

CURRENTLY - FROM NEWS TO NOTES

DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS

The Hindu & The Indian express

Headline	Source
Stage set for two-phase electoral battle in Bihar	The Hindu, Page 1 — GS-2: Polity & Governance
Medicine Nobel for scientists who demystified the immune system	The Hindu, Page 1 — GS-3: Science & Technology
Maritime drills — Indian Coast Guard and Navy conduct NATPOLREX-X off Chennai coast	The Hindu, Page 1 — GS-3: Security & Disaster Management

Headline	Source
Consider sharing Wangchuk’s detention grounds with wife, top court tells Centre	The Hindu, Page 1 — GS-2: National Security / Governance
Deliberations continue on proposed Nuclear Bill	The Hindu, Page 12 — GS-3: Energy & Technology
Crimes against children surge in Assam, Rajasthan, and Kerala	The Hindu, Page 7 — GS-2: Social Justice / Vulnerable Sections

Stage set for two-phase electoral battle in Bihar

Polling on November 6, 11; CEC says final rolls shared with all parties, adds that eligible persons can add their names until 10 days before the last dates for filing nominations on October 17, 20

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

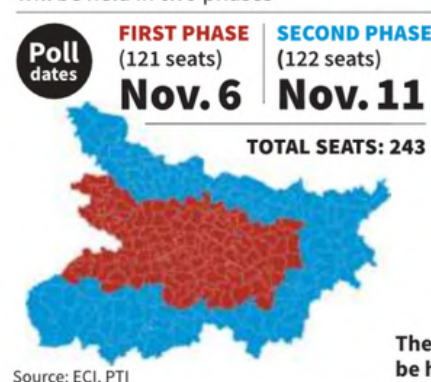
The Bihar Assembly election will be conducted in **two phases**, covering all 243 constituencies.

The first phase of polling will be on November 6 for 121 constituencies, while the second phase on November 11 will cover the remaining 122. Counting of votes will be taken up on November 14, Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar said on Monday.

Byelection in the Budgam and Nagrota constituencies in Jammu and Kashmir; Anta in Rajasthan; Ghatsila (reserved for Scheduled Tribes) in Jharkhand; Jubilee Hills in Telangana; Tarn Taran in Punjab; Dampa (Scheduled

Battle lines drawn

The upcoming Assembly election in Bihar will be held in two phases



Assembly bypolls on November 11

- Jammu and Kashmir: Budgam, Nagrota
- Rajasthan: Anta
- Jharkhand: Ghatsila (ST)
- Telangana: Jubilee Hills
- Punjab: Tarn Taran
- Mizoram: Dampa (ST)
- Odisha: Nuapada

The counting of votes will be held on November 14

Tribe) in Mizoram; and Nuapada in Odisha will be held on November 11. The votes will be counted on November 14.

There are **203 general constituencies**, **two reserved for Scheduled Tribes**, and **38 for Scheduled Castes** in Bihar. The State has **7.43 crore eligible**

voters, including close to 3.92 crore men, 3.5 crore women, and 1,725 transgender persons. About **14.01 lakh are first-time voters** (18-19 age group); 1.63 crore are in the 20-29 age group; 4.04 lakh are very senior citizens (aged above 85); and about 14,000 are centenarians, besides 1.63

lakh service electors and 7.2 lakh voters with disabilities.

The Gazette notification for the first phase of polling will be issued on October 10, and the last date to file nominations is October 17. For the second phase, the Gazette notification will be issued on October 13, and the last date to file nominations is October 20.

Mr. Kumar said the final electoral roll has been shared with all the parties. In case voters notice errors in the list, they can file an appeal with the District Magistrate. If any eligible person has been left out, they can have their names added until 10 days before the last date for filing nominations.

CONTINUED ON
» PAGE 10

Stage set for two-phase electoral battle in Bihar

Source: The Hindu, Page 1

GS Paper: Polity (UPSC Mains GS-2: Electoral Process, Constitutional Bodies – Election Commission)

Context

Election Process — From Notification to Result Declaration

1. Recommendation & Notification

- Election Commission of India (ECI) recommends the election schedule.
- President (for Lok Sabha) / Governor (for Vidhan Sabha) issues the official Gazette notification under the Representation of the People Act, 1951.

