



BACKGROUNDERS

Press Information Bureau

Government of India

International Day for Elimination of Violence Against Women

Building a Safer, More Inclusive Digital India for Women

November 24, 2025

Key Takeaways

- **National Commission for Women (NCW)**, established in January 1992 is the apex national statutory body to protect and promote the interests of women in India.
- Strong legal frameworks such as the **Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act, 2005 (PWDVA)**, and the **Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act, 2013** have been put in place.
- Government-backed schemes like **Mission Shakti**, **One Stop Centres**, **Women Helpline (181)**, and **Swadhar Greh** provide integrated support for women in distress.
- Technology-enabled platforms like **SHe-Box** and **Women Help Desks** improve reporting and access to timely justice.

Introduction

November 25 – the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women – carries profound resonance globally. Governments, international bodies, and civil society organisations are intensifying efforts to eliminate violence against women through stronger laws and global advocacy campaigns. Over the years, India has steadily strengthened its legal and support framework to safeguard women's rights, promote gender equality, and address the deep-rooted social and digital challenges that women and young girls face.

Established by the United Nations General Assembly in 2000, this day marks the start of the global **16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence** from **November 25 to December 10**. For 2025, the global theme is **"UNiTE to End Digital Violence against All Women and Girls"**. From online harassment and cyberstalking to deepfakes, cyberstalking, doxxing, and coordinated misogynistic attacks, technology-facilitated gender-based violence has emerged as a disturbing new form of abuse.

What is Digital Abuse?

Digital tools are increasingly being used to stalk, harass, and abuse women and girls.

This includes:

- Image-based abuse/ non-consensual sharing of intimate images.
- Cyberbullying, trolling, and online threats.
- Online harassment and sexual harassment.
- **AI-generated deepfakes.**
- Hate speech and disinformation on social media platforms.
- **Doxxing** – publishing private information.
- Online stalking or surveillance/tracking to monitor someone's activities.
- Online grooming.
- **Catfishing** and impersonation.
- **Misogynistic** networks – e.g. manosphere, incel forums.



What is Manosphere

Online misogyny is increasingly infiltrating schoolyards, workplaces, and intimate relationships, reflecting deeper societal issues that need urgent attention and action.



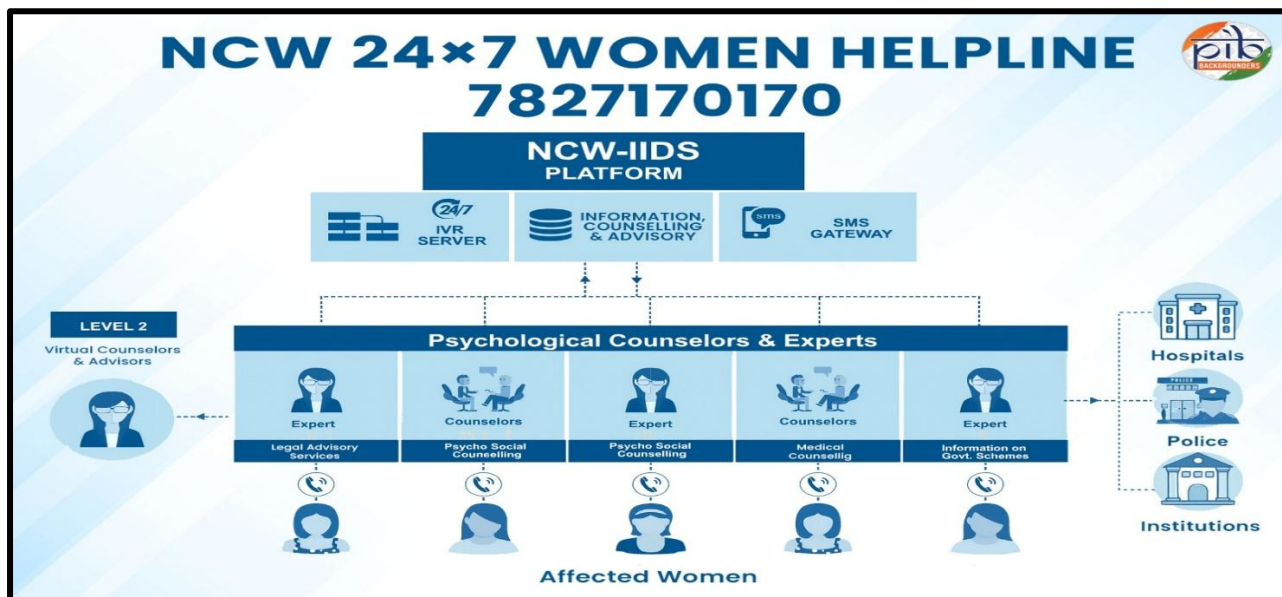
India's Fight to End Violence Against Women: Laws and Legislations

