major police station are professionally trained to handle cybercrime cases.

3. **Indian Cyber Crime Coordination Centre (I4C)** (refer <https://i4c.mha.gov.in/> for further details), functioning under the Ministry of Home Affairs, implements the Cyber Crime Prevention against Women and Children (CCPWC) scheme as a comprehensive mechanism to combat online exploitation and abuse.

- a. **National Cyber Crime Reporting Portal** enables victims to report cyber offences, including child sexual exploitation and abuse material and online harassment. It also provides the option of anonymous reporting, thereby safeguarding confidentiality and encouraging victims to disclose such offences without fear or hesitation. The framework further facilitates prompt coordination with intermediaries for the time-bound removal of unlawful or objectionable content.
- b. **Cyber Volunteer Programme** promotes community participation for flagging unlawful content.
- c. **Utilisation of cyber forensic-cum-training laboratories** established across States and Union Territories, may enhance investigative capabilities.
- d. **Public awareness is further supported through the ‘Cyber Dost’ initiative**, which disseminates regular advisories on cyber safety and digital hygiene.

4. **Awareness campaigns, school programmes, and outreach initiatives**, particularly in rural and underserved areas, may be done through community engagement. Personnel attached with WHDs may also visit neighbourhoods for awareness and sensitisation focusing on safe use of digital platforms, privacy settings, identification of online grooming, cyberstalking, deepfakes, financial frauds, reporting mechanisms, and preservation of digital evidence. These efforts should focus on informing women of their rights, available support systems, and the process of accessing justice.

C. Advisory on Children Safety

Child safety must not be viewed as a reactive function limited to post-incident response. It must be anchored in a preventive, intelligence-led, and rights-based framework where risks are identified early, vulnerabilities are addressed proactively, and long-term rehabilitation is ensured.

I. Institutional Safety

An effective institutional framework is fundamental to ensuring timely and sensitive responses to child-related cases. Specialised police units such as Special Juvenile Police Units (SJPU), Child Welfare Police Officers (CWPOs), and Anti-Human Trafficking Units (AHTUs) must function as dedicated pillars of child protection.

1. **Appointment of a Child Welfare Police Officer (CWPO)**, not below the rank of Assistant Sub-Inspector, must be ensured in every police station as per Section 107 of the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2015. The CWPO should be entrusted with responsibility for handling child-related cases and ensuring that all legal procedures are followed in a child-sensitive and rights-based manner. Such officers must be adequately trained and periodically monitored to ensure effectiveness and accountability. Reference may also be made to MHA's advisory dated 17.10.2022, available on the Ministry's website. CWPOs may visit schools periodically to interact with children and apprise them of relevant legal provisions and safeguards. The telephone number, mobile number, and email ID of the designated CWPO may also be shared with schools for easy access and timely assistance.
2. **Interactions with children** must be non-intimidating, trauma-sensitive, and supportive. Police personnel should avoid conventional interrogation approaches and instead adopt communication methods that build trust, encourage expression, and respect the child's emotional state. Ensuring confidentiality and protection of the child's identity is essential at every stage of engagement.
3. **Child safety spaces in police stations:** Child safety spaces in police

stations may be reoriented as child-friendly spaces that uphold the dignity, comfort, privacy, and psychological well-being of children. This would require appropriate physical infrastructure, including separate rooms, secure waiting areas, non-intimidating surroundings, trained and sensitized police personnel, and adequate privacy safeguards. It must also be accompanied by a corresponding shift in institutional culture towards empathy, sensitivity, and child-centred care. Assistance may be taken from child counsellors, psychologists, NGOs, and retired teachers, who may periodically visit or sit in police stations to listen to the concerns, complaints, and problems of children in a supportive and reassuring environment.

4. Legal provisions to protect children and must form the core legal backbone of administrative operations. Such as:

- a. Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, 2023
- b. Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita, 2023
- c. Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2015
- d. Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act, 2012
- e. Prohibition of Child Marriage Act, 2006
- f. Immoral Traffic (Prevention) Act, 1956
- g. Orphanages and Other Charitable Homes (Supervision and Control) Act, 1960
- h. Child and Adolescent Labour (Prohibition and Regulation) Act, 1986
- i. Bonded Labour System (Abolition) Act, 1976
- j. Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education (RTE) Act, 2009
- k. National Food Security Act, 2013
- l. Persons with Disabilities Act / Rights of Persons with Disabilities (RPwD) Act, 2016
- m. National Trust Act, 1999
- n. Hindu Minority and Guardianship Act, 1956

- o. Guardians and Wards Act, 1890
- p. Information Technology Act, 2000
- q. Digital Personal Data Protection (DPDP) Act, 2023
- r. Legal Services Authorities Act, 1987, etc.

5. Key Provisions for Child Safety:

Stricter punishments for offences such as rape, gang rape, trafficking, kidnapping, and sexual exploitation of minors, with enhanced penalties in cases involving aggravated circumstances. The New Laws recognise organised and technology-enabled crimes, thereby enabling action against online exploitation, child sexual exploitation and abuse material (pornographic material), and trafficking networks. **Specialised child protection legislation** such as the **Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act, 2012** and the **Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2015**, collectively ensure a comprehensive legal framework for prevention, protection, and rehabilitation of children.