2. Filing of Nominations

- Candidates submit nomination papers within the period prescribed in the notification (usually 7 days).

3. Scrutiny of Nominations

- Election officers verify nomination papers to ensure legal validity.



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4. Withdrawal of Candidature

- Candidates may withdraw within 2 days after scrutiny.

5. Final List of Contestants

- ECI publishes the final list after the withdrawal deadline.

6. Election Campaigning

- Campaigning continues up to 48 hours before polling, under the Model Code of Conduct.

7. Polling

- Conducted under ECI supervision using EVMs & VVPATs, ensuring secrecy of vote.

8. Counting of Votes

- Held at designated centers under strict security and ECI oversight.

9. Held at designated centers under strict security and ECI oversight.

- Returning Officer declares results constituency-wise.
- ECI publishes official results in the Gazette.

Consider the following statements :

1. The Election Commission of India is a five-member body.
2. Union Ministry of Home Affairs decides the election schedule for the conduct of both general elections and bye-elections.
3. Election Commission resolves the disputes relating to splits/mergers of recognised political parties.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct ?

- (a) 1 and 2 only
- (b) 2 only
- (c) 2 and 3 only
- (d) 3 only



Practising restraint

Mary Brunkow, Fred Ramsdell, and Shimon Sakaguchi won the 2025 Nobel Prize for medicine/physiology for revealing how the body restrains its own defences to stay healthy



Mary Brunkow

Fred Ramsdell

Shimon Sakaguchi



- The immune system must distinguish the self from invaders to avoid attacking the body itself

- Shimon Sakaguchi discovered regulatory T-cells that calm immune reactions and preserve self-tolerance

- Mary Brunkow and Fred Ramsdell traced the scurfy mouse's fatal autoimmunity to a faulty Foxp3 gene

- They linked FOXP3 mutations to human IPEX syndrome, proving its vital role in tolerance

- Together, their work revealed FOXP3 controls regulatory T-cell development and prevents immune 'mutiny'

- Today, the findings guide new therapies for autoimmune disease, cancer, and transplantation

Image Credit: Nobel Prize Outreach

+ Medicine Nobel for scientists who demystified the immune system

Jacob Koshy
NEW DELHI

The annual Nobel Week – when the world’s most prestigious prizes for scientific achievement are announced – kicked off on Monday with three scientists, two Americans and one Japanese, sharing the Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine for unravelling tantalising aspects of the human immune system. Their discovery has helped blaze new paths into treating cancer as well as autoimmune disease – a condition by which the immune system ends up harming healthy cells they are meant to protect.

Human immune system is a complex of several cells – B cells, T cells, neutrophils and macrophages – that have a role in identifying and eliminating foreign bodies that may bring with it disease. This year’s prize to Mary Brunkow, Fred Ramsdell and Shimon Sakaguchi was for discover-



Key find: The trio were awarded for their fundamental discoveries relating to peripheral immune tolerance. REUTERS

ing the mechanism and key constituents of the so-called ‘peripheral immune tolerance’. The laureates identified the immune system’s security guards, *regulatory T cells*, which prevent immune cells from attacking our own body.

“Their discoveries have been decisive for our understanding of how the immune system functions and why we do not all develop serious autoimmune diseases,” Olle Kämpe, chair of the Nobel Committee, said in a statement.

Shimon Sakaguchi made the first key discovery in 1995. At the time,

many researchers were convinced that immune tolerance only developed due to potentially harmful immune cells being eliminated through a process called *central tolerance*. Mr. Sakaguchi showed that the immune system is more complex and discovered a previously unknown class of immune cells, which protects the body from autoimmune diseases.

Mary Brunkow and Fred Ramsdell made the other key discovery in 2001, when they presented the explanation for why a specific mouse strain was

particularly vulnerable to autoimmune diseases. They had discovered that mice have a mutation in a gene that they named *Foxp3*. They also showed that mutations in the human equivalent of this gene triggered a serious autoimmune disease, IPEX.

Two years after this, Mr. Sakaguchi was able to link these discoveries. He proved that the *Foxp3* gene governs the development of the cells he identified in 1995. These cells, now known as ‘regulatory T cells’, monitor other immune cells and ensure that our immune system tolerates our own tissues.

The laureates’ discoveries launched the field of peripheral tolerance, spurring the development of medical treatments for cancer and autoimmune diseases. This may also lead to more successful transplantations. Several of these treatments are now undergoing clinical trials.