The Government of India has prioritised the elimination of violence against women through a multi-pronged approach, encompassing robust legal frameworks, institutional support, dedicated helplines, and flagship schemes. These efforts align with the observance of the International Day for Elimination of Violence Against Women (November 25), emphasising not only immediate redressal but also long-term empowerment. **The Ministry of Women and Child Development (MWCD) leads these initiatives, integrating safety (Sambal) and empowerment (Samarthya) components under the umbrella Mission Shakti scheme.**

National Commission for Women (NCW)

This Commission was established as **a statutory body by the Government of India on January 31, 1992** with the mandate to examine and monitor all constitutional and legal safeguards for women, recommend amendments to existing laws wherever required, and investigate complaints related to the deprivation of women's rights. Most states have also constituted **State Commissions for Women (SCWs)** with parallel responsibilities. The NCW receives complaints of violence and rights violations against women — both in writing and online through its portal www.ncw.nic.in and actively processes them to ensure prompt and effective redressal.

Furthermore, the **National Commission for Women (NCW)** launched **Helpline** number(s) for reporting of domestic violence incidences. One such helpline number is **7827170170** to provide **24x7** online support to women in distress **through referral by linking them with Police, Hospitals, District Legal Services Authority, psychological counsellors** etc. The portal is driven by **Interactive Voice Response (IVR)** mechanism through **Digital India**, in collaboration with **Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology**.



Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, 2023:

Effective from July 1, 2024, this **replaces the Indian Penal Code (IPC)** and **introduces stringent penalties for sexual offenses, including the life imprisonment for rape of minors under 18 years**. It expands definitions of sexual offenses, **mandates audio-video recording of victim statements**, and prioritises crimes against women and children in trial proceedings.

Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act, 2005 (PWDVA):

In India, domestic violence is governed by this Act. which defines an “**aggrieved person**” as **any woman who is, or has been, in a domestic relationship with the respondent**.

Domestic relationship means they live or have lived together in a shared household, and can be related by marriage, adoption, or family ties. Section 3 defines it as any act that harms a woman’s physical or mental health or endangers her safety, including harassment for unlawful demands. The term “domestic violence” includes:

- **Physical abuse** (harm, injury, or threat)
- **Sexual abuse** (any non-consensual or humiliating sexual act)
- **Verbal / emotional abuse** (insults, threats, humiliation)
- **Economic abuse** (withholding money, denying access to resources, disposing of property)
- **Dowry-related harassment** or coercion for property / dowry

Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition, and Redressal) Act, 2013:

This Act applies to all women, regardless of age, job type, or work sector. It mandates employers to create an Internal Committee (IC) in workplaces with over 10 employees, while the Appropriate Government sets up Local Committees (LCs) for smaller organisations or cases against employers. The Ministry of Women and Child Development (MWCD) oversees implementation and awareness. To centralise complaint data, the MWCD launched SHe-Box, a portal for reporting and tracking cases, with inquiries under the Act required to be completed within 90 days.

Mission Shakti

Mission Shakti is an integrated, mission-mode umbrella scheme designed to enhance women's safety, security, and empowerment. It operationalises the government's vision of "women-led development" by tackling challenges women face throughout their life cycle, promoting coordination across ministries, and encouraging citizen ownership to position women as equal contributors to nation-building.



Shelter homes under 'Swadhar Greh Scheme'

The **Ministry of Women and Child Development** is implementing the **Swadhar Greh Scheme**, revised with effect from April 01, 2016. The scheme caters to primary needs of women in difficult circumstances – women and girls rendered homeless due to family discord, crime, violence, mental stress, social ostracism as well as women and girls at risk of being forced into prostitution. Through the provisions of shelter, food, clothing, counselling, training, clinical and legal aid, the scheme aims to rehabilitate such women in difficult circumstances, both economically and emotionally.

One Stop Centre

The **Ministry of Women and Child Development** also implemented the **One Stop Centre (OSC)** Scheme with effect from April 01, 2015. These OSCs provide a range of integrated services under one roof including police facilitation, medical aid, legal aid and counselling, psycho-social counselling and temporary shelter to women affected by violence or those in distress. Since 2015, the establishment of OSCs at the district level has provided women facing violence and distress with a dedicated platform for timely support and assistance, filling a gap that previously existed.

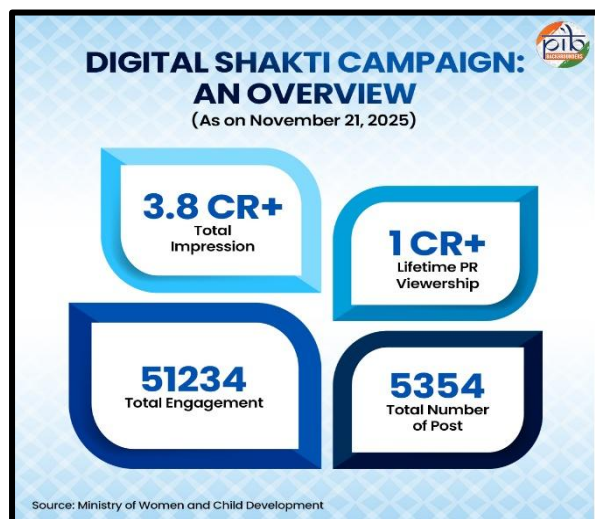


Stree Manoraksha

The **Ministry of Women and Child Development** has engaged the services of **National Institute of Mental Health and Neuro Sciences (NIMHANS)** in Bengaluru for providing basic and advanced training under project 'Stree Manoraksha' to the staff of One Stop Centres across the country on handling psycho-social and mental health care needs to support the women facing violence and distress.



