



## Child Welfare Police Officers to be Appointed

**For Prelims:** Child Welfare Police Officer (CWPO), National Commission for Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR), POCSO Act, 2012, Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2015, Child Sexual Abuse.

**For Mains:** Issues related to Children and steps need to be taken,

### Why in News?

The Ministry of Home Affairs has asked the States/Union Territories to **appoint a Child Welfare Police Officer (CWPO) in every police station** to exclusively deal with children, either as victims or perpetrators as per the advisory issued by [National Commission for Protection of Child Rights \(NCPCR\)](#).

- The advisory comes in the backdrop of **increasing number of crimes against children, including murders and offences** under the [Protection of Children from Sexual Offences \(POCSO\) Act, 2012](#).

### What is the Advisory Issued by NCPCR?

- **At least one officer, not below the rank of an Assistant Sub-Inspector, must be designated as CWPO in every police station** as per the provisions under the [Juvenile Justice \(Care and Protection of Children\) Act, 2015](#).
- **A Special Juvenile Police Unit** in each district and city **headed by an officer not below the rank of a Deputy Superintendent of Police** should be established.
  - The unit would comprise **CWPOs and two social workers** having experience of working in the field of child welfare, of whom one shall be a woman, to co-ordinate all functions of police in relation to children.
- The **contact particulars of the CWPOs should be displayed in all police stations** for the public to contact.

### What is the Status of Crimes Against Children in India?

- According to the data published by the **National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB)**:
  - The **total number of crimes against children** increased from **1,28,531 in 2020 to 1,49,404 in 2021**.
    - While **Madhya Pradesh topped the country** with 19,173 cases, **Uttar Pradesh stood second** with 16,838 cases.
  - A total of **1,402 children were murdered across** the country.
  - As many as **1,15,414 cases of kidnapping and abduction involving 1,18,549 children** were reported in 2021.
    - **Uttar Pradesh, Maharashtra and Madhya Pradesh topped the list** in these cases.

## What is NCPCR?

- NCPCR is a **statutory body** set up in March 2007 under the **Commissions for Protection of Child Rights (CPCR) Act, 2005**.
- It is under the administrative control of the **Ministry of Women & Child Development**.
- The Commission's mandate is to ensure that all laws, policies, programmes, and administrative mechanisms are in consonance with the **child rights perspective as enshrined in the Constitution of India and also the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child**.
- It inquires into **complaints relating to a child's right to free and compulsory education** under the [Right to Education Act, 2009](#).
- It monitors the **implementation of POCSO Act, 2012**.

## What is Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2015?

- It replaced the **Juvenile Delinquency Law and the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children Act) 2000**.
- The Act **offered provisions to allow trials of juveniles in the age group of 16-18 years** as an adult who were found to be in conflict with the law, especially heinous crimes.
- The Act also **offered provisions regarding adoption**. The Act replaced the **Hindu Adoptions and Maintenance Act (1956)** and Guardians of the ward Act (1890) with more universally accessible adoption law.
- The Act enabled smooth functioning of **adoption procedures for orphans, surrendered, and abandoned children** while making the [Central Adoption Resource Authority \(CARA\)](#) the statutory body for adoption-related matters.

## What is Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act, 2012?

- It was **enacted to protect the children from offences of sexual assault, sexual harassment and pornography** with due regard for safeguarding the interest and well-being of children.
- It **defines** a child as **any person below eighteen years of age** and regards the best interests and welfare of the child as a matter of paramount importance at every stage, to ensure the healthy physical, emotional, intellectual and social development of the child.
- It **defines different forms of sexual abuse**, including penetrative and non-penetrative assault, as well as sexual harassment and pornography.
- It deems a **sexual assault to be "aggravated" under certain circumstances**, such as when the abused child is mentally ill or when the abuse is committed by a person in a position of trust or authority like a family member, police officer, teacher, or doctor.
- It also **casts the police in the role of child protectors** during the investigative process.
- The Act stipulates that a **case of child sexual abuse must be disposed of within one year** from the date the offence is reported.
- It was [amended in August 2019](#) to provide **more stringent punishment**, including the death penalty, for sexual crimes against children.

## Way Forward

- **Comprehensive Framework:** The report calls for **prioritising prevention activities** against abuse, creating safe online environments for children, besides calling on all with a role to protect children to work together to dramatically improve the response.
- **Multi Stakeholder Approach:** Developing a **comprehensive outreach system to engage parents, schools, communities, NGO partners and local governments** as well as police and lawyers to ensure better implementation of the legal framework, policies, national strategies and standards.

**Q. With reference to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, consider the following: (2010)**

1. The Right to Development
2. The Right to Expression
3. The Right to Recreation

Which of the above is/are the Rights of the child?

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

**Ans: D**

**Exp:**

- The United Nations (UN) took its first step towards declaring the importance of child rights by establishing the United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF) in 1946. In 1948, the UN General Assembly adopted the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, making it the first UN document to recognise children's need for protection.
- The first UN document specially focused on child rights was the Declaration on the Rights of the Child, but instead of being a legally binding document it was more like a moral guide of conduct for governments. It was not until 1989 that the global community adopted the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, making it the first international legally binding document concerning child rights.
- The convention, which came into force on the 2nd September 1990, consists of 54 articles covering various categories of child rights including right to life, right to development, right to engage in play and recreational activities, right to protection, right to participation, expression, etc. **Hence, 1, 2 and 3 are correct.**
- **Therefore, option D is the correct answer.**

**Source:** [TH](#)

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