Medicine Nobel for scientists who demystified the immune system

Source: The Hindu, Page 1

GS Paper: Science & Tech (UPSC GS-3 - Biotechnology, Health)

Context

Three scientists — Shimon Sakaguchi (Japan), Mary Brunkow, and Fred Ramsdell (USA) — won the 2025 Nobel Prize in Medicine for discovering how our immune system stops itself from attacking our own body.

Their finding can help treat autoimmune diseases (like diabetes, arthritis) and even cancer.

1. The Problem

Our immune system is our body's army — it protects you from germs and infections. But sometimes, this army gets confused and starts attacking your own healthy cells — this causes autoimmune diseases.

Scientists didn't fully understand how the body prevents this from happening in healthy people.

2. Sakaguchi's Discovery (Japan, 1995)

- Shimon Sakaguchi found a special group of T-cells in our immune system that keep other immune cells in check.
 - These are called Regulatory T-cells (Tregs) — they act like peacekeepers in the immune army.
- He also discovered that if the body lacks these cells, it starts attacking itself — leading to serious autoimmune diseases.
 - So, he proved that these cells are essential for what's called "immune tolerance" — the ability of the immune system to tolerate (not attack) the body's own tissues.

3. Brunkow & Ramsdell's Discovery (USA, 2001)

- A few years later, Mary Brunkow and Fred Ramsdell studied a special strain of mice that easily developed autoimmune diseases.
 - They found the cause — a mutation in a gene called Foxp3.
 - This gene acts like an instruction manual that tells the body how to make those "peacekeeping" regulatory T-cells.
 - When this gene is faulty, the body can't produce enough of those cells — leading to diseases like IPEX syndrome in humans.

4. How Their Discoveries Connect

Sakaguchi's work identified the cells — the "peacekeeping" Regulatory T-cells that maintain balance in the immune system. Years later, Brunkow and Ramsdell discovered the gene — Foxp3 — that gives rise to and controls these very cells.

When both discoveries are viewed together, they explain the entire mechanism of peripheral immune tolerance: the immune system creates Regulatory T-cells (thanks to the Foxp3 gene), and those cells then keep other immune cells from attacking the body itself.



Maritime drills



Dramatic display: The Indian Coast Guard and Navy conducting the exercise NATPOLREX-X off the Chennai coast on Monday to tackle marine oil spill emergencies and strengthen India's preparedness. B. JOTHI RAMALINGAM

Consider sharing Wangchuk's detention grounds with wife, top court tells Centre

Krishnadas Rajagopal
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Monday orally asked the Centre to consider sharing the grounds of preventive detention of climate activist Sonam Wangchuk with his wife, Gitanjali Angmo, even as the Centre said her *habeas corpus* plea was a ruse to create an “emotive atmosphere”.

Mr. Wangchuk was detained under the National Security Act (NSA), 1980 following violent protests in Leh on September 24.

Dr. Angmo had asked the top court to direct the



Gitanjali Angmo in New Delhi.
SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

detaining authorities to produce Mr. Wangchuk in court. She submitted that it had been 10 days since he was reported to be detained at Jodhpur in Rajasthan on September 26.

There was no informa-

tion about the grounds of his detention or the state of his health, she added.

Issuing notice to the Centre and the Ladakh administration, a Bench of Justices Aravind Kumar and N.V. Anjaria said “something has been done” for now. It posted the case for hearing on October 14.

The Bench, in its short order dictated in court after a brief hearing, put the ball in the court of the Centre and other authorities concerned to decide whether or not to share the grounds of preventive detention with Dr. Angmo.

The court drew the at-

tention of senior advocate Kapil Sibal, appearing for Dr. Angmo, to Section 8 of the NSA. The provision requires the grounds of detention to be communicated only to Mr. Wangchuk.

Solicitor-General Tushar Mehta, appearing for the Centre and the Ladakh administration, said the authorities had shared the grounds with Mr. Wangchuk immediately and there was no further obligation under the NSA to share them with his wife.

Dr. Angmo has argued the detention is both mala-fide and designed to suppress democratic dissent.

