Polity & Governance · GS - II

How can India strengthen institutional accountability and survivor-centric justice to address sexual violence against women in public and private spaces?

EXAM YEAR	PAPER	SUBJECT
DAILY PRACTICE 25/11/2026	GS - II	Polity & Governance

MARKS	WORD LIMIT
15	~250 words

Answer Hint

Sexual-offence laws, police accountability, forensic investigation, survivor protection, fast-track courts, gender sensitisation, institutional oversight

Model Answer

Introduction

Sexual violence against women is not confined to homes or public streets; it can also occur in commercial establishments and other private spaces. Effective prevention requires both robust law enforcement and institutions that prioritise survivors' rights and dignity.

Key Institutional Measures

1. **Effective legal enforcement:** The Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, 2023 criminalises rape and gang rape, while the BNSS provides the procedural framework for investigation and prosecution.

2. **Accountable policing:** Police must promptly register complaints, preserve evidence, conduct impartial investigations and ensure that absconding accused persons are pursued through lawful procedures.

3. **Forensic capacity:** Timely medical examination, forensic evidence collection, digital evidence preservation and scientific investigation can strengthen prosecution.

4. **Survivor-centric procedures:** Protection of identity, access to legal assistance, counselling, medical care and compensation are essential to prevent secondary victimisation.

5. **Institutional responsibility:** Commercial establishments must maintain appropriate security arrangements, staff accountability and effective grievance-reporting mechanisms.

Structural Challenges

1. Social stigma and fear of retaliation discourage reporting.
2. Delayed investigations and trials weaken public confidence.
3. Poor coordination among police, medical institutions and prosecution agencies affects case outcomes.

Way Forward

1. Strengthen gender-sensitive police training and forensic infrastructure.
2. Improve coordination between investigating agencies and fast-track courts.
3. Expand victim-support services and witness-protection mechanisms.
4. Conduct regular safety audits of commercial establishments.

Conclusion

Justice requires more than stringent laws. A responsive police system, accountable institutions and dignified treatment of survivors are essential to ensuring safety, equality and public confidence in the criminal justice system.

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