

## National Crime Records Bureau Data

### Why in news?

The National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB) released the much delayed crime data for 2017.

### What are the categories of data?

- The NCRB has introduced more than three dozen new categories and sub-categories of crimes under various heads.
- At least four categories where significant diversification of data can be seen are -
  - i. crimes against women and children
  - ii. atrocities against Dalits
  - iii. cases of corruption
  - iv. time taken by police and courts to take cases to their conclusion
- For the first time, the NCRB has introduced categories of cyber crimes against women and children.
- In the case of Dalits, the NCRB has for the first time published data on offences registered solely under the SC/ST (Prevention of Atrocities) Act.
- The further categorisation under this includes insult, land grab and social ostracism.
- The NCRB has also recorded cases of disproportionate assets against public servants.
- The other heads include abetment, criminal intimidation, simple hurt, credit/debit card and online frauds, Internet crimes through online gaming and kidnapping for begging among others.
- Importantly, for the first time, the NCRB has dwelt on not just pendency of cases (with the police and courts) but also the period of such pendency.

### What are the highlights?

- **Women and children** - In the case of women and children, the NCRB has this time recorded data for "murder with rape".
- In 2017, close to 33,885 women were reported to have been raped across the country.
- Of these, 227 were murdered after the rape.
- Close to 28,150 children were raped with cases registered under IPC and the

POCSO Act.

- Of these, nearly 150 were killed after being raped.
- The NCRB has, however, removed the category of gangrape that was introduced to its database following the December 2012 gangrape case.
- In the category of cyber crimes against women, nearly 4,200 offences were recorded.
- It includes cases where women were stalked, blackmailed or their morphed pictures were uploaded on the internet.
- In a sub-category for SLL (special and local laws) cyber crimes against women, the number of women-centric crimes is given as 600.
- Of this, 271 relate to publishing or transmitting of sexually explicit material under the Information Technology Act.
- The report has also introduced the categories of sexual harassment at the workplace and in public transport.
- As many as 479 and 599 cases were reported in 2017 under these categories respectively.
- Also, nearly 33,600 cases were registered and close to 40,400 juveniles arrested during the year.
- Majority of juveniles in conflict with law apprehended under IPC and SLL crimes were in the age group of 16 to 18 years.
- These cases accounted for around 72% of cases during 2017.
- **Justice delayed** - In the latest report, the NCRB, besides the numbers, has also recorded the period of pendency.
- For IPC crimes, police are supposed to file a charge-sheet within 90 days.
- The data show that police delayed charge-sheets in 40% of cases.
- In certain cases such as rioting, which includes communal riots, police delayed filing of charge-sheets in 60% of the cases.
- There are more than 3 lakh cases pending investigations for more than one year.
- In more than 40% of cases, the fast-track courts have taken more than 3 years to finish the trial.
- In fact, in as many as 3,384 cases committed to fast-track courts, the trial was finished in more than 10 years.
- Of the 38,000-odd cases that fast-track courts completed in 2017, over 4,500 cases had been running for 5-10 years.
- In only around 11,500 cases was the trial completed within one year.
- In courts as a whole, more than 2,71,000 cases were pending trial at the end of 2017.
- **Other data** - Under the category of rioting, new subcategories have been added which include vigilante action, disputes over water, power and property and rioting during morchas.

- Some other new data include spreading of fake news where 257 offences have been recorded.
- As many as 952 election-related offences were also recorded in 2017 apart from offences relating to religion (1,808) and Obscene Acts and Songs at Public Places (29,557).

### What are the key drawbacks in the report?

- **Hate crimes** - The report omits data on mob lynchings, khap killings, murder by influential people and killings for religious reasons.
- A few months ago, government officials had blamed the States of West Bengal and Bihar for lackadaisical responses in sending data in this regard.
- The Supreme Court, in 2018, in an order, called for a special law to deal with lynching.
- Data on such hate crimes would have been useful in both law enforcement and jurisprudence.
- But the Central government has time and again argued against the need for a separate law.
- It has affirmed that curbing lynching was a matter of “enforcement”.
- As of now, there exist only a few independent “hate crime trackers” based on media reports.
- Without a proper accounting of hate crimes, tackling them effectively is hard.
- **State-wise variations** - The NCRB data on crime hide significant variances in case registration of serious crimes such as rapes and violence against women across States.
- This makes it difficult to draw State-wise comparisons.
- The total number of crimes committed against women country-wide increased by 6% since 2016, while those against dalits went up by 13%.
- However, there is the possibility of some States reporting such crimes better.
- This is pertinent, particularly in rape cases.
- E.g. the UT of Delhi registered a rate of 12.5 per one lakh population, surpassed only by MP (14.7) and Chhattisgarh (14.6)
- But the filing of rape complaints in Delhi have significantly increased following public outcry over the December 2012 rape incident.
- This could partially explain the high rate of such cases.
- The higher record of IPC crimes in Delhi among metropolitan cities in 2017 is also likely due to the use of easier (online) means to register them.
- **Assessment methodology** - The report uses the census base year as 2001 to calculate crime rates for States and 2011 for metropolitan cities.
- This makes the assessments unwieldy.

**Source: Indian Express, The Hindu**