Consider sharing Wangchuk's detention grounds with wife, top court tells Centre

Source: The Hindu, Page 1

Context

The Supreme Court asked the Centre to consider sharing the grounds of preventive detention of climate activist Sonam Wangchuk, detained under the National Security Act (NSA), 1980, with his wife, Gitanjali Angmo. However, the Centre argued that Section 8 of the NSA requires the detention grounds to be communicated only to the detainee, not to others.

Section 8 of the NSA mandates that the reasons for detention must be given only to the

Deliberations continue on proposed nuclear Bill

Questions on private sector's role, radioactive waste disposal yet to be settled; Finance Minister said in Feb. that govt. intends to amend Atomic Energy Act, Civil Liability for Nuclear Damage Act

Jacob Koshy
NEW DELHI

Deliberations within the government continue on bringing in new legislation to allow the private sector to operate nuclear plants in India with questions regarding management of nuclear waste and determining if private players can conduct core research into nuclear technologies still being ironed out.

Drafts of the proposed new Bill were still being deliberated upon by an inter-governmental committee of experts as well as the Law Ministry though there was a "good chance" of it being introduced in the forthcoming Winter Session of Parliament, an official privy to the proceedings told *The Hindu* on condition of anonymity.

Currently, only Nuclear Power Corporation of India Ltd. (NPCIL), Bhartiya Nabhikiya Vidyut Nigam Ltd. (BHAVINI), and NPCIL-NTPC joint venture Anushakti Vidyut Nigam Limited (ASHVINI) can build and operate nuclear power plants in the country.

In February, however,



Nuclear reforms: Currently, only three PSUs can build and operate nuclear power plants in the country. FILE PHOTO

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman said in her Budget speech that the government intended to amend two Acts – the Atomic Energy Act and the Civil Liability for Nuclear Damage Act – to enable private companies, including foreign companies, to form partnerships, and build and operate nuclear plants in India.

Despite the India-U.S. nuclear deal of 2008 formally allowing sale of nuclear technologies to India, though with built-in periodic checks and scrutiny by the International Atomic Energy Agency, clauses in India's Atomic Energy Act and the Civil Liability for Nuclear Damage Act

(2010) have been impediments since they impose practically unlimited liability on foreign suppliers of nuclear equipment in case of an accident.

Alignment of laws

"The effort is to align India's laws on liability with that of conventions such as the Convention on Supplementary Compensation for Nuclear Damage (CSC)," the official noted. "However, we also have to bring clarity on questions such as who will be responsible, whether it is the private sector or the government power plant operators, for safe disposal of nuclear waste as well as the re-processing of spent nuclear

fuel. There is also discussion on enabling research and development of core nuclear technologies."

The government's thrust to encourage greater private sector participation is with the larger objective of installing 100 GW of nuclear capacity by 2047. This is premised not only on importing foreign reactors but also developing Bharat Small Reactors (BSRs) and exploring partnerships with the private sector. BSRs are 220 MW Pressurized Heavy Water Reactors (PHWRs). These reactors are being upgraded to reduce land requirements, making them suitable for deployment near industries such as steel, aluminium, and metals units, serving as captive power plants to aid in decarbonisation efforts.

The plan involves private entities providing land, cooling water, and capital, while the NPCIL handles design, quality assurance, and operation and maintenance. This initiative aligns with India's commitment to achieving 500 GW of non-fossil fuel-based energy generation and meeting 50% of requirements from renewable energy by 2030.

Deliberations continue on proposed nuclear Bill

Source: The Hindu, Page 12

GS Paper: GS-3 (Science & Technology, Energy Security, Infrastructure)

Context

Key Points

- Purpose:** Government deliberating a new nuclear legislation to allow private sector participation in building and operating nuclear power plants.
- Legal Changes Proposed:** Amendments planned to:
 - Atomic Energy Act, 1962
 - Civil Liability for Nuclear Damage Act, 2010
 - Aim: permit private & foreign partnerships in reactor construction and operation.
- Current Situation:** Only public sector entities — NPCIL, BHAVINI, and ASHVINI (NPCIL-NTPC JV) — can operate nuclear power plants.



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4. Broader Objective: Achieve 100 GW of nuclear power capacity by 2047, supporting India's clean-energy and net-zero goals.

