



Swift Justice, Safer Society: The Impact of Fast Track Special Courts

(Ministry of Law and Justice)

20th March 2025

“Justice delayed is justice denied”

- William E Gladstone

- Fast Track Special Courts (FTSCs) play a crucial role in expediting justice for rape and POCSO Act cases, with a high disposal rate of 96.28%.
- In 2024 alone, **88,902** new cases were instituted and **85,595** cases were resolved, highlighting the effectiveness of FTSCs in addressing backlogs.
- The government extended the scheme until 2026 with a financial outlay of ₹1952.23 crore under the Nirbhaya Fund.
- These courts have collectively disposed of over **3,06,604 cases** as of the latest data.
- FTSCs reaffirm the government’s commitment to justice, women’s safety, and reducing the trauma faced by survivors of sexual crimes.



न्याय विभाग
DEPARTMENT
OF JUSTICE

सत्यमेव जयते

**Fast Track Special Courts
(FTSCs)**

75
Azadi Ka
Amrit Mahotsav

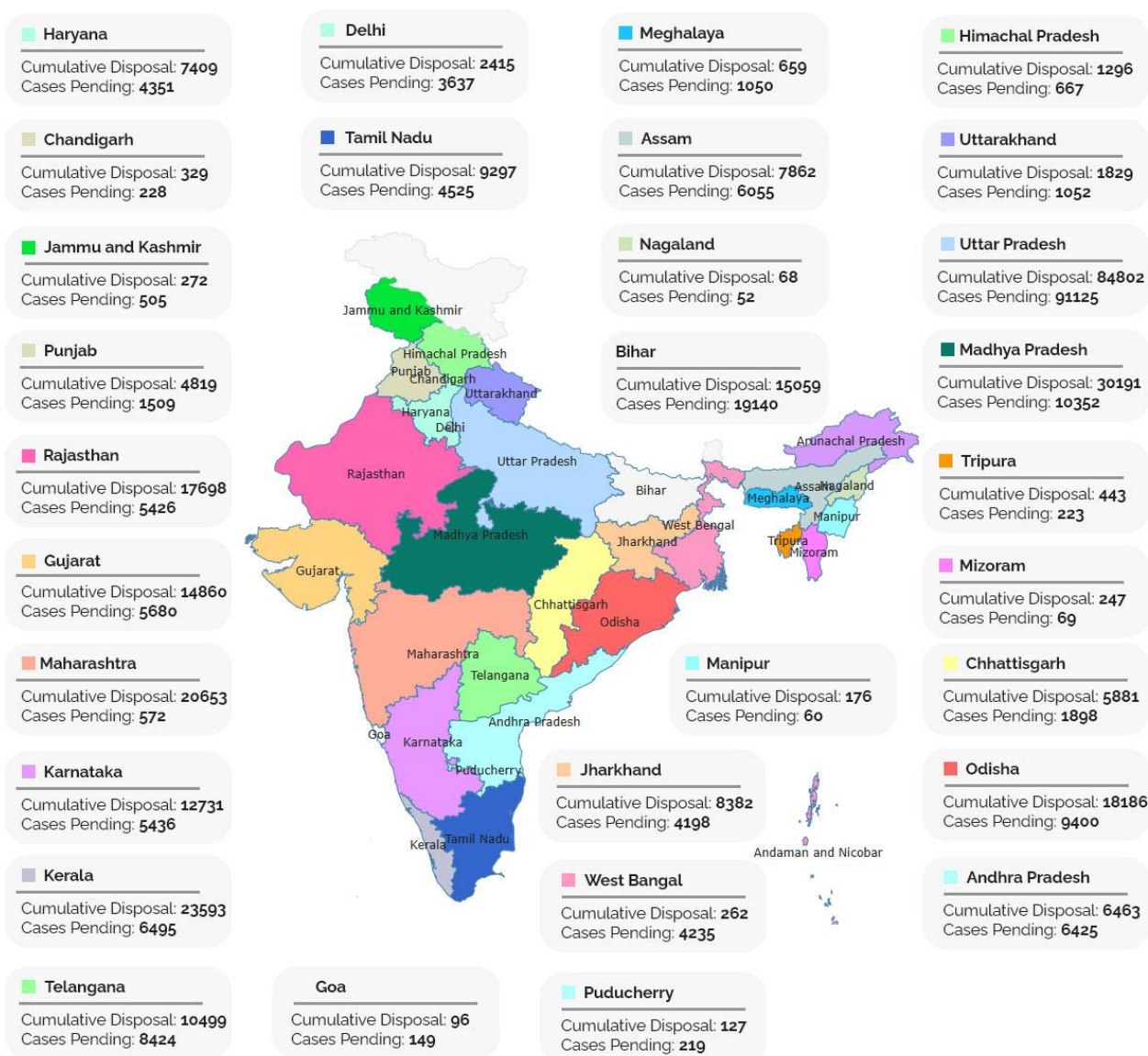
With an impressive **disposal rate of 96.28%**, Fast Track Special Courts (FTSCs) have significantly expedited justice for survivors of sexual crimes by ensuring **swift legal proceedings** in cases of **rape and offenses under the POCSO Act**. In **2024 alone, 88,902 new cases** were instituted, while **85,595 cases** were resolved, underscoring the **effectiveness of these courts** in addressing case backlogs.