- a. **Section 15 of The Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act, 2012**, mandates strict punishment for storing, possessing, or failing to report child sexual exploitation and abuse (pornographic) material. It penalizes failure to delete or report such material, especially with intent to share, transmit, propagate, display or distribute, and covers storage for commercial purposes. [*Just Rights for Children Alliance & Anr. vs S. Harish & Ors.*, dated 23.09.2024 (2024 SCC OnLine SC 2611)]
- b. **Section 21 of POCSO Act, 2012** mandates reporting of offences that any person, including the child, who has knowledge or apprehension of an offence under the Act, must report it to the Special Juvenile Police Unit (SJPU) or local police. Upon receiving such a report, the SJPU or local police must, within 24 hours, make arrangements for the care and protection of the child — including shelter or hospitalisation if needed — and simultaneously report the matter to the Child Welfare Committee and the Special Court, ensuring the child's needs are addressed without delay.
- c. **Procedural safeguards** under Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita, 2023

ensure justice, including time-bound investigation **as per section 193(2) of the BHARATIYA NAGARIK SURAKSHA SANHITA, 2023, , 2023**, mandatory registration of FIRs (including Zero FIR), and provisions for recording statements in a sensitive and secure manner. It also emphasises the use of forensic evidence and technology to strengthen prosecution.

- d. **Section 95 of Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, 2023** states that whoever hires, employs or engages any child to commit an offence shall be punished with imprisonment of either description which shall not be less than three years but which may extend to ten years, and with fine; and if the offence be committed shall also be punished with the punishment provided for that offence as if the offence has been committed by such person himself.
- e. **Section 96 of Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, 2023 (Procuration of child)** replaces the term “minor girl” with “child,” thereby extending protection to all children below 18 years irrespective of gender.
- f. **Section 137 of Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, 2023 (Kidnapping)** broadens the definition to cover all children below 18 years without gender distinction, strengthening legal protection against abduction.
- g. **Section 139 of Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, 2023**, punishes the kidnapping or maiming of a child for begging. It mandates rigorous imprisonment of at least 10 years (up to life) for kidnapping, and at least 20 years (up to life) for maiming, plus fines. This provision protects children from exploitation.
- h. **Under section 397 Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita, 2023** all hospitals public or private whether run by the central government the state government local bodies or any other person shall immediately provide the first aid or medical treatment free of cost to the victims of any offence covered under sections 4, 6, 8 or 10 **Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act, 2012** and shall immediately inform the police of such incident., etc.

Brief Overview of Legal Provisions for Crimes against Children



6. Children Protection Resources as Force Multipliers

Child protection resources available for within and outside the government need to be strengthened and used as Force Multipliers for ensuring the safety of children. These include:

a. National Bodies and Commissions

- i. National Commission for Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR), (refer <https://www.ncpcr.gov.in/>) Further, most States/UTs have their own State Commission for Protection of Child Rights (SCPCR), such as Delhi Commission for Protection of Child Rights (DCPCR), Madhya Pradesh State Commission for Protection of Child Rights (SCPCR), etc.
- ii. National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) (refer <https://nhrc.nic.in/>) , further all states have their State Human Rights Commission (SHRC), such as Andhra Pradesh Human Rights Commission, Punjab Human Rights Commission, etc.
- iii. National Commission for Scheduled Castes, (refer <https://ncsc.nic.in/>) Some states have established their own Commission for Scheduled Castes, such as Punjab State Scheduled Castes Commission, Madhya Pradesh State Scheduled Castes Commission, etc.
- iv. National Commission for Scheduled Tribes, most states with significant tribal populations have established State Commissions for Scheduled Tribes (SCSTs), such as Jharkhand State Commission for Scheduled Tribes (STs), Telangana State Commission for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, etc.
- v. National State Legal Services Authority (NALSA), statutory body established under the Legal Services Authorities Act 1987, to provide free legal-aids to eligible persons such as women, children, scheduled castes, scheduled tribes, victims of trafficking and other vulnerable sections etc.

b. Emergency Response Systems

- i. Childline (1098) – 24/7 Emergency outreach for children in distress
- ii. Police Emergency (112) – Rapid police response, ERSS and Digital found

(For details, please refer: <https://an.erss.in/>)

iii. Cyber Crime Reporting Portal (cybercrime.gov.in)

iv. Mobile lost Reporting Portal (<https://www.ceir.gov.in/Home/index.jsp>)

c. Legal and Judicial Bodies

i. Child Welfare Committees (CWCs)

ii. Juvenile Justice Boards (JJBs)

iii. Fast Track Special Courts (FTSCs)

iv. District Legal Services Authorities (DLSAs)

v. Para Legal Volunteers (PLVs)

vi. Lok Adalats (as alternative dispute resolution involving child welfare matters)

vii. Office of District Magistrate

d. Support and Redressal Mechanisms

i. District Child Protection Units (DCPU), supervised and supported by a State Child Protection Society (SCPS) or a state-level department of women and child development.

ii. Anti-Human Trafficking Units (AHTUs) (For details order, guidelines etc., please refer <https://www.mha.gov.in/en> -> Divisions of MHA -> Women Safety Division -> Anti Trafficking Sections)

iii. POCSO e-Box (<https://ncpcr.gov.in/pocso/>)

iv. The District Labour Officer

v. Railway Police and Railway Protection Force (RPF) (<https://rpf.indianrailways.gov.in/RPF/>)

e. **Government Schemes and Portals**

- i. Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS)
- ii. Mission Vatsalya (Ministry of Women and Child Development)- TRACK Portal (Tracking and Monitoring under Mission Vatsalya) (refer <https://missionvatsalya.wcd.gov.in/login>)
- iii. Beti Bachao Beti Padhao (BBBP)
- iv. PM POSHAN (Mid-Day Meal Scheme)
- v. PENCIL (Platform for Effective Enforcement for No Child Labour) Portal (refer <https://pencil.gov.in/>) by Ministry of Labour and Employment, engaging Central Government, State Government, Districts, civil society and the public in eradicating child labour to achieve a child-labour-free society.
- vi. e-BaalNidan (NCPCR) for reporting any child rights violations / complaint other than POCSO. (<https://ncpcr.gov.in/ebaalnidan/>)
- vii. SAHARA (Supportive Action with Holistic Approach to build Resilience among the children of Armed Forces Personnel) Portal (NCPCR) for reporting rights complaints related to children of Central Armed Police Forces (CAPF).
- viii. NCPCR tracking portal for out-of-school children. It registers children who have dropped out of school or have not been attending for the past 30 days, with automatic linkage to concerned authorities like CWCs, DCPUs, and SJPU for care and protection, and mainstreaming children back into formal education.
- ix. MASI – Monitoring App for Seamless Inspection (NCPCR) for real-time monitoring of Child Care Institutions (CCIs) across the country,
- x. PANKHUDI Portal (refer <https://pankhudi.wcd.gov.in/web/home>) is a single-window digital platform that facilitates structured participation from individuals, NGOs, and corporate entities in women and child development.

