

## Today's Prelims Topics

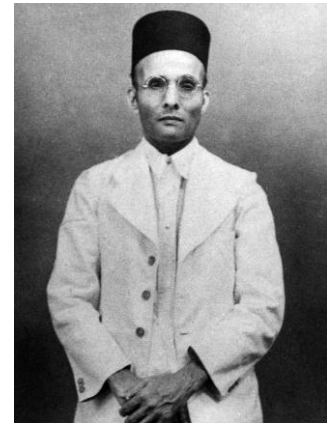
### Veer Savarkar

#### Context

The Prime Minister paid homage to Veer Savarkar on his birth anniversary.

#### About Veer Savarkar

- **Birth:** 28 May 1883, Bhagur, Nashik District, Maharashtra
- **Death:** 26 February 1966, Bombay (now Mumbai)
- **Book:** "**The Indian War of Independence**" in 1909, portraying the 1857 uprising as a unified and nationalistic rebellion against British rule.
- **Contribution:** Founded **Mitra Mela** in 1899, which later became the **Abhinav Bharat Society** in 1904.
  - Studied law in **London**, where he became involved with the **Free India Society** and other revolutionary activities.
  - Coined the term **Hindutva** and articulated it in his 1923 pamphlet "**Hindutva: Who is a Hindu?**"
  - Became the **President of the Hindu Mahasabha** in 1937.
  - Opposed the **Quit India Movement** in 1942.
  - Established the **Patit Pavan Mandir**, a temple open to all Hindus regardless of caste.
- **Imprisonment:**
  - Arrested in 1909 for revolutionary activities and sentenced to **two life terms (50 years)** of imprisonment.
  - Incarcerated in the **Cellular Jail, Andaman and Nicobar Islands** (Kala Pani) from 1911.
  - Advocated for the **abolition of untouchability** and worked towards the **eradication of the caste system**.
  - Accused (but acquitted) in the **assassination of Mahatma Gandhi** in 1948 due to lack of evidence.



Source: [PIB: Prime Minister pays homage to Veer Savarkar Ji](#)

## Modified Interest Subvention Scheme (MISS)

### Context

Cabinet approves continuation of Modified Interest Subvention Scheme (MISS) for FY 2025-26 with existing 1.5% Interest Subvention (IS).

### About Modified Interest Subvention Scheme (MISS)

- It is a **Central Sector Scheme**, 100% funded by the Government of India.
- **Launched: 2006-07**
- **Aim:** to provide short term Agri-loans availed by **farmers through Kisan Credit Card (KCC)** for their working capital requirements at concessional rate of interest.
- **Key Features of MISS:**
  - **Interest Subvention:** 1.5% subvention on short-term agri loans up to Rs.3 lakh at 7% interest.
  - **Prompt Repayment Incentive (PRI):** Timely repayment reduces effective interest to 4%.
  - **Allied Activities Coverage:** Loans up to Rs.2 lakh for animal husbandry and fisheries also eligible.
  - **No Structural Changes:** Same scheme structure continued for FY 2025–26.
- **Significance:**
  - **Financial Inclusion:** Supports over **7.75 crore KCC holders**, ensuring affordable institutional credit to small and marginal farmers.
  - **Rising Agri Credit:** KCC credit rose from **Rs.4.26 lakh cr (2014)** to **Rs.10.05 lakh cr (2024)**; total agri credit reached **Rs.25.49 lakh cr in 2023–24**.
  - **Digital Reforms:** **Kisan Rin Portal (2023)** enhanced transparency and streamlined subsidy claims.

### Fact

The implementing agencies for settling the claims under Interest Subvention Scheme are Reserve Bank of India (RBI)/National Bank for Agriculture and Rural development (NABARD).

