



KAMARAJ IAS ACADEMY
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Scheme for Critical care and Support to POCSO victims

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Why is in news? Scheme of WCD Ministry under Nirbhaya Fund for Critical care and Support to POCSO victims

Under Nirbhaya Fund, a scheme of Ministry of Women & Child Development namely **Scheme for critical care and support for accessing justice to rape gang rape survivors and minor girls** who get pregnant was appraised at the total cost of Rs.74.10 cr.

The scheme **aims at providing shelter, food & daily needs, safe transportation** for attending court hearings and legal aid to the **minor girls who have been abandoned by the family** due to **forced pregnancy**, either due to rape/gang rape or due to any other reason, and have no other means to support themselves.

In the year **2021**, the **National Crime Records Bureau reported 51,863 cases under the POCSO Act**. Out of these, 64% (33,348) cases were reported under section 3 and 5 (penetrative sexual assault and aggravated penetrative sexual assault respectively).

Further analysis of this data shows that **out of total 33,348 cases reported under section 3 and 5 of the Act 99% (33,036) cases were committed against girls**.

In many of these cases, girls become pregnant and bear several physical and mental health concerns, which are further aggravated when they are disowned or abandoned by their own families or are orphan.

Objectives of the Scheme:

To provide integrated support and assistance to girl child victims under one roof and

To facilitate immediate, emergency and non-emergency access to a range of services including access to education, police assistance, medical (also comprising maternity, neo-natal and infant care), psychological and mental counselling legal support and insurance cover for the girl child victim and her new-born under one roof to enable access to justice and rehabilitation of such girl child victims.

Eligibility criteria:

Any girl **below the age of 18 years**, who is a victim of: **Penetrative Sexual Assault** - Section 3 of the POCSO Act, **Aggravated Penetrative Sexual Assault** - Section 5 of the POCSO Act, **Section 376, 376A-E of Indian Penal Code, 1860 (IPC)** and **has become pregnant** due to such assault or rape is covered under the Scheme.

Such girl child victim should be: **an orphan or abandoned by the family or does not wish to live with the family**

It is **not mandatory for the girl child victim to have a copy of the FIR for availing the benefits** under the Scheme.

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However, it shall be the responsibility of the persons responsible for the implementation of the Scheme to ensure that information is provided to the police and FIR is registered.

Procedure to be followed by Child Care Institutions (CCIs) **Children's Home:**

The person-in-charge of the Home shall **provide a separate safe space for the girl child** as her needs are different from other children residing in the Home.

A case worker shall be immediately designated or appointed by the person-in-charge for taking care of the girl child.

Separate funds shall be provided to the Home for the care and protection of the girl.

Under **Mission Vatsalya** guidelines provisions of dedicated CCIs for POCSO Victims will also be made for proper rehabilitation and for support of POCSO Victims.

Nirbhaya Fund:

It was a **10 billion corpus** announced by Government of India in its **2013 Union Budget**. It is a type of **non-lapsable corpus fund**.

The aim of the fund is to **support initiatives protecting the dignity and ensuring safety of women in India**.

Nirbhaya (fearless) was the pseudonym given to the **2012 Delhi gang rape victim**.

The **Ministry of Women and Child Development** and several other ministries decided on the application of the fund.

One use was to open One Stop Centres to support women who are victims of violence.

The fund is **administered by the Department of Economic Affairs** of the finance ministry.