- xi. Bal Vivah Mukht Bharat Portal (<https://stopchildmarriage.wcd.gov.in/>) , a dedicated platform supporting the national campaign to end child marriage, etc. [Society for Enlightenment and Voluntary Action & Anr. vs Union of India & Ors., dated 18.10.2024 (2024 SCC OnLine SC 2922)]

f. **Community and Outreach Platforms**

- i. Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS)- Operates through anganwadi centres at the grassroots/village level.
- ii. Self-Help Groups (SHGs) and Women's Groups – Last-mile connectivity for identifying and reporting child abuse at the grassroots
- iii. Community Policing at large in general and communities of children (Student Police Cadets- SPC Units, National Cadet Corps- NCC etc. provide ready access points to such communities) in particular.
- iv. Civil Society Organisations (CSOs)
- v. Department of School Education and Literacy (refer <https://www.dsle-education.gov.in/>)
- vi. Department of Education and Educational Institutions
- vii. Childline Collaborative Partners – NGOs and institutions partnering with CHILDLINE 1098
(<https://web.umang.gov.in/landing/departments/childline-1098.html>)

7. **Increase awareness among the police about the different nature of sexual offences.** Studies have repeatedly shown that in the vast majority of sexual offences no bodily injury will be present. It must be clearly communicated to police formations that absence of injury is by no means evidence of absence of sexual violence.
8. **Confidentiality and protection of identity of the victim** must be ensured, especially in cases related to sexual offence. Under the **Protection of Children**

from **Sexual Offences Act, 2012**, (refer <https://www.indiacode.nic.in/bitstream/123456789/2079/1/AA2012-32.pdf>)

disclosure of the identity of a child victim is prohibited, and any violation must attract legal consequences. Therefore, police personnel must ensure that the child's identity is protected at all stages, including during reporting, investigation, documentation, and media interaction. Sensitive handling of records and controlled access to case information are essential components of this obligation. (Also refer MHA's Advisory dated 16.01.2019)

9. **Cyber Safety Provisions for Children:**

- a. **Section 66E (privacy violation), 66C and 66D (punishment of identity theft/impersonation) Information Technology Act, 2000**, are crucial in punishing offences.
- b. **Section 67B (a)&(b) of the Information Technology Act, 2000** provisions tackling online child sexual abuse. **Clause 67B(c) Information Technology Act, 2000** punishes any person who cultivates, entices, or induces children into online relationships for sexually explicit acts or in a manner that may offend a reasonable adult on a computer resource.
- c. **Digital Personal Data Protection (DPDP) Act, 2023** mandates "verifiable parental consent" for processing a child's data (under 18) and restricts targeted advertising toward children.
- d. **Section 15 of the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act, 2012 read with Rule 11 of the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Rules, 2020** that relates to punishment for storage of child sexual exploitation and abuse material and mandatory reporting

10. **International Cooperation Mechanisms introduced by I4C (Indian Cybercrime Coordination Centre, Website: <https://i4c.mha.gov.in/>)** including collaboration with global organisations such as the National Centre for Missing and Exploited Children (NCMEC), facilitate timely sharing of intelligence and reporting of online child sexual exploitation cases involving India.

11. **NCRB Digital Citizen Services Portal:** NCRB hosts citizen services at the

national level which includes ‘Missing Person Search’, ‘Generate Vehicle NOC’, ‘Proclaimed Offenders Information’ and ‘Locate Nearest PS’. This portal can be accessed through URL ‘digitalpolicecitizenservices.gov.in’ <https://digitalpolice.gov.in/DigitalPolice/Services>

12. **Anti-Human Trafficking Units (AHTUs)** play a critical role in tracing missing children by treating such cases as potential trafficking incidents and conducting intelligence-led investigations across districts and borders. If a child remains untraced for four months, the case must be mandatorily transferred to AHTUs for specialised intervention and network-based investigation. They coordinate with railway police, border units, and other agencies to track movement and dismantle trafficking networks.(refer MHA’s website for Advisories to the State Government / UT Administration). As per direction of the Hon’ble Supreme Court in Writ Petition (Civil) no. 75 of 2012, on 10.05.2013, Bachpan Bachao Andolan vs Union of India, in case a missing child is not recovered within four months from the date of filing of the First Information Report, the matter may be forwarded to the Anti-Human Trafficking Unit of the concerned District in order to enable the said Unit to take up more intensive investigation regarding the missing child.

I. Strengthening Safety Measures

Preventive policing must form the cornerstone of child safety strategies, as early identification and intervention significantly reduce the risk of harm.

1. Preventive Policing

- a. **Structured risk-mapping** may identify vulnerable children, including those in street situations, school dropouts, and migrant populations, along with high-risk environments such as transport hubs, industrial areas, and isolated locations. Proactive intelligence gathering is essential to this approach.