Opposition slams U.P. govt. as woman 'denied treatment'

A pregnant woman alleged that the doctor of a hospital in Jaunpur refused to treat her over her religion; Ghazipur MP seeks investigation

Mayank Kumar
LUCKNOW

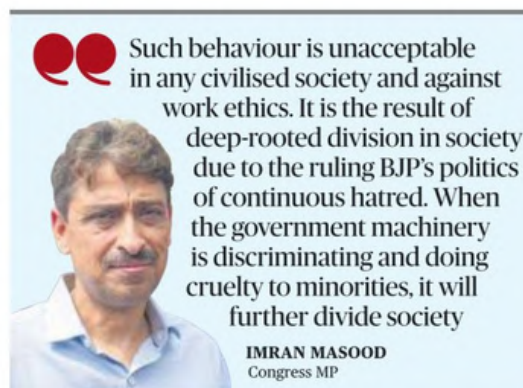
A viral video from the Jaunpur District Women's Hospital in Uttar Pradesh, where a pregnant Muslim woman alleged being denied treatment by a doctor due to her religion, has triggered an uproar.

The incident allegedly took place a few days ago when the patient was brought to the hospital for delivery.

"She [the doctor] said, 'I will not treat Muslim.' The incident happened around 9.30 p.m. My delivery did not happen. The doctor added, 'I will not conduct the delivery.' One other Muslim person was also not diagnosed by the doctor. She directed the nurse to not bring me to the OT [operation theatre], asking her to take me elsewhere," alleged Shama Parveen, hailing from Chandwak in Jaunpur, in the video.

The Hindu reached out to the Chief Medical Officer and the hospital administration but failed to get a response.

The Opposition parties on Sunday alleged that



Such behaviour is unacceptable in any civilised society and against work ethics. It is the result of deep-rooted division in society due to the ruling BJP's politics of continuous hatred. When the government machinery is discriminating and doing cruelty to minorities, it will further divide society

IMRAN MASOOD
Congress MP

such instances were the result of divisive politics practised by the ruling BJP.

"Such behaviour is unacceptable in any civilised society and against work ethics. It is the result of deep-rooted division in society due to the ruling BJP's politics of continuous hatred. When the government machinery is discriminating against and doing cruelty to minorities, it will further divide society. On one side, anti-social elements have been given a free run in Fatehpur to vandalise an old mausoleum, damage shops during Kanwar Yatra, while the minority

community is being deliberately targeted across U.P.," Congress MP Imran Masood said.

Samajwadi Party MP Afzal Ansari demanded an inquiry. "If this has happened, it is beyond imagination as doctors are seen with a high respect in society and must not differentiate between patients. It points towards a broader pattern in U.P., where a particular community is being targeted by those sitting in power. People at the top are speaking venomous language... I hope the judiciary will take cognisance of the deliberate targeting of particular communities," he said.

As first responder, India remains committed to assisting Nepal, says Modi

Kallol Bhattacharjee
NEW DELHI

India is committed to assisting Nepal as it has been a "first responder" whenever the country has faced a natural calamity, Prime Minister Narendra Modi said on Sunday, as heavy rain caused widespread destruction and loss of lives in the Himalayan nation.

"The loss of lives and damage caused by heavy rain in Nepal is distressing. We stand with the people and Government of Nepal in this difficult time. As a friendly neighbour and first responder, India remains committed to providing any assistance that may be required," Mr. Modi said.

Nepal's weather department warned on Sunday



Saving lives: Nepalese Army personnel get ready to rescue people after a flood in Jhapa district on Sunday. AP

that the water level in the Kosi, Tamor, Arun, and Sunkoshi rivers was expected to flow above danger levels, with a high possibility of flash floods in smaller rivers across Ilam, Jhapa, Morang, Panchthar, Terhathum, Dhankuta, Sunsari, Udayapur, Saptari, Siraha, and Dhanusa districts.

According to initial reports, at least 47 people are feared dead, with infrastructure washed away in several places. The swelling of the Kosi has also raised a flood threat in north Bihar.

Crimes against children surge in Assam, Rajasthan, and Kerala

A rise in the number of cases does not always mean a rise in the number of crimes; it may also indicate better reporting

DATA POINT

Devyanshi Bihani

In 2023, cases of crimes against children recorded the sharpest rise in three States – Assam, Rajasthan and Kerala, according to the latest data from the National Crime Records Bureau.

