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## Rising Complaints of Crimes Against Women: NCW

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### Why in News

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Recently, the **National Commission for Women (NCW)** informed that there was a **rise of 46% in complaints of crimes against women** in the first eight months of 2021 over the corresponding period of last year.

- NCW was set up as a statutory body in January 1992 under the **National Commission for Women Act, 1990**. Its mission is to **strive towards enabling women to achieve equality and equal participation** in all spheres of life.
- In October 2020, the **Supreme Court** said that crimes against women continued in a **never-ending cycle** in India.

### Key Points

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- **About:**
  - **Crime Heads (No. of Complaints):**  
**Against Right to live with dignity** > **Domestic violence**> Harassment of married women or dowry harassment> Outraging modesty of women or molestation> Rape and attempt to rape> **Cyber crimes**.
  - **State-Wise Data:**  
**Uttar Pradesh** (10,084)> **Delhi** (2,147)> **Haryana** (995)> **Maharashtra** (974).

- **Violence against Women:**

- **About:**

- The **United Nations** defines violence against women as "**any act of gender-based violence** that results in, or is likely to result in, **physical, sexual, or mental harm or suffering to women, including threats** of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or in private life."
- Violence against women is a **social, economic, developmental, legal, educational, human right, and health (physical and mental) issue.**
- Since the outbreak of **Covid-19**, emerging data and reports from those on the front lines, have shown that all types of violence against women and girls, particularly domestic violence, has intensified.

- **Reasons:**

- **Gender Disparity** is one of the deep rooted cause of violence against women that put women at risk of several forms of violence.
- **Non-Retaliatio**n, **Absence of laws** addressing their rights comprehensively and **Ignorance of the existing statutes.**
- **Societal attitude, stigma** and conditioning also made women vulnerable to **domestic violence** and these are the main factors for under-reporting of cases.

- **Impact:**

- The adverse **psychological, sexual and reproductive health consequences** of violence against women and girls affect women at all stages of their life.
- For example, **early-set educational disadvantages** not only represent the primary obstacle to universal schooling and the right to education for girls; down the line they are also to blame for restricting access to higher education and even translate into **limited opportunities for women in the labour market.**

- **Global Initiatives:**

- **The Spotlight Initiative:** The **European Union (EU)** and the **United Nations (UN)** have embarked on a new, global, multi-year initiative focused on eliminating all forms of Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG).  
It is so named as it brings focused attention to this issue, moving it into the spotlight and placing it at the centre of efforts to achieve gender equality and women's empowerment.
- **International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women-25<sup>th</sup>** November.
- **UN Women** is the **United Nations** entity dedicated to gender equality and the empowerment of women.

- **Indian Initiatives:**
  - **Constitutional Safeguards:**
    - **Fundamental Rights:**  
It guarantees all Indians the **right to equality (Article 14)**, no discrimination by the State on the basis of gender (**Article 15(1)**) and special provisions to be made by the State in favour of women (**Article 15(3)**).
    - **Fundamental Duties:**  
It ensures that practices derogatory to the dignity of women are prohibited under **Article 51 (A)**.
  - **Legislative Framework:**
    - **Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act, 2005**
    - **The Dowry Prohibition Act, 1961**
    - **The Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition, and Redressal) Act, 2013**
    - **The Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO), 2012**

## Way Forward

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- Violence against women **continues to be an obstacle to achieving equality, development, peace** as well as to the fulfillment of women and girls' human rights.
- All in all, the promise of the **Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)** - to leave no one behind - cannot be fulfilled without putting an end to violence against women and girls.
- Crime against women cannot be resolved in the court of law alone. A holistic approach & changing the entire ecosystem is what is required.
- All the stakeholders need to get their act together, including Law makers, police officers, forensic dept, prosecutors, judiciary, medical & health dept, NGOs, rehabilitation centers.

**Source: IE**