- b. **Intelligence units and cybercrime cells must systematically collect and analyse information** related to trafficking networks, online exploitation, and child labour syndicates.
- c. **National Database on Sexual Offenders (NDSO) usage by police to track sex offenders to prevent repeat offences.**

2. Community Outreach and Awareness

- a. Village level functionaries like Panchayat, , Sarpanches etc., who are mandated by law to report all crimes against women and children
- b. ANM Workers, ASHA Workers and other Community outreach workers.
- c. **Police must actively conduct outreach programmes** in schools, villages, and urban communities to educate children and families about risks, rights, and available support systems.
- d. **Collaboration** with teachers, anganwadi workers, civil society organisations, and local institutions is critical in identifying early signs of abuse and ensuring timely intervention.
- e. **Promotion of helplines and digital reporting platforms** must be prioritised to make assistance accessible (through development of Mobile App / Software / web Portal / on-line reporting, monitoring and communication of decision to the public etc.) thereby reducing barriers of reporting.
- f. **Community-based intelligence** should complement institutionalised intelligence wherein local institutions such as schools, anganwadi centres, and youth organisations, **civil society organisations** act as critical sources of early warning signals. Community policing must be institutionalised as a force multiplier to detect emerging risks, encourage reporting, last-mile surveillance, particularly in rural and underserved areas to curb crimes against children such as, trafficking of children, child sexual abuse, child labour, child marriage, online offences against children (cyber abuse, grooming, exploitation), corruption in child welfare

programmes, exploitation of children in street situations abuse/neglect/exploitation in child care institutions, missing children/abduction / kidnapping, commercial sexual exploitation of children, child begging and forced exploitation, child sexual exploitation and abuse material (online sexual exploitation and pornography involving children), emotional, physical, and psychological abuse of children, discrimination and violence against the girl child, etc.

- g. Railway Authorities / Railway Protection Force and Transport Authorities: Should keep watch on their jurisdiction /area regarding unattended children and may make enquiry regarding their parents /guardian. If they are found to be without their parents / guardian, they may consult with the Police Personnel for identification of these children as per Ministry of Women and Child Development's letter dated 25.06.2025 (available on the website of MHA)

3. **Supervisory oversight must be institutionalised through structured and periodic review mechanisms** at both district and State levels. Monthly reviews at the district level may be conducted by the Superintendent of Police (SP) and District Magistrate (DM) to assess the status of cases, *identify operational gaps, and ensure timely intervention*. Monitoring must be based on clearly defined performance indicators, including delays in FIR registration, **especially in all cognizable offences where registration of FIR is mandatory**, adherence to investigation timelines, timely filing of charge sheets, disbursal of victim compensation **including interim compensation**, and instances of acquittals arising from procedural or investigative lapses as per the New Laws.
4. **Exposure of children to digital platforms** has also increased the risk of online exploitation. Cybercrime units must be equipped to detect and respond to offences such as grooming, sextortion, and online abuse. Awareness programmes targeting children, parents, and educators are essential to building resilience and promoting safe online behaviour. In line with *Cyber Crime Prevention against Women and Children (CCPWC) Scheme* and *MHA cyber safety initiatives*, police must strengthen cybercrime units to detect, prevent, and respond to such offences.

II. Missing Children

Cases involving missing children require urgent and decisive action, with the initial hours being critical for successful recovery. It is important to define when a child is treated missing by Police. The time when a parent thinks the child is missing must be the starting point of rescue efforts. Unfounded optimism that a child will return if only parents can wait for another hour will take away the golden hour for rescue.

1. Directions from **Bachpan Bachao Andolan vs Union of India Writ Petition (Civil) No. 75 of 2012** and other Supreme Court judgments:

- a. **Definition of missing children:** missing child has been defined as a person below eighteen years of age, whose whereabouts are not known to the parents, legal guardians and any other person who may be legally entrusted with the custody of the child, whatever may be the circumstances/causes of disappearance. The child will be considered missing and in need of care and protection within the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2015, until located and/or his/her safety/well-being is established.
- b. **Mandatory FIR registration with presumption of abduction or trafficking:** in case of every missing child reported, there will be an initial presumption of either abduction or trafficking, unless, in the investigation, the same is proved otherwise. In case of complaint with regard to any missing children made in a police station, the same should be reduced into a First Information Report and appropriate steps should be taken to see that follow-up investigation is taken up immediately thereafter.
- c. **Statutory procedure for complaints and preliminary inquiry:** whenever any complaint is filed before the police authorities regarding a missing child, the same must be entertained under Section 173 of the Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita, 2023, , 2023. However, even in respect of complaints made otherwise with regard to a child, which may

come within the scope of Section 174 of the Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita, 2023, , 2023, upon making an entry in the Book to be maintained for the purposes of Section 174 of the Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita, 2023, , 2023, and after referring the information to the Magistrate concerned, continue with the inquiry into the complaint. The Magistrate, upon receipt of the information recorded under Section 174 of the Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita, 2023, , 2023, shall proceed, in the meantime, to take appropriate action under sub-section (2), especially, if the complaint relates to a child and, in particular, a girl child.

- d. **Child Welfare Police Officer (CWPO):** Every police station shall designate a Child Welfare Police Officer (CWPO) as per Section 107 of Juvenile Justice Act, not below the rank of Assistant Sub-Inspector, to handle child-related cases in a child-sensitive and rights-based manner. Such officers shall be appropriately trained and periodically monitored to ensure accountability and effectiveness.
- e. **Deployment of para-legal volunteers and NGOs coordination for child protection and rehabilitation:** para-legal volunteers, who have been recruited by the legal services Authorities, should be utilized, so that there is, at least, one paralegal volunteer, in shifts, in the police station to keep a watch over the manner in which the complaints regarding missing children and other offences against children are dealt with. The State Legal Services Authorities should also work out a network of NGOs, whose services could also be availed of at all levels for the purpose of tracing and reintegrating missing children with their families which, in fact, should be the prime object, when a missing child is recovered.
- f. **Public notification and media dissemination of recovered children:** every found/recovered child must be immediately photographed by the police for purposes of advertisement and to make his relatives / guardians aware of the child having been recovered / found/**to use technology such as facial recognition to match the child.** Photographs of the recovered child should be published on the website and through the newspapers and even on the T.V. so that the parents of the missing child could locate their missing child and recover

him or her from the custody of the police.