**Source:** [Pib: Cabinet approves continuation of Modified Interest Subvention Scheme \(MISS\) for FY 2025-26 with existing 1.5% Interest Subvention \(IS\)](#)

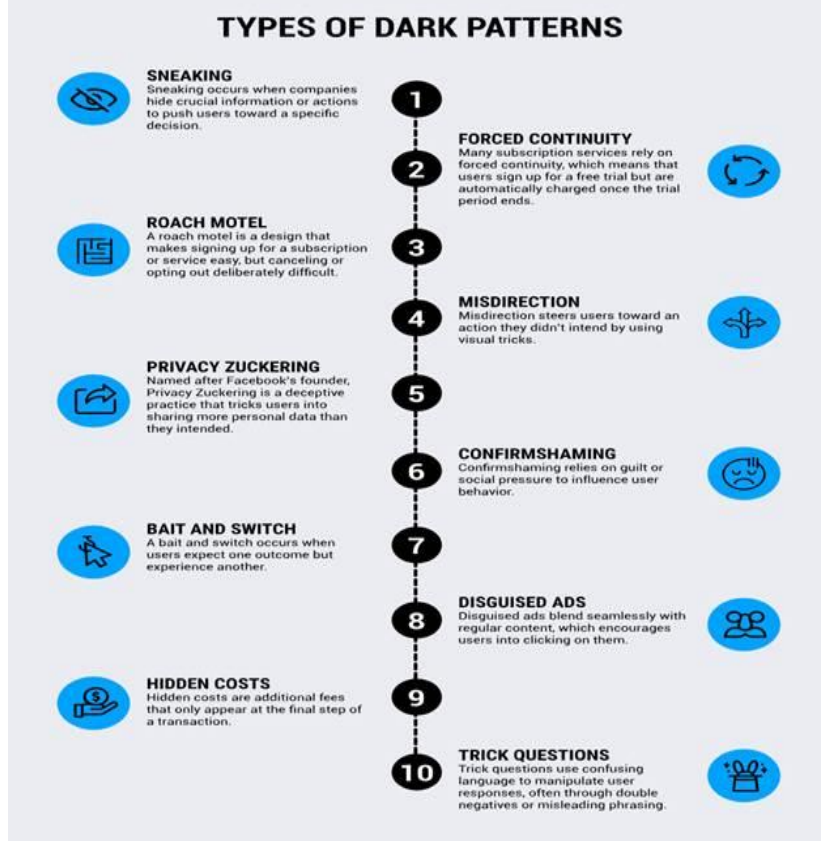
## Dark Patterns

### Context

CCPA issued notices to 11 companies for using dark patterns, violating its 2023 guidelines.

### What Are Dark Patterns?

- **Origin of Term:** Coined in **2010** by UK-based user experience designer **Harry Brignull**.
- **Definition:** User interfaces **deliberately designed to mislead or manipulate** users into taking actions they may not have intended.
- **Sectors Affected:** Common across **e-commerce, travel, health, retail, and social media** platforms.
- **Common Examples:**
  - **Sneak into Basket:** Adding items to a cart without the user's consent.
  - **Deceptive Button Design:** Highlighting "Accept" (e.g., for cookies) while hiding or minimizing the "Reject" option.
  - **Hidden Costs:** Revealing extra charges only at the final checkout stage.
- **Intent:** Crafted to **benefit companies** by nudging users into disadvantageous decisions.
- **Legal Status:** Often operate in a **legal grey area**, exploiting **loopholes in consumer protection laws**.
- **In India:**
  - **Issued By:** Central Consumer Protection Authority (CCPA)
  - **Legal Basis:** Consumer Protection Act, 2019
  - **Guidelines Name:** Guidelines for Prevention and Regulation of Dark Patterns, 2023
  - **Date of Notification:** 30 November 2023
  - **Applicable To:** Advertisers, sellers, and platforms offering goods/services in India (including e-commerce and digital platforms)



### Why Are Dark Patterns Hard to Regulate?

- **Lack of Specific Law:** Most countries, including **India**, do **not have a dedicated law** explicitly banning dark patterns.
- **Broad Legal Coverage:** In India, the **Consumer Protection Act, 2019** prohibits **unfair trade practices**, but dark patterns are not always clearly defined under it.
- **Global Examples of Action:**
  - In **2022**, **Google** and **Facebook** were **fined in the EU and France** for making it easier to **accept cookies** than to reject them — a typical dark pattern tactic.

