Rise of Crimes Against Women

Why in news?

As per annual report of National Crime Record Bureau the crimes against women rose 4% in 2022 compared to 2021.

Crime in India 2022
• **Released by-** National Crime Record Bureau. • **Increase in crime-** The report indicates 4% rise in crimes against women which corresponds to roughly 51 FIRs each hour. • **Majority of cases-** Cruelty by spouses or relatives accounted for the highest number of cases in crime against women, it is followed by • Kidnapping and abduction, • Assault "with intent to outrage modesty", and • Rape. • Around 13,000 cases were registered under *Dowry Prohibition Act.* • **Delhi-** It registered highest rate (144) of crime against women in the country which is far higher than the national average of 66.4. • **States-** Uttar Pradesh, Maharashtra, Rajasthan, West Bengal, and Madhya Pradesh these 5 states were responsible for around half of all cases filed in the country in 2022.

What are the causes for rise in crimes against women?

- **Patriarchal prisoners-** The root cause of crimes against women is the patriarchal society that does not value women's rights and dignity.
- **Regressive value system**- It undermine women's movements and empowerment which promote conservative, traditional, or backward views on gender roles, sexuality, and morality.
- **Gender based violence**- Child marriage, female genital mutilation, honour killings, dowry violence etc., and increase the crime rate against women.

As per World Health Organization (WHO) report 1 in 3 women in India face gender-based violence

- **Women as commodity**- Dowry system has tragically transformed the sacred institution of marriage into a cold business transaction.
- It is associated with various forms of violence and abuse against women, such as domestic violence, dowry deaths, and bride burning.
- **Policy paralysis**- India has women specific laws and schemes but the gap between the formulation of policies for protection of women and their implementation remains a key challenge.
- **Shock absorbers** - Women bear the brunt of the social and economic hardships

caused by inequality, discrimination, and lack of opportunities.

- **Inequality**-The high crime rate reflects the persistent discrimination and oppression faced by women and girls in India, across different social and economic groups.

Legal framework for women safety	
Laws	**About**
Immoral Traffic (Prevention) Act 1956	It aims to prevent trafficking for commercial sexual exploitation of women and
Dowry Prohibition Act, 1961	It prohibits the giving or taking of dowry.
Indecent Representation of Women (Prohibition) Act 1986	It is enacted to prohibit the advertisement or publication or any kind of indecent representation of women including writings, paintings, figures, etc.
Commission of Sati (Prevention) Act 1987	It prohibits the commission of sati, which is the act or rite of burning or burying alive of any widow or woman along with the body of her deceased husband.
Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act 2005	It recognizes *domestic violence as a human rights violation* and provides the right to every woman to live in a violence free home according to their wish.
Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act 2013	It is enacted based on the *Vishaka guidelines* framed by the Supreme Court that provides measures to protect the working women form evil of sexual harassment.

What are the challenges in the implementation of law?

- **Low representation**- In India, women police officers is only 11.7% against the global average of 24.7%.
- **Investigation hurdles**- Due to dismal proportion of women police officers the investigation and prosecution is affected, this leads to disproportionate levels of workload on women police personnel and slower rates of charge-sheeting and convictions.
- **Huge workload**- The low representation of women in police force causes disproportionate levels of workload on them and leads to slower rates of charge-sheeting and convictions.
- **Policing issues**- There is a severe lack training for investigations, with most of the investigating officers are juniors with a poor pay scale.
- **Delay in cases disposal**- Due to policing and investigation hurdles the case takes long time to resolve increasing the pendency of cases.

What lies ahead?

- There is a need for more *gender sensitive policing* which would require increasing the recruitment and retention of women police officers as well as providing with adequate training and support.
- A study by Commonwealth Human Rights Initiative recommended measures to improve the working conditions and opportunities for women police officials.

References

1. The Hindu- Crime against women on rise
2. NCRB- Crime in India 2022 report