- g. **Coordination and monitoring mechanism with legal enforcement agencies:** standard operating Procedure must be laid down to handle the cases of missing children and to invoke appropriate provisions of law where trafficking, child labour, abduction, exploitation and similar issues are disclosed during investigation or after the recovery of the child, when the information suggests the commission of such offences. A protocol should be established by the local police with the High Courts and also with the State Legal Services Authorities for monitoring the case of a missing child.
- h. **Escalation to AHTUs:** In case a missing child is not recovered within four months from the date of filing of the First Information Report, the matter may be forwarded to the Anti-Human Trafficking Unit of the concerned District in order to enable the said unit to take up more intensive investigation regarding the missing child. The Anti-Human Trafficking Unit shall file periodical status reports after every three months to keep the Legal Services Authorities updated.
- i. **Regulation and monitoring of placement agencies:** State/UT Police, in coordination with the Labour Department, District Administration and Child Welfare Committees, may ensure strict monitoring of placement agencies supplying children/adolescents as domestic help or labour. Records of private placement agencies may be maintained by Labour Department/Police. Such agencies should not be allowed to function unchecked, as the judgment highlights their role in trafficking, forced labour, domestic servitude and sexual exploitation of children.
- j. **Mandatory verification of agencies, employers and children placed for work:** A district-level online mechanism may be developed to maintain details of placement agencies, employers, children/adolescents placed, their age, address, nature of work, period of employment, wages and commission paid to agencies. Such records should be accessible to CWC, police and other competent authorities for verification and follow-

up.

k. Mandatory police verification and background check on periodic basis, of every staff, teaching or non-teaching, regular or contractual, or any other person being an employee of any institution housing children or coming in regular contact with children including schools, creches, sports academies or any other facility for children

l. Child trafficking to be treated as an organised crime : Cases involving movement of children through placement agencies, false job promises, forced domestic work, begging, prostitution, drug peddling, slavery or bonded labour should be treated as potential organised trafficking cases requiring intelligence-led investigation and inter-State coordination.

m. Immediate rescue, production and rehabilitation of children: Whenever a child is found in exploitative domestic work, forced labour, trafficking, confinement or abuse, police should ensure immediate rescue and production before the Child Welfare Committee, followed by safe shelter, counselling, rehabilitation, education and reintegration with family wherever appropriate.

n. Child-friendly and confidential handling: During enquiry, rescue and investigation, the child's confidentiality must be protected. Police/LEAs should avoid unnecessary photography, videography or disclosure of identity, and should use non-threatening, non-intrusive and sensitive questioning while interacting with the child, family or local community.

o. Risk assessment before rescue operations: Before conducting fact-finding or rescue operations, police should assess the risk to the child, witnesses, NGOs and other assisting persons. Operations should preferably be conducted by teams and in coordination with CWC, Labour Department, NGOs and other relevant authorities to avoid further victimisation of the child.

p. No child to be kept in a police station: A rescued child should not

be kept in a police station and must be shifted promptly to a safe and child-friendly environment, shelter home, or institution as directed by the Child Welfare Committee. Details of the Child Welfare Committee should be maintained at every police station and shared with any person in need or upon request. Till such transfer is completed, the police station should provide immediate support, including food, water, toilet facilities, interpreter/translator services, and access to a support person.

- q. **Use of support persons and specialised agencies:** In child-related cases, police should involve Child Welfare Committees, Childline, NGOs, crisis intervention centres, translators/interpreters and support persons [*Bachpan Bachao Andolan vs Union of India & Ors.*, dated 18.08.2023 (2023) 9 SCC 133], wherever required. Detailed interviews of child victims may preferably be conducted by trained persons or in the presence of appropriate child protection functionaries.
- r. **Single-window coordination mechanism:** States/UTs may consider creating a coordinated or single-window enforcement mechanism so that victims, families or NGOs do not have to approach multiple authorities separately. Police, labour department, CWC, women/child commissions, AHTUs and district administration should work in a coordinated manner for rescue, investigation, wage recovery, shelter and rehabilitation.
- s. **Documentation and evidence recording:** Police/LEAs should ensure careful documentation of all facts relating to trafficking and exploitation, including location, dates, persons involved, mode of transport, route, financial transactions and following the money trail, wages withheld, nature of brutality or abuse, employer details and agency details. Verified facts, assumptions and witness statements should be clearly distinguished in written records.
- t. **Recovery of wages and protection of freedom of movement:** In cases of child labour/domestic servitude, the response should not be limited to rescue. Mechanisms should also ensure recovery of unpaid wages, protection of freedom of movement, shelter in cases of abuse and access to rehabilitation before the child is sent home.

- u. **Accountability of placement agencies and employers:** Failure of placement agencies to provide accurate details of children placed, employers, wages, addresses and period of employment should invite appropriate legal action. Employers found involved in abuse, confinement, forced labour, sexual exploitation or non-payment of wages should be prosecuted under relevant laws. Standard operating procedures for placement agencies should be developed to address trafficking and exploitation.
- v. **Inter-State coordination for source and destination areas:** Since children may be trafficked from vulnerable districts and transported to destination cities for domestic work, begging, prostitution, forced labour or other exploitation, police should establish coordination between source, transit and destination States/UTs for tracing, rescue, investigation and rehabilitation.
- w. **Follow-up till trial and rehabilitation:** As far as possible, continuity of the investigating officer may be maintained from investigation to trial. Police should also support prosecution, witness protection, psycho-legal support, trauma counselling, rehabilitation and reintegration of the rescued child.
- x. **Post-recovery actions:** Once a child is recovered, the police authorities shall carry out further investigation to see whether there is any involvement of any trafficking in the procedure by which the child went missing and if, on investigation, such links are found, the police shall take appropriate action thereupon.
- y. **Rehabilitation child care homes:** the state authorities shall arrange for adequate shelter homes to be provided for missing children, who are recovered and do not have any place to go to. Such shelter homes or after-care homes will have to be set up by the state government concerned and funds to run the same will also have to be provided by the state government together with proper infrastructure. Such homes should be put in place within three months, at the latest. Any private home, being run for the purpose of sheltering children, shall not be entitled to receive

a child, unless forwarded by the Child Welfare Committee and unless they comply with all the provisions of the Juvenile Justice Act, including registration. Details of shelter home, child care institution shall be shared with police station and made available on the website on the State Government/Social welfare department