Source: [NDTV](#)



## Zangezur Corridor

### Context

Armenia raised concerns in May 2025 over the proposed **Zangezur Corridor**, backed by **Azerbaijan, Turkey, and Pakistan**, fearing threats to its sovereignty and regional balance.



### Geographical Context:

- The Zangezur Corridor is a proposed transport route intended to connect mainland **Azerbaijan** with its exclave, the **Nakhchivan Autonomous Republic**, by passing through Armenia's **Syunik Province**.
- The corridor would traverse Armenia's southern Syunik Province, linking Azerbaijan to Nakhchivan.
- **Length:** Approximately 43 kilometers.

### Historical Background:

- During Soviet times, transport links existed between Azerbaijan and Nakhchivan through Armenian territory.
- These links were disrupted due to conflicts, notably the **Nagorno-Karabakh conflict**, leading to blockades and severed connections.

### Significance:

- **Economic:** The corridor aims to enhance regional trade by providing a direct route between Azerbaijan and Turkey, potentially boosting economic activities in underdeveloped areas of Azerbaijan, Armenia, and Turkey.
- **Geopolitical:** It could serve as a strategic link connecting Turkey to the Turkic nations of Central Asia, aligning with pan-Turkic aspirations.

### Stakeholders' Positions:

- **Azerbaijan & Turkey:** Strong proponents, viewing it as a means to strengthen regional connectivity and economic ties.

- **Armenia:** Expresses concerns over sovereignty and territorial integrity, wary of potential geopolitical shifts.
- **Iran:** Opposes the corridor, fearing it may alter regional dynamics and reduce its influence over transit routes.
- **Russia:** Supports the corridor as part of broader regional integration efforts but faces criticism from Iran.

#### Recent Developments:

- **2020 Ceasefire Agreement:** Post the Second Nagorno-Karabakh War, the ceasefire agreement included provisions to unblock regional transport links, indirectly referencing the corridor.
- **Ongoing Negotiations:** Discussions continue, with disagreements over the corridor's status and operational control.

#### India's Concerns

- India supports Armenia, which sees the corridor as a threat to its territorial integrity.
- The corridor strengthens Turkey-Azerbaijan-Pakistan ties, potentially isolating India.
- It may undermine India's **INSTC** and benefit **China's BRI**.
- India shares Iran's concern, as the corridor bypasses traditional Iran-Armenia trade routes.
- Risks escalating conflict in the South Caucasus, affecting India's connectivity and strategic interests.

Source: [India.com: Turkey, Pakistan, Azerbaijan..., this country deeply worried about Zangezur Corridor due to..., will India back its ally?](#)



## Lokpal

### Context

Lokpal gave a **clean chit to Madhabi Puri Buch**, former SEBI Chairperson, by disposing of all complaints filed in the **Hindenburg-Adani case**, marking a significant judgment.

### What is Lokpal?

- **Lokpal** is an **anti-corruption statutory body** set up under the **Lokpal and Lokayuktas Act, 2013**.
- It inquires into **allegations of corruption against public functionaries**, including the Prime Minister, Ministers, and Members of Parliament.
- **First Lokpal Chairperson:** Justice **Pinaki Chandra Ghose** (appointed in 2019)
- **Headquarters:** New Delhi
- **Independent body** not under control of any ministry.

