POCSO Act: Addressing Gaps in Child Protection and Institutional Implementation

Discussion on the persistent gap between legislative guarantees under the POCSO Act and its actual institutional implementation.

The Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act is a comprehensive, gender-neutral law enacted to protect children from sexual abuse and exploitation.

KEY EXAM POINTS

- The **POCSO Act** provides a rights-based, gender-neutral, and child-sensitive legal framework for child protection.
- Major **implementation deficits** include delays in investigation, lack of victim support, and slow prosecution in courts.
- The framework mandates **child-friendly procedures** and specialized adjudication to secure timely justice.
- Strengthening **institutional accountability** across police, judiciary, and child welfare committees is crucial for child safety.
- **Special Juvenile Police Units** (SJPUs) and **Child Welfare Committees** (CWCs) play a key role in implementing POCSO.

DID YOU KNOW..!?

The Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act was enacted in the year **2012**.

The POCSO Act defines a child as any person below the age of **18 years**.

The POCSO Act was amended in **2019** to introduce more stringent punishments, including the **death penalty** for aggravated penetrative sexual assault.

Article 21 of the Indian Constitution guarantees the Right to Life and Personal Liberty, which includes the protection of children.

Article 39(f) of the Directive Principles of State Policy (**DPSP**) directs the State to ensure children are given opportunities to develop in a healthy manner.

The National Commission for Protection of Child Rights (**NCPCR**) was established in **2007** under the Commission for Protection of Child Rights (CPCR) Act, **2005**.

Article 45 of the Constitution mandates early childhood care and education for all children until they complete the age of **six years**.

REVISION FLASHCARD

POCSO Act 2012 defines a child as under 18 and was amended in 2019 for stricter penalties.

Syllabus Relevance: High relevance for Unit 5 (Polity) and Unit 9 (Social Welfare Schemes & Child Rights).

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