2. **Assistance from the public and sister agencies** (especially Railway Protection Force) <https://rpf.indianrailways.gov.in/RPF> may be mobilized promptly utilizing all the channels for spreading the word, from police wireless to NIC QuickSMS to Social Media to Newspapers Radio and TV Channels. The details of the child should be uploaded on Mission Vatsalya Portal by Police. Standard operating procedures for convergence between RPF and GRP should be made to ensure registration of cases and arrest of traffickers. Railway Police need to register zero FIR in offences of kidnapping, missing children and trafficking.
3. **Strengthening of Anti-Human Trafficking Units** must be done at both district and state levels to conduct targeted operations, monitor trafficking routes, and dismantle organised networks. Trafficking of children must be addressed as an organised and network-driven crime requiring coordinated and intelligence-led interventions. Surveillance must focus on transit points such as railway stations and bus terminals, as well as destination areas where exploitation is likely to occur. Regular review of investigations and strict enforcement of relevant legal provisions are essential to disrupting these networks.
4. **Digital documentation** for missing and found children should be done. States/UT Administration should ensure mandatory updation of all found children, including those sheltered in the Child Care Institutions are entered on to the **Mission Vatsalya Portal, which is managed by Ministry of Women and Child Development**. Such uploading is mandatory under **Section 32 (2) Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2015**; non-reporting is punishable under **Section 33 and Section 34 Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2015**. **Aadhar Data** may be utilised to locate families of found children, with an order from the District and Session Judge. Instruction/Advisories on the issue of missing

children/person issued by Ministry of Women and Child Development vide letter dated 25.06.2026 and the hon'ble supreme court order dated 22.05.2026 in the SLP No. 11263/2025 G. Ganesh vs State of Tamil Nadu may should be followed.

D. Additional Measures for Enhancing Women and Child Safety

1. Forensic and Medical Response

- a. In rape/sexual assault cases, medical examination of the victim by a registered medical practitioner should be ensured within the prescribed legal framework and with consent, as provided under **Section 184 Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita, 2023**. No prohibited or unscientific examination, including the two-finger test, shall be conducted. Victims shall simultaneously be referred to One Stop Centres, counselling services and legal aid wherever required. At least one government hospital in every district should be designated and equipped for round-the-clock medico-legal examination of sexual assault survivors, so that examination is not delayed pending availability of a specific practitioner or facility.
- b. Forensic evidence should be collected, preserved, and transported strictly in accordance with the guidelines issued by the Directorate of Forensic Science Services under the Ministry of Home Affairs. SOPs for medical officers and investigating officers regarding the collection of DNA samples for forensic examination, along with other forensic science-related SOPs, are available on the Directorate's website. **Sexual Assault Evidence Collection (SAEC) Kits** issued to States/UTs should be used in every reported case of sexual assault, and police personnel, prosecutors, and medical officers should be regularly trained in their proper use.
- c. Police need to ensure close coordination with forensic science laboratories, medical officers and prosecutors from the initial stage of investigation to minimise evidentiary gaps and improve the quality of prosecution.
- d. **Time bound forensic examination** -Greater emphasis may be laid on timely forensic examination by ensuring early involvement of forensic experts, prompt collection of scientific evidences, and regular monitoring

of pending FSL reports to improve the quality of investigation. India should have a single, centralized national forensic DNA database. DNA profiles generated in accordance with applicable law should be utilised for investigation of repeat offenders while ensuring privacy safeguards and lawful handling of biological evidence. {similar to UMID database (Unidentified Bodies, Missing Persons, Identification portal and DNA Database)}.

2. Technology-enabled Monitoring and Investigation Support

- a. States/UTs may ensure regular use of the **Investigation Tracking System for Sexual Offences (ITSSO)** for monitoring completion of investigation in sexual offence cases within the prescribed two-month period. Pendency should be reviewed up to police station level, and data on CCTNS should be updated regularly.
- b. Police authorities shall ensure timely, accurate and complete updation of records relating to crimes against women and children on CCTNS, ICJS and other notified digital platforms. Periodic supervisory review and data validation should be undertaken to maintain the integrity of crime records, facilitate evidence-based policing, and support policy formulation, monitoring and research.
- c. **The National Database on Sexual Offenders (NDSO)** may be used regularly by investigating agencies for verification, investigation support, offender tracking and prevention of repeat offences, subject to applicable safeguards.
- d. **NCRB tools such as Cri-MAC, ZIPNET, ICJS** may be effectively utilised for inter-State sharing of crime-related information through the National Crime Alert and communication platform for missing and found persons. The platform further facilitates real-time alerts, inter-unit coordination, and seamless transfer of Zero FIRs across States/UTs, thereby strengthening timely response, investigation, and follow-up action.
- e. **Integrating CCTNS, e-Courts and other digital platforms, including ICJS, ITSSO, e-Prosecution, e-Forensics** ensures a centralised monitoring/State-level digital dashboards that reflect real-time

improvements of cases, facilitate inter-agency coordination, and support evidence-based decision-making at all levels of administration, by tracking compliance with statutory timelines at every stage of the criminal justice process, including FIR registration, investigation, forensics examination, filing of charge sheets, cognizance, framing of charges, recording of evidence, and trial proceeding. Monitoring may be anchored in key performance indicators, including reduction in delays in FIR registration, decrease in case pendency, timely filing of charge sheets, and prompt disbursement of victim compensation. Such data-backed oversight mechanisms are critical for enhancing transparency, improving efficiency, and ensuring accountability in the justice delivery system.

