

Elimination of Violence against Women

Mains: *GS II – Welfare Schemes for Vulnerable Sections of the population by the Centre and States and the Performance of these Schemes.*

Why in News?

Recently, the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women November 25 was celebrated and it carries profound resonance globally.

What is the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women?

- **Established by** – The United Nations General Assembly in 2000.
- **Significance** – This day marks the start of the global *16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence* from November 25 to December 10.
- **2025 Theme** – For 2025, the global theme is UNiTE to End Digital Violence against All Women and Girls.
- **Digital violence faced by women** – From online harassment and cyberstalking to deepfakes, cyberstalking, doxxing, and coordinated misogynistic attacks, technology-facilitated gender-based violence has emerged as a disturbing new form of abuse.

What is Digital Abuse?

Digital tools are increasingly being used to stalk, harass, and abuse women and girls.

This includes:

- Image-based abuse/ non-consensual sharing of intimate images.
- Cyberbullying, trolling, and online threats.
- Online harassment and sexual harassment.
- **AI-generated deepfakes.**
- Hate speech and disinformation on social media platforms.
- **Doxxing** – publishing private information.
- Online stalking or surveillance/tracking to monitor someone's activities.
- Online grooming.
- **Catfishing** and impersonation.
- **Misogynistic networks** – e.g. manosphere, incel forums.



What is Manosphere

Online misogyny is increasingly infiltrating schoolyards, workplaces, and intimate relationships, reflecting deeper societal issues that need urgent attention and action.



What are the institutional and legal measure taken by India to End Violence against Women?

- **National Commission for Women (NCW)** – This Commission was established as a statutory body by the Government of India on January 31, 1992.
- It works with the mandate to examine and monitor all constitutional and legal safeguards for women, recommend amendments to existing laws wherever required, and investigate complaints related to the deprivation of women's rights.
- **State commissions for women** – Most states have also constituted State Commissions for Women (SCWs) with parallel responsibilities.
- The NCW receives complaints of violence and rights violations against women, both in writing and online.
 - **Helplines** – Furthermore, the National Commission for Women (NCW) launched Helpline number(s) for reporting of domestic violence incidences.
 - One such helpline number is 7827170170 to provide 24x7 online support to women in distress through referral by linking them with Police, Hospitals, District Legal Services Authority, psychological counsellors etc.
- The portal is driven by Interactive Voice Response (IVR) mechanism through Digital India, in collaboration with Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology.
- **Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, 2023** – This replaces the Indian Penal Code (IPC) and introduces stringent penalties for sexual offenses, including the life imprisonment for rape of minors under 18 years.
- It expands definitions of sexual offenses, mandates audio-video recording of victim statements, and prioritises crimes against women and children in trial proceedings.

- **Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act, 2005 (PWDVA)** - In India, domestic violence is governed by this Act.
- It defines an “aggrieved person” as any woman who is, or has been, in a domestic relationship with the respondent.
- Domestic relationship means they live or have lived together in a shared household, and can be related by marriage, adoption, or family ties.
 - **Section 3** - It defines domestic violence as any act that harms a woman’s physical or mental health or endangers her safety, including harassment for unlawful demands.
- The term “domestic violence” includes:
 - **Physical abuse** (harm, injury, or threat)
 - **Sexual abuse** (any non-consensual or humiliating sexual act)
 - **Verbal / emotional abuse** (insults, threats, humiliation)
 - **Economic abuse** (withholding money, denying access to resources, disposing of property)
 - **Dowry-related harassment** or coercion for property / dowry
- **Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition, and Redressal) Act, 2013** - This Act applies to all women, regardless of age, job type, or work sector.
- It mandates employers to create an Internal Committee (IC) in workplaces with over 10 employees, while the Appropriate Government sets up Local Committees (LCs) for smaller organisations or cases against employers.
- The Ministry of Women and Child Development (MWCD) oversees implementation and awareness.
- To centralise complaint data, the MWCD launched SHe-Box, a portal for reporting and tracking cases, with inquiries under the Act required to be completed within 90 days.
- **Mission Shakti** - It is an integrated, mission-mode umbrella scheme designed to enhance women’s safety, security, and empowerment.
- It operationalises the government’s vision of “women-led development” by tackling challenges women face throughout their life cycle, promoting coordination across ministries, and encouraging citizen ownership to position women as equal contributors to nation-building.
- **Shelter homes under ‘Swadhar Greh Scheme’** - The Ministry of Women and Child Development is implementing the Swadhar Greh Scheme.
- The scheme caters to primary needs of women in difficult circumstances.
- It includes women and girls rendered homeless due to family discord, crime, violence, mental stress, social ostracism as well as women and girls at risk of being forced into prostitution.
- Through the provisions of shelter, food, clothing, counselling, training, clinical and legal aid, the scheme aims to rehabilitate such women in difficult circumstances, both economically and emotionally.
- **One Stop Centre** - The Ministry of Women and Child Development also implemented the One Stop Centre (OSC) Scheme.
- These OSCs provide a range of integrated services under one roof including police facilitation, medical aid, legal aid and counselling, psycho-social counselling and temporary shelter to women affected by violence or those in distress.
- **Stree Manoraksha** - It is for providing basic and advanced training under project