Need for FTSCs

Despite the existence of a strong law and policy framework, a large number of rape and POCSO Act cases are pending in various courts across the country. The key motive behind introducing harsh punishment is to create deterrence, but it is only possible if trials are completed within the time frame

and justice is delivered expeditiously to the victims. The Criminal Procedure Code (CrPC) and POCSO Act prescribe strict timelines for the completion of investigation and trial, yet delays persist due to case backlogs and limited judicial resources.

The Hon'ble Supreme Court of India, in *Suo Motu Writ Petition (Criminal) No. 1/2019*, took up the issue of timely investigations and trials in POCSO Act offenses and issued directives on **July 25, 2019**, mandating speedy disposal of cases. To implement these directions and the **Criminal Law (Amendment) Act, 2018**, the Government launched the **FTSC Scheme on October 2, 2019**, establishing **specialized courts nationwide for the expeditious disposal of rape and POCSO Act cases**.



Progress so far

The implementation of the **Centrally Sponsored Scheme (CSS) of FTSCs**, managed by the **Department of Justice, Ministry of Law & Justice**, aims to support **State Governments** in establishing Fast Track Special Courts (FTSCs) across the country. Under the Scheme, a total of **790 FTSCs**, including **exclusive POCSO (e-POCSO) courts**, are to be set up. Each FTSC is expected to **dispose of 41-42 cases per quarter** and **at least 165 cases annually** to ensure timely justice and case backlog reduction. `

306604

Cumulative Disposal since the inception of the scheme



203157

Pendency in Fast Track Special Courts including exclusive POCSO



745

Functional Fast Track Special Courts including exclusive POCSO Courts.

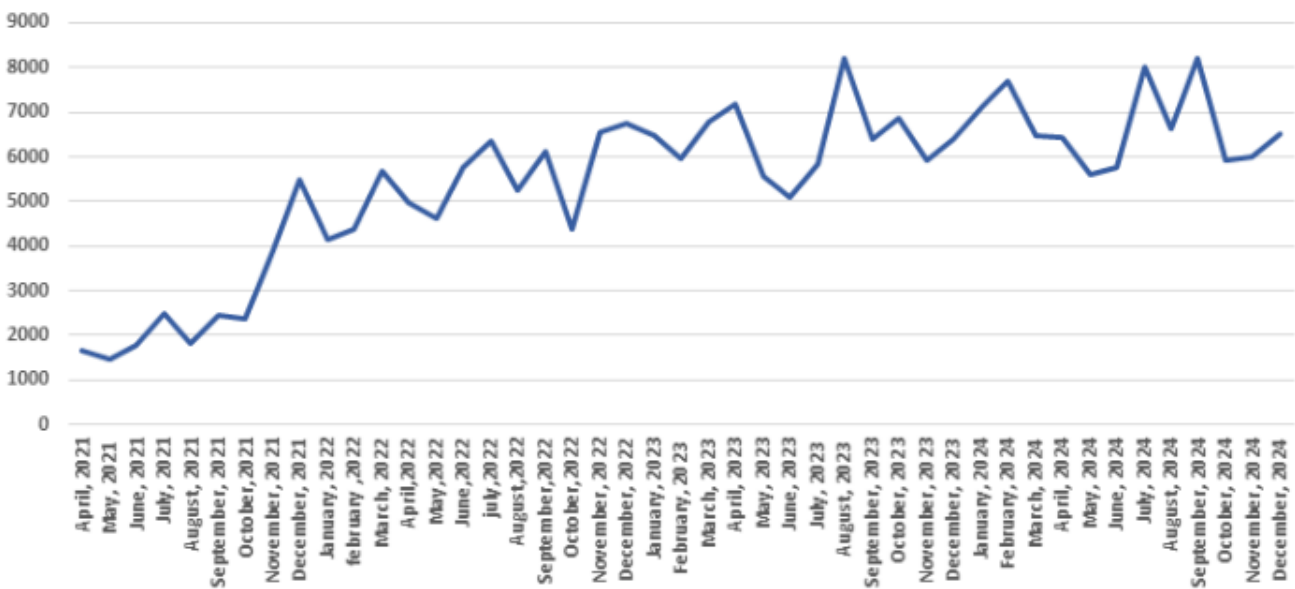


404

Total Functional exclusive POCSO Courts



Total Monthly Disposal (FTSCs including ePOCSO) since April, 2021



Currently, **745 Fast Track Special Courts (FTSCs)**, including **404** exclusive POCSO Courts, are operational across 30 States and UTs, having collectively disposed of over **3,06,604 cases** to date. Setting up and functioning of the FTSCs falls within the domain of State Govt. in consultation with their respective High Courts which are set up as per their need and resources.

