Polity & Governance · GS - II

Examine the role of criminal law, police accountability and institutional responsibility in addressing sexual harassment against women in public spaces.

EXAM YEAR	PAPER	SUBJECT
DAILY PRACTICE 29/10/2026	GS - II	Polity & Governance

MARKS	WORD LIMIT
10	~150 words

Answer Hint

Women's safety; Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita; police responsiveness; due process; institutional accountability; gender-sensitive policing

Model Answer

Introduction

Sexual harassment restricts women's freedom, mobility and participation in education and employment. Effective prevention requires accessible reporting mechanisms, responsive policing and fair judicial procedures.

Role of Criminal Law

The Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, 2023, criminalises sexual harassment and several other offences against women. Prompt registration of complaints, appropriate evidence collection and timely investigation are essential for effective enforcement.

Police and Institutional Responsibility

Police must respond sensitively, protect complainants from intimidation and preserve relevant evidence. Educational institutions, political organisations and employers should establish clear complaint mechanisms and ensure that allegations are addressed without retaliation.

Safeguarding Due Process

An arrest does not establish guilt. Investigations and trials must follow the law, protect the identity and dignity of victims where legally required, and uphold the accused person's right to a fair process.

Way Forward

Gender-sensitive police training, safer public transport, public awareness, accessible helplines and time-bound investigations can strengthen prevention and accountability. Organisations should adopt transparent disciplinary procedures while respecting the presumption of innocence.

Conclusion

Women's safety requires more than punitive laws. Consistent enforcement, institutional accountability and respect for due process are essential to building safer public spaces and strengthening public confidence in justice.

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