‘Stree Manoraksha’ to the staff of One Stop Centres across the country.

- They are trained on handling psycho-social and mental health care needs to support the women facing violence and distress.
- **Digital Shakti Campaign** - The National Commission for Women has been implementing the Digital Shakti Campaign, a pan India project aimed at digitally empowering and skilling women and girls.
- In line with its commitment to create safe online spaces, Digital Shakti equips women with the skills and awareness needed to protect themselves and take action against illegal or inappropriate activities online.
- **National Domestic Violence Helpline** - It works with the aim to provide 24x7 emergency and non-emergency support to women facing any form of violence or distress.
- The scheme offers assistance nationwide through a toll-free number **181**, connecting women to services via a referral system.
- **Nirbhaya Fund** - The Government also implements Emergency Response Support System (ERSS) under the Nirbhaya Fund.
- It is a pan-India, single, internationally recognised number, i.e., **112** based system for various emergencies such as police, fire and ambulance services, with computer aided dispatch of field resources to the location of distress.
- In addition to that, a **WhatsApp number 7217735372** was also launched as emergency response during Covid Pandemic lockdown.
- In matters which required urgent intervention, the State Police authorities were also approached through telephone calls/ email for providing immediate assistance to these women.

What are the Institutional Mechanisms?

- **Fast Track Special Courts (FTSCs)** - Operationalised under the Nirbhaya Fund, these courts expedite trials for rape and POCSO cases.
- **Women Help Desks (WHDs)** - Set up in police stations to facilitate sensitive reporting of gender-based violence.
- **SHe-Box Portal** - The Ministry of Women and Child Development launched the SHe-Box portal, a unified online platform fully aligned with the Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act, 2013 (POSH Act).
 - **Serves as a centrally accessible repository** - It contains details of all Internal Committees (ICs) and Local Committees (LCs) constituted across government and private sector organisations nationwide.
 - The portal enables women to lodge complaints of workplace sexual harassment, track their progress in real time.
 - It ensures that every complaint is automatically routed to the concerned IC/LC of the respective workplace, whether in Central Ministries, State/UT administrations, or private entities.
 - **Nodal officers** - It mandates the appointment of a nodal officer in every organisation to regularly update committee details and complaint status, facilitating effective monitoring and swift redressal.

What are some technology-driven initiatives to monitor the progress of schemes?

- **Investigation Tracking System for Sexual Offences (ITSSO)** – An online platform that enables real-time monitoring and tracking of police investigations in sexual assault cases to ensure timely completion.
- **National Database on Sexual Offenders (NDSO)** – A central registry of convicted sexual offenders designed to help law-enforcement agencies identify and track repeat offenders.
- **Crime Multi-Agency Centre (Cri-MAC)** – This system facilitates instant sharing of information on heinous and inter-state crimes among police stations and higher authorities across all States and Union Territories via alerts, emails, and SMS which strengthens coordination, leading to a rapid response.

What lies ahead?

- These integrated efforts reflect the nation's commitment to building a safer, more inclusive environment where every woman and girl both offline and online can live with dignity, freedom, and equal opportunity.

Reference

[PIB| Ending Violence against Women](#)