- f. **Digital access to justice** may broaden by developing online platforms and modules for filing complaints, tracking cases, accessing compensation schemes, and disseminating legal awareness.
- g. **The central citizen service** available through the Digital Police portal for online search of missing persons may be publicised and integrated with local police outreach, especially in missing children and trafficking-related cases.
- h. **The Emergency Response Support System (ERSS-112)**, including call, SMS, email and 112 India mobile application, may be strengthened through backend coordination, response-time monitoring, field resource mapping and public awareness campaigns, particularly among women and girls.

3. Rehabilitation, Counselling and Victim Support

- a. Rehabilitation of victims should be treated as an integral part of police and administrative response. Victims and their families may be linked with counselling, medical support, legal aid, compensation, including interim compensation, shelter, education, livelihood support and long-term reintegration services as required.
- b. Professional counsellors may be empanelled at district level, and

counselling of victims and family members should preferably be undertaken by trained professionals rather than police personnel, while police may facilitate access and coordination.

- c. **Special Needs and Disability-Inclusive Rehabilitation Support** services should account for victims with disabilities, including provision of sign-language interpreters, accessible shelter facilities, and communication aids during statement recording and trial.
- d. The effectiveness of welfare, rehabilitation and compensation schemes for victimised women and children may be periodically reviewed by district and State-level authorities, with emphasis on timely access and removal of procedural barriers.
- e. Communication with victims and family members-Technology-based victim communication (SMS/WhatsApp updates regarding investigation progress, court dates, compensation, etc.) may be provide to improve transparency and victim confidence.
- f. Victim compensation should be disbursed by the District Legal Services Authorities in a timely manner, in coordination with the Police and District Child Protection Units, under the relevant Victim Compensation Scheme. Disbursement must be initiated at the earliest possible stage, ideally at the time of medical examination or FIR registration in serious cases, rather than being made contingent upon the outcome of trial.
- g. Every police station/Women Help Desk should ensure that survivors are informed of, and where required physically facilitated to, the nearest One Stop Centre at the first point of contact, so that medical, legal, psychological, and shelter support commence in parallel with the investigation.

(refer

<https://missionsbakti.wcd.gov.in/public/documents/whatsnew/SoP-OSCs.pdf>)

4. Protection of Complainants, Good Samaritans and Citizens Assisting Victims

- a. It must be ensured that complainants, good Samaritans or citizens assisting women and children in distress are not harassed by any public or private agency on account of extending such assistance.
- b. Clear instructions may be issued to field formations that persons reporting offences, assisting victims or helping in rescue/medical support shall be treated with dignity and shall not be subjected to unnecessary questioning, repeated summons or procedural inconvenience.

5. **Acceptance of Dying Declarations:** Section 26(a) of the Bharatiya Sakshya Adhiniyam (BSA), 2023, provides that the statement, written or verbal, by a person who is dead shall be treated as relevant fact in the investigation when the statement is made by a person as to the cause of his death, or as to any of the circumstances of the transaction which resulted in his death. Hon'ble Supreme Court in its order dated 7 January 2020, in the matter of Criminal Appeal Nos. 194-195 of 2012 in the case of Purshottam Chopra & Anr. v. State (Govt. of NCT Delhi), directed that a particular statement, when being offered as dying declaration and satisfies all the requirements of judicial scrutiny, cannot be discarded merely because it has not been recorded by a Magistrate or that the police officer did not obtain attestation by any person present at the time of making of the statement.

6. Evidence-based Research, Review and Policy Feedback

- a. Universities, research institutions and police training institutions may be encouraged to undertake studies on causes, risk factors, behavioural patterns, offender profiles, reporting barriers and institutional responses relating to crimes against women and children. Civil society organisations may also be engaged to understand challenges in the field and good practices.
- b. Findings from such research may be used to improve prevention strategies, training modules, hotspot identification, victim support

systems, public awareness campaigns and standard operating procedures.

7. **Essential Components of Training for Police Personnel:**

The training should cover **gender-sensitive and victim-centric conduct**, including privacy, dignity, non-judgmental communication and prevention of secondary victimisation. It should include **mandatory legal duties**, especially FIR/Zero FIR registration, time-bound investigation, and accountability for delay or refusal. Training must focus on **investigation standards**, including medical examination, forensic evidence, proper use of SAEC kits, statement recording, documentation and chain of custody. It should also include **child-friendly procedures, missing child response, trafficking indicators, cyber safety, and use of tools such as CCTNS, ITSSO, Cri-MAC, NDSO and ERSS-112**. Lastly, it should cover **rehabilitation, counselling, referral to support agencies, community outreach and supervisory review mechanisms**.

8. **Establishing Standing Mechanism for better investigation, prosecution monitoring and coordination:**

- a. **Identification of repeat offenders** -A system for identifying repeat offenders and crime hotspots may be institutionalised by effectively utilising available databases. This will help in preventive policing and focused deployment in vulnerable areas.
- b. **Coordination amongst stakeholders**-Regular coordination meetings may be held between Police, Prosecution, Forensic experts, One Stop Centres, Child Welfare Committees, Juvenile Justice Boards, Child Care Institutions and Legal Services Authorities, in serious cases involving women and children to ensure coordinated and timely action.
- c. **System for time bound investigation** -A mechanism for periodic assessment of investigating officers may be introduced, along with refresher training, to ensure that investigations are conducted professionally, within prescribed timelines, and in accordance with legal provisions. Further, the chargesheets must be filed within the timelines as

prescribed under Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita, 2023, POCSO and other applicable laws.