Digital Shakti Campaign



The National Commission for Women has been implementing the Digital Shakti Campaign, a pan India project aimed at digitally empowering and skilling women and girls. In line with its commitment to create safe online spaces, Digital Shakti equips women with the skills and awareness needed to protect themselves and take action against illegal or inappropriate activities online.

National Domestic Violence Helpline

The Government of India commenced the Universalisation of Women Helpline (WHL) Scheme on April 01, 2015 with the aim to provide 24x7 emergency and non-emergency support to women facing any form of violence or distress. The scheme offers assistance nationwide through a **toll-free number 181**, connecting women to services via a referral system.

The Government also implements **Emergency Response Support System (ERSS)** under the **Nirbhaya Fund**. It is a pan-India, single, internationally recognised number, i.e., 112 based system for various emergencies such as police, fire and ambulance services, with computer aided dispatch of field resources to the location of distress. It has been operationalised in 36 States/ UTs.

In addition to that, a **WhatsApp** number **7217735372** was also launched as emergency response during Covid Pandemic lockdown. In matters which required urgent intervention, the State Police authorities were also approached through telephone calls/ email for providing immediate assistance to these women.



Institutional Mechanisms

To ensure accessible and survivor-friendly justice, the government has established specialised institutions for reporting, investigation, and adjudication.

- **Fast Track Special Courts (FTSCs):** Operationalised under the Nirbhaya Fund, these courts expedite trials for rape and POCSO cases. As on **August 2025**, **773 FTSCs** (including **400** exclusive e-POCSO courts) are functional across **29 States/UTs**, disposing of over **334,213** cases since inception.
- **Women Help Desks (WHDs):** Set up in police stations to facilitate sensitive reporting of gender-based violence. As on **February 2025**, **14,658 WHDs** are operational nationwide, enhancing access to FIRs, counselling, and legal aid. For implementation guidelines.



- **SHe-Box Portal:** The Ministry of Women and Child Development launched the SHe-Box portal, a **unified online platform fully aligned with the Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act, 2013 (POSH Act)**. It serves as a centrally accessible repository containing details of all Internal Committees (ICs) and Local Committees (LCs) constituted across government and private sector organisations nationwide. The portal enables women to lodge complaints of workplace sexual harassment, track their progress in real time, and ensures that every complaint is automatically routed to the concerned IC/LC of the respective workplace — whether in Central Ministries, State/UT administrations, or private entities. Additionally, it mandates the appointment of a nodal officer in every organisation to regularly update committee details and complaint status, facilitating effective monitoring and swift redressal.



Strengthening Women's Safety through Legal Reforms and Technology

In order to combat sexual violence more effectively, the Government of India enacted the **Criminal Law (Amendment) Act, 2018**, which significantly toughened punishments for rape and related offences. To ensure these stricter laws deliver real results on the ground, the government has rolled out several technology-driven initiatives with continuous monitoring of their implementation.

Key initiatives include:

- **Investigation Tracking System for Sexual Offences (ITSSO):** An online platform that enables real-time monitoring and tracking of police investigations in sexual assault cases to ensure timely completion.
- **National Database on Sexual Offenders (NDSO):** A central registry of convicted sexual offenders designed to help law-enforcement agencies identify and track repeat offenders.
- **Crime Multi-Agency Centre (Cri-MAC):** Launched on March 12, 2020, this system facilitates instant sharing of information on heinous and inter-state crimes among police stations and higher authorities

across all States and Union Territories via alerts, emails, and SMS which strengthens coordination, leading to a rapid response.

Conclusion

This year as the world marks the International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women on November 25 under the powerful global theme “UNiTE to End Digital Violence Against All Women and Girls”, India is intensifying its efforts to confront gender-based violence in all its forms-both offline and online. Through Mission Shakti’s expanding network of **One Stop Centres**, **Women Help Desks**, and emergency helplines, along with reforms like the *Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, 2023* and targeted tools such as **SHe-Box**, **ITSSO**, and the **Digital Shakti Campaign**, India is ensuring accessible reporting, survivor support, and faster justice. These integrated efforts reflect the nation’s commitment to building a safer, more inclusive environment where every woman and girl — both offline and online can live with dignity, freedom, and equal opportunity.

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