# Transferring Trial - Muzaffarpur Shelter Home Case

## Why in news?

The Supreme Court recently transferred the trial in the Muzaffarpur shelter home case from Bihar to a court in Delhi.

## What is the background?

- Mumbai's Tata Institute of Social Sciences submitted an audit report of 110 shelter homes in Bihar in April 2018.
- It alleged about the sexual exploitation of children at a shelter home in Muzaffarpur.
- At least 34 minor girls were allegedly drugged and raped.
- The CBI alleged that the main accused, Brajesh Thakur, had coerced girls to dance and have sexual intercourse with guests.
- Thakur is lodged in a high-security prison in Punjab at present.
- The CBI named 21 people as accused and has listed 101 people, including victims, as witnesses.
- However, CBI argued that the trial would not be fair if it was held in Muzaffarpur.
- Hence the SC recently ordered the transfer of trial in the case from Bihar to Saket trial court in New Delhi that deals with cases filed under the POSCO Act. Click here to know about the recent amendments to POSCO Act
- SC also ordered the trail to be completed in 6 months.

## What does it reveal?

- The intervention of the SC had become necessary, given the apparent apathy of the authorities in Bihar even after horrific instances of physical and sexual exploitation came to light.
- The Supreme Court criticised the Bihar government for its management of shelter homes.
- The response of the State government has not inspired much confidence.
- Apart from some officials being suspended, and some of those involved arrested, the State government did not have much to show as stringent action.

## What should be done?

- It is high time that States bestowed sufficient attention to such institutions.
- A recent Central government committee report highlighted the shocking inadequacies in the facilities available at most child care institutions and homes. Click here to know more
- The study highlights the disconnect between civil society and the welfare system for children, and the poor engagement of elected representatives.

**Source: The Hindu**

