Polity & Governance · GS - II

Examine the effectiveness of India’s legal and institutional framework for protecting children from sexual offences. What measures are needed to improve access to justice and victim support?

EXAM YEAR	PAPER	SUBJECT
DAILY PRACTICE 28/10/2026	GS - II	Polity & Governance

MARKS	WORD LIMIT
10	~150 words

Answer Hint

POCSO Act 2012; child-friendly justice; Special Courts; victim protection; timely investigation; witness support; rehabilitation; institutional accountability

Model Answer

Introduction

Sexual offences against children violate their dignity, bodily autonomy and fundamental right to life. India has established a specialised legal framework to prosecute such crimes and protect child victims.

Existing legal framework

1. POCSO Act, 2012: It criminalises specified sexual offences against children below 18 years and provides child-friendly procedures for investigation and trial.

2. Special Courts: Designated courts are intended to facilitate the timely disposal of cases and reduce additional trauma for victims.

3. Constitutional protection: Article 21 safeguards life and personal liberty, while Article 15(3) permits special provisions for children. The Juvenile Justice framework also supports the care and rehabilitation of children in need of protection.

Key challenges

Delays in investigation and trials, social stigma, intimidation of witnesses, inadequate counselling and uneven institutional capacity can impede justice. Survivors may also face difficulties accessing compensation and long-term rehabilitation.

Way Forward

Police, prosecutors and judicial personnel require specialised training. Child-friendly reporting facilities, witness protection, confidential proceedings, timely forensic examinations and accessible psychological support should be strengthened. Effective implementation and monitoring are as important as stringent laws.

Conclusion

Protecting children requires a survivor-centred approach combining effective prosecution, institutional accountability, prevention and long-term rehabilitation.

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