- d. **Feedback mechanism**- A mechanism for obtaining victim feedback after completion of investigation may be introduced to identify gaps in police response and improve service delivery.
- e. **Repository of best practices** - A district-level best practices repository may be developed so that successful models can be replicated across other districts.
- f. **A real-time monitoring dashboard** - It may be developed at the District/State level to monitor important parameters and time taken at every stage of the investigation and trial. This involves FIR registration, investigation progress, forensic reports, filing of charge sheets, victim compensation, and disposal of cases. This will enable timely supervisory intervention across all the following stages:
 - i. Filing of complaint
 - ii. Registration of FIR
 - iii. Recording of statement of victim under section 183 of Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita, 2023,
 - iv. Time taken during investigation
 - v. Filing of chargesheet
 - vi. Appointment of Support persons
 - vii. Release of interim compensation
 - viii. Framing of Charges
 - ix. Testimony of victims/witnesses
 - x. Time taken to complete the entire trial
 - xi. Time taken for appeal in case of acquittal/conviction
- g. **Special Public Prosecutors** (SPPs) must be appointed in all cases involving crimes against women and children, and should be well-versed with all laws applicable to offences against women and children, including the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, 2023, POCSO Act, Immoral Traffic

(Prevention) Act, 1956, and related special legislation (*Refer Section 18(8) Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita, 2023,). SPPs so appointed must receive specialised and periodic training on victim-sensitive prosecution, appreciation of forensic and digital evidence, trauma-informed examination of witnesses (particularly child and vulnerable witnesses), online and technology-facilitated offences, human trafficking, and other emerging forms of technology-enabled crime, so as to improve the quality and effectiveness of prosecutions and secure higher rates of conviction.*

- h. **Victim-Accused Separation & Pre-Statement Counselling** - Ensure that women and children victims of crimes are immediately separated from the accused and to be kept segregated throughout the investigation and trial proceedings, (including during medical examination, identification proceedings, and recording of statements etc,) to prevent secondary victimisation and retraumatisation. Victims must be provided appropriate psychological counselling by a trained counsellor/psychologist prior to the recording of their statements under Sections 180 and 183 of The Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita, 2023, (as applicable), so as to enable them to depose freely and without fear or distress.
- i. In cases involving organized crimes (like cyber-enabled offences especially against women and children, trafficking etc.) police authorities shall undertake parallel financial investigations to identify, trace, freeze and recover the proceeds of crime and other digital evidence. Investigating Officers shall promptly analyse bank accounts, payment gateways, Unified Payments Interface (UPI) transactions, mobile wallets, prepaid instruments, cryptocurrency transactions, mule accounts and other digital financial channels used for commission of the offence. Additionally, parallel coordination with Financial Intelligence Unit-India (FIU-IND) and, where warranted, referral for action under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act, 2002, may be undertaken alongside the financial

investigation.

9. **Mandatory registration, licensing, and periodic inspection** of placement agencies, labour contractors, and recruitment intermediaries operating in source and transit areas, with police coordination for verification of antecedents and prompt action against unregistered or non-compliant operators found facilitating trafficking under the guise of employment. Such registration may be linked to a centralised database accessible to the Police, Labour Department, and Anti-Human Trafficking Units (AHTUs), to enable cross-verification and tracking.

Conclusion

Ensuring the safety of women and children requires a coordinated approach combining legal provisions, effective policing, institutional accountability, and community participation. Legislation provide the necessary framework, but their impact depends on proper and timely implementation. A project report for crime against women and children prepared by BPR&D is attached as Annexure IV(2).

There is a need to move from a reactive approach to a preventive and evidence-based system, particularly in addressing trafficking, cyber offences, workplace safety, and crimes against vulnerable groups. Regular monitoring and clear accountability at all levels are essential for effective implementation. Awareness programmes and community involvement are also important to improve reporting and early intervention. Women Help Desks, child protection systems, grievance redressal bodies, and coordination between agencies need to be strengthened to improve access to support and justice. The overall objective is to ensure a safe environment where women and children can access their rights without fear.

List of Annexures

S. No	Annexure	Subject	URL/Link
1.	Annexure-I	Standard Operating Procedure (SOP): Zero FIR & E-FIR	https://bprd.nic.in/uploads/pdf/SOP_on_Zero_FIR%20and%20eFIR%20-%20NCL%202023.pdf
2.	Annexure-II	Women, Children and the New Criminal Laws An overview of changes introduced in Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita and Bharaiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita, 2023	https://bprd.nic.in/uploads/pdf/Women%2C%20Children%20and%20the%20New%20Criminal%20Laws%20(1).pdf
3.	Annexure-III	Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) for Investigation and Prosecution of Rape against Women	https://bprd.nic.in/uploads/pdf/SOP%20for%20Investigation%20and%20Prosecution%20of%20Rape%20against%20Women%20-Final%20submitted%20(Revised)%20to%20JS%20WS%20MHA.pdf

4.	Annexure-IV	Crime Against Women & Children – A National Level Model For Victim Support & Assistance System (One Stop Centres)-	https://bprd.nic.in/uploads/pdf/MM07%20Crime%20Against%20Women%20%26%20Children%20%E2%80%93%20A%20National%20Level%20Model%20For%20Victim%20Support%20%26%20Assistance%20System%20(One%20Stop%20Centres).pdf
		Crime Against Women : Investigation Techniques(2021-22)-	https://bprd.nic.in/uploads/pdf/03%20Crime%20against%20women%20Investigation%20Techniques.pdf
5.	Annexure-V	Investigating Sex Trafficking: A Handbook, 2025	
6.	Annexure-VI	Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) for Women Help Desks	https://bprd.nic.in/uploads/pdf/SOP%20for%20Women%20Help%20Desks.pdf