

Centrally Sponsored Scheme for Fast Track Special Courts

August 6, 2021

In news- Union Cabinet has approved the continuation of 1023 Fast Track Special Courts (FTSCs) including 389 exclusive POCSO Courts as a Centrally Sponsored Scheme from April 2021 to March.2023.

Background-

The Central Government enacted “**The Criminal Law (Amendment) Act, 2018**” and made provision of stringent punishment including death penalty for perpetrators of rape. **This led to the establishment of the Fast Track Special Courts (FTSCs).** However, Fast track courts were first recommended by the Eleventh Finance Commission in 2000.

About the scheme-

- The **Scheme was launched on 02nd October 2019.**
- The scheme is being **implemented by the Department of Justice** of the Ministry of Law and Justice.
- Funding: Rs. 1572.86 crore (Rs.971.70 crore as Central Share and Rs.601.16 crore as State share).
- **Central Share is to be funded from Nirbhaya Fund.**
- Currently covering 28 States, it is proposed to be expanded to cover all 31 states which are eligible to join the Scheme.
- It is supporting the efforts of State/UT Governments for providing time bound justice to hapless victims of sexual offences in the country including the remote and far – flung areas.

What are Fast Track Special Courts?

- Fast track courts are organized with the sole purpose to

- dispense Justice as expeditiously as possible by conducting proceedings preferably on a day to day basis.
- They have a better clearance rate as compared to the regular courts and hold speedy trials.
 - Besides providing quick justice to the hapless victims, it strengthens the deterrence framework for sexual offenders.
 - The cases already filed before the concerned Court (i.e. particular jurisdiction) will be transferred to FTC for speedy disposal.
 - **The FTCs deal with cases** of heinous nature including cases related to crime against women, child trafficking under POCSO Act 2012, crime against senior citizens, crime against the disabled, and heinous crimes etc.

Nirbhaya Fund

- Nirbhaya fund was created in 2013 in the aftermath of December 2012 Delhi gangrape and murder case.
- Under this fund the Centre gives money to the states, which in turn spend it on programmes meant for ensuring women's safety.
- The Women and Child Development Ministry is the nodal agency for expenditure from the Nirbhaya Fund.
- The Nirbhaya Fund Framework provides for a non-lapsable corpus fund for the safety and security of women to be administered by the Department of Economic Affairs (DEA) of the Ministry of Finance (MoF) of the Government of India.
- **MoF through DEA is the nodal Ministry for any accretion into and withdrawal from the corpus, and the MWCD is responsible to review and monitor the progress of sanctioned projects/ schemes.**