In Assam, recorded cases of crimes against children surged by nearly 100% – from an average of around 5,100 cases between 2018 and 2022 to more than 10,000 in 2023. In Kerala, the number increased by 106% – from an average of more than 2,800 cases between 2018 and 2022 to more than 5,900 cases in 2023. In Rajasthan, the number increased by 70% – from an average of 6,200 cases between 2018 and 2022 to more than 10,500 cases in 2023.

In comparison, overall recorded cases of crimes against children in India increased by 25% in that period. Map 1 shows the percentage change in cases of crimes against children in 2023 compared with the average number of cases recorded between 2018 and 2022. While these three States stand out, the reasons for the rise in each of them vary considerably.

In Assam, a record crackdown on child marriage led to a sharp rise in the number of cases filed under the Prohibition of Child Marriage Act, 2006. In fact, a close look at Assam's crime data against children shows that the spike was driven almost entirely by this State-led intervention. Between 2020 and 2022, about 150 cases were recorded annually in Assam under the Prohibition of Child Marriage Act; this increased to 5,267 in 2023. That year, cases related to child marriage accounted for nearly 52% of all crimes against children in the State, a dramatic jump from 3-4% in the preceding years, as shown in Chart 2.

In Rajasthan, two key factors appear to have driven the rise. The first is the sudden shift in the way

offences against children were categorised – from only non-POCSO sections to specific POCSO provisions. POCSO refers to the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act, 2012. In 2021 and 2022, over 2,700 cases were filed separately under the rape provision (Section 376 of the Indian Penal Code). However, in 2022 and 2023, no cases were filed independently under this section; instead, there was a corresponding rise in cases registered under the relevant POCSO provision. Cases filed under Sections 4 and 6 of the POCSO Act read with Section 376 of the IPC increased from just three in 2021 and 2022 to more than 3,500 in 2022 and 2023 (Chart 3). This shift – from filing cases solely under IPC provisions to invoking relevant sections of the POCSO Act – was seen across the country, but was most pronounced in Rajasthan.

It should be noted that the more accurate classification of child rape cases occurred alongside an actual increase in such offences in Rajasthan – from about 2,700 to 3,500 cases. However, whether this rise is primarily due to proper classification or an actual increase in offences is an open question.

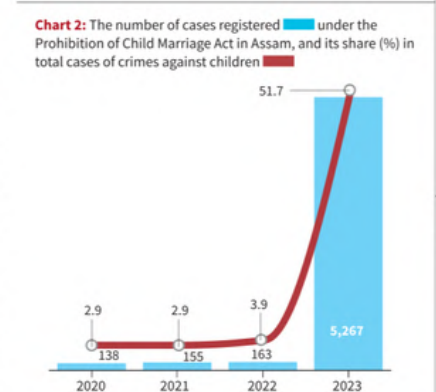
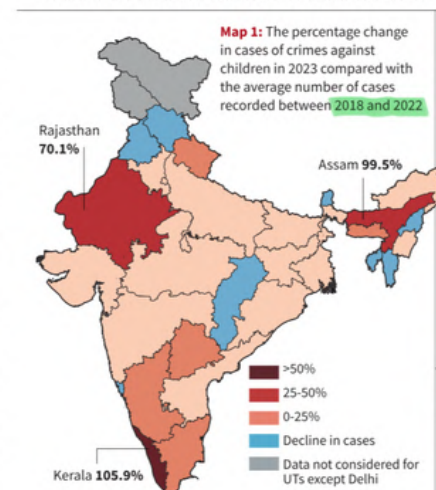
The second is that there was a sharp spike in cases related to the kidnapping and abduction of children. In Rajasthan, cases filed under various sections related to the kidnapping and abduction of children rose sharply, with their share in total crimes against children climbing to over 54% in 2023 – a steep increase (Chart 4).

There was a surge in POCSO cases in Kerala too. The increase appears partly linked to more accurate classification of offences under specific POCSO sections, accompanied by an increase in the reported cases (Chart 5).

It is important to note that the rise in cases, particularly those involving crimes against children, may indicate improved reporting, rather than a genuine increase in the incidence of such crimes.

Three States, one trend

The data for the charts were sourced from the National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB) from 2020 to 2023



It is important to note that the rise in cases, particularly those involving crimes against children, may indicate improved reporting, rather than a genuine increase in the incidence of such crimes.