### Structure:

- **Chairperson:** A former **Chief Justice of India**, a **Supreme Court Judge**, or an eminent person with integrity and experience.
- **Members:** Maximum of 8 members (50% judicial).
- **Reservation:** 50% of members must be from **SC/ST/OBC/Minorities/Women**.
- **Appointment Process:** By the **President** on the recommendation of a **Selection Committee**:
  - Prime Minister (Chairperson)
  - Speaker of Lok Sabha
  - Leader of Opposition in Lok Sabha
  - Chief Justice of India or a Judge nominated by him
  - An eminent jurist nominated by the President

### Jurisdiction:

- Covers **Prime Minister, Ministers, MPs, Group A–D public servants**, and officials of NGOs receiving government funds.
- PM is included **with some exceptions** (national security, international relations, etc.).

### Powers and Functions:

- Can conduct **preliminary inquiry, investigation, and prosecution**.
- Refers cases to **CBI** or other agencies.
- Has powers of a **civil court** during inquiries.

### Limitations/Exceptions:

- Cannot probe allegations against the PM in matters of:
  - International relations
  - External/internal security
  - Public order
  - Atomic energy and space (unless a full bench agrees and approves)



## News in Short

### Asiatic Wild Dogs (Dhole)

**News?** May 28 is celebrated as World Dhole Day.

#### About Dhole

- **Common Names:** Asiatic wild dog, whistling dog, red dog.
- **Scientific Name:** *Cuon alpinus*.
- **Family:** Canidae (dog family).
- **Geographic Range:** Found across **central, south, and southeast Asia**.
- **In India:** Present in
  - Shivalik foothills,
  - Northeastern India,
  - Eastern Deccan Plateau,
  - Eastern Ghats,
  - Western Ghats.
- **Preferred Habitats:**
  - Tropical dry forests
  - Tropical moist forests
  - Temperate forests
  - Production agroforests
- **Social Behaviour:** Live in **clans** rather than traditional "packs".
  - Clans often **split into smaller hunting groups** of 3–5 individuals, especially during the **spring season**.
  - Highly **social and cooperative** animals.
- **Conservation Status of Dholes:**
  - **IUCN List of Threatened Species:** Endangered
  - **Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES):** Appendix II
  - **Wildlife Protection Act, 1972 :** Schedule II
- **Threats include:**
  - Habitat loss and fragmentation
  - Depletion of prey base
  - Conflict with humans and livestock predation
  - Diseases from domestic dogs



#### Fact

- **Indira Gandhi Zoological Park (Visakhapatnam)** houses the **highest population of Dhole**.

**Source:** [The Hindu](#)



## Editorial Summary

### India's financial sector reforms need a shake-up

#### Context

For years, the government and regulators have attempted incremental reform in banking, financial services, and insurance (BFSI), yet systemic frictions persist.

#### Reforms Introduced by the Government and Regulators in the BFSI Sector

- **Unified KYC and UBO Norms:** India, as a member of the Financial Action Task Force (FATF), is implementing global KYC norms.
  - The Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) has started pressing foreign portfolio investors (like Elara and Vespera Funds) to disclose granular shareholder and UBO (Ultimate Beneficial Ownership) data.
  - This aims to increase transparency and prevent misuse of complex ownership structures via tax havens like Mauritius.
- **Retirement Planning Reforms:** Government and RBI have enabled the issuance of **long-dated sovereign bonds**.
  - There is an ongoing push for **zero-coupon government securities** to replace costly annuity products in retirement planning.
  - This **removes the 2% intermediation margin** taken by insurance companies, benefiting savers in the long run.
- **Digital Infrastructure and Tech Integration:** The government has promoted platforms like:
  - **Account Aggregator (AA)** framework – allows individuals to access and share financial data securely.
  - **Central KYC (CKYC)** registry – simplifies KYC for customers across financial institutions.
  - These platforms promote **financial inclusion, interoperability, and ease of doing finance**.
- **Corporate Bond Market Initiatives:** RBI had **mandated** the National Stock Exchange (NSE) to develop a **secondary bond market** to improve liquidity and transparency.

#### