Impact of Pandemic on Crimes and Suicides

What is the issue?

Increase in violent crimes, suicides in NCRB's Crime in India report 2021 points to indirect consequences of pandemic.

What is NCRB ?

- **Origin**- The National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB) was established in 1986 with the aim of establishing a body to compile and keep records of data on crime.
- **Ministry-** It functions under the **Union Home Ministry**.
- **Functions**- Its functions include collection, coordination and exchange of information on inter-state and international criminals to the respective states.
- NCRB also acts as a national warehouse for the fingerprint records of Indian and foreign criminals, and assists in locating interstate criminals through fingerprint search.
- **Reports of NCR**
    - Crime in India
    - Accidental Deaths & Suicides in India (ADSI)
    - Prison Statistics India
    - Report on Missing Women and Children in India
    - Fingerprint in India

What is the status of violent crimes in India in 2021?

- Registration in violent crimes such as rape, kidnapping, atrocities against children, robberies and murders increased in 2021 in comparison to the drop in 2020.
- **Overall crime rate**- The overall crime rate (per 1 lakh people) decreased from 487.8 in 2020 to 445.9 in 2021.
- **Major crimes**- Cruelty by husband or his relatives constituted 31.8% of crimes against women.
- **Chargesheeting and conviction rate**- While violent crimes increased, the chargesheeting rate fell as did the conviction rate.
- **State wise data**- Assam (76.6 violent crimes per one lakh people), Delhi (57) and West Bengal (48.7) had the highest numbers.
- Gujarat, Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu registered the lowest numbers.
- **Safest city-** Kolkata has emerged as the safest city in 2021 with the fewest cognisable offences recorded per lakh of its population.

What about the status of suicides?

- **Suicide rate**- The report revealed that the suicide rate in the population in 2021 — 12 per one lakh people was the highest in the last five years.
- **Main reasons**- Domestic problems (33.2%) and illnesses (18.6%).
- **Other causes**- Drug abuse/addiction, marriage-related issues, love affairs, bankruptcy or indebtedness.
- **Victims**- Most victims are daily wage earners (25.6%) and housewives (14.1%).
- **Region**- Delhi saw a massive 24% jump in suicides, followed by Chennai and Bengaluru.

What does the report signify?

- Domestic violence continues to be a major issue.
- The decrease in crime rate is largely due to a decrease in cases registered under disobedience to a public servant's order, relating to lockdowns.
- The decrease in chargesheeting rate and conviction rate signifies the poor response of law enforcement in a year with more violent crimes.
- The 5.9% jump in cases registered as cybercrimes over 2020 indicates the increasing use of digital devices and the related challenges.
- With India registering the highest excess deaths during the pandemic, according to the World Health Organization, these figures are not surprising.

References

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