FINANCIAL FRAMEWORK

The Fast Track Special Courts (FTSCs) Scheme was initially launched for one year and later extended until March 2023. The Union Cabinet, in its meeting on **November 28, 2023**, further extended the Scheme for three more years, from **April 1, 2023**, to **March 31, 2026**. The total financial outlay for this period is **₹1952.23 crore**, with ₹1207.24 crore as the Central Share, funded through the Nirbhaya Fund.



During the financial year 2024-25, a total of ₹200.00 crore has been allocated and fully released as the Central share of funds for the functioning of Fast Track Special Courts (FTSCs) in the States/UTs.

The financing of the **Fast Track Special Courts (FTSCs) Scheme** follows the pattern of **Centrally Sponsored Schemes (CSS)** as outlined below:

- 1. Cost Sharing:** The Central Government contributes **60%**, while **State/UT Governments contribute 40%**. However, for Northeastern States, Sikkim, and the hilly States of J&K (now a Union Territory), Himachal Pradesh, and Uttarakhand, the ratio is **90:10**.
- 2. Funding for Union Territories:** In UTs with a legislature, the **60:40** ratio applies, whereas in UTs without a legislature, the entire funding is provided by the Central Government.
- 3. Provision of funds** is made for meeting expenses related to remuneration to one Judicial Officer and seven support staff as well as flexi-grants. **Flexi-Grant** can be utilized for meeting daily operational expenses and making the **courts child and women friendly**.
- 4. Reimbursement Mode:** The Scheme operates on a reimbursement basis, where funds are released only after the submission of an Expenditure Statement by the respective State/UT Governments

Key Recommendations from the Indian Institute of Public Administration (IIPA)

A third-party evaluation of the Scheme was carried out by Indian Institute of Public Administration (IIPA) in the year 2023 which has inter-alia recommended for continuation of the scheme. The recommendations given by IIPA, are as under:

- IIPA strongly recommended the continuation of this scheme as its primary objective is to handle cases of sexual offences against women and children through a **streamlined and expedited judicial process**.
- To expedite trials, States and High Courts must strengthen parameters, including appointing **Special Judges** experienced in POCSO cases, ensuring sensitization training, and appointing female public prosecutors.

- The courtrooms need to be upgraded with **modern technology**, such as audio and video recording systems and LCD projectors. To be at par with the current evolving technologies, the court could enhance IT systems including **electronic case filing** and **digitalization of court records**.
- **Forensic Labs** to increase and to train manpower to expedite the pending cases in courts and ensure timely submission of DNA Reports. It will not only help the skilled manpower to assist the scientist and reporting officers but moreover will help to give a fair and speedy justice.
- **Vulnerable Witness Deposition Centers (VWDCs)** should be established in all districts to facilitate a better process of recording victim testimonies, thereby initiating a smoother court proceeding. The States should take initiative to conduct the trial in a way that is child-friendly, behind closed doors without disclosing the child's identity. Further, every FTSC should have a child psychologist to assist the child with rigorous pre-trial and trial procedures.

Fast Track Special Courts have notably adopted the approach of setting up **Vulnerable Witness Deposition Centers** within the courts to facilitate the victims and to make the courts into Child-Friendly Courts for providing crucial support for a compassionate legal system.

Conclusion

Fast Track Special Courts have become a vital part of India's judicial system, ensuring swift justice for victims of heinous crimes. While challenges persist, continuous reforms and infrastructural improvements can enhance their effectiveness. Their role in addressing case backlogs and providing expert-guided legal proceedings is crucial in reducing victims' trauma and distress, reaffirming the government's commitment to protecting vulnerable groups and upholding justice through a responsive legal framework.

References

- ❖ https://sansad.in/getFile/annex/267/AU1705_ZLVidb.pdf?source=pqars
- ❖ <https://doj.gov.in/fast-track-special-court-ftscs/>
- ❖ <https://dashboard.doj.gov.in/fast-track-special-court/index.php>
- ❖ <https://cdnbbsr.s3waas.gov.in/s35d6646aad9bcc0be55b2c82f69750387/uploads/2024/01/202401121490725560.pdf>
- ❖ [https://www.pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=2004317#:~:text=Vulnerable%20Witness%20Deposition%20Centers%20\(VWDCs,initiating%20a%20smoother%20court%20proceeding.](https://www.pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=2004317#:~:text=Vulnerable%20Witness%20Deposition%20Centers%20(VWDCs,initiating%20a%20smoother%20court%20proceeding.)

Santosh Kumar/ Sarla Meena/ Anchal Patiyal