

7. Crime in India 2023

Recently, the Crime in India 2023 report was published by the National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB).

Crime in India 2023 – Overview

Total Cognizable Crimes

India recorded 62.4 lakh cognizable crimes in 2023, representing a 7.2% increase compared to 2022. Out of these, 37.6 lakh cases were under the Indian Penal Code (IPC), which includes offences such as theft, assault, murder, rape, and dowry-related crimes. 24.8 lakh cases were under Special and Local Laws (SLL), which includes legislation outside IPC, such as NDPS Act, Arms Act, IT Act, and other local or state-specific laws. National crime rate rose from 422.2 per lakh population (2022) to 448.3 per lakh population (2023), indicating a steady increase in crime prevalence.

Urban and Metropolitan Crime Trends

Metropolitan cities showed a 10.6% increase in total crimes, with 9.44 lakh cases reported.

Types of crimes in urban areas –

1. **Theft** – 44.8% of cases
2. **Rash driving / negligent driving** – 9.2%
3. **Obstruction on public ways** – 8.1%

These figures indicate a shift from traditional violent crimes to urban lifestyle-related offences and petty crimes.

Changing Patterns of Crime

Decline in Traditional Violent Crimes – There is a gradual decline in violent crimes like rape and dowry deaths in India. This suggests improved awareness, legal frameworks, and social interventions in some regions, although such crimes continue to pose a significant social challenge.

Rise of Cybercrimes – Cybercrime cases increased by 31.2%, rising to 86,420 cases. Nearly 69% of cybercrimes were related to online fraud, scams, and phishing.

State-wise data –

1. Karnataka – 21,889 cases
2. Telangana – 18,236 cases
3. Uttar Pradesh – 10,794 cases

The rise reflects digital penetration, increased internet use, and greater vulnerability to online crimes.

Crimes Against Vulnerable Groups

Scheduled Tribes (STs) – Total cases increased by 28.8%, from 10,064 (2022) to 12,960 (2023).

Women – Marginal rise of 0.4% in crimes against women; primary types include –

1. **Cruelty by husband or relatives** – 29.8%
2. **Kidnapping and abduction** – 19.8%
3. **Assault** – 18.7%

These figures highlight persistent social inequities, gender-based vulnerabilities, and the need for targeted interventions.

Key Policy Recommendations

1. Strengthening Cybercrime Infrastructure – Establish more digital forensic laboratories to investigate cybercrimes. Launch public awareness campaigns to educate citizens about online safety, phishing, and fraud.

2. Improving Reporting Mechanisms – Develop anonymous reporting channels to encourage victims to report crimes without fear of social stigma or reprisal. Strengthen victim support systems, including counselling, legal aid, and protective measures.

3. Police Training and Capacity Building – Train police in gender-sensitive protocols for crimes against women and children. Introduce child-friendly mechanisms in the investigation of crimes involving minors.

4. Standardisation and Inter-State Coordination – Standardise crime classifications and reporting formats to ensure uniformity across states. Enhance inter-state coordination using a National Crime Analytics Dashboard to identify crime trends, hotspots, and patterns.

5. Judicial Reforms – Establish fast-track courts for cybercrimes and gender-based violence to expedite legal proceedings and reduce pendency. Introduce digital case management and e-filing systems to accelerate justice delivery.

National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB)

Establishment and History

Founded in 1986, based on recommendations of –

1. **Tandon Committee**
2. **National Police Commission (1977–81)**
3. **MHA Task Force (1985)**

It acts as a national repository for crime and criminal data, providing statistics to policymakers, law enforcement agencies, and researchers.

Parent Ministry – Functions under the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA), Government of India.

Primary Functions

Collects, compiles, and publishes crime data from all states and union territories. Manages the Crime and Criminal Tracking Network & Systems (CCTNS) for modernized crime management and real-time tracking.

Publishes three major reports –

1. **Crime in India** – Comprehensive annual report on IPC and SLL crimes.
2. **Accidental Deaths & Suicides in India** – National-level statistics and analysis.
3. **Prison Statistics India** – Details of prison population, facilities, and management.

Significance of NCRB

1. Provides evidence-based data for policymaking, law enforcement, and planning.
2. Enables researchers and academicians to study crime patterns and trends.
3. Supports digital policing initiatives, improving crime reporting, investigation, and management.

Emerging Insights from Crime Trends 2023

India is witnessing a shift from traditional violent crimes to urban and digital crimes. Cybersecurity and digital literacy are now critical for crime prevention. Vulnerable groups (women, STs) continue to face increasing threats, highlighting social and institutional challenges. Strengthening police infrastructure, judicial efficiency, and data-driven governance is crucial to mitigate these evolving threats.

Source – <https://www.hindustantimes.com/india-news/2023-ncrb-data-murder-rape-fall-cybercrimes-rise-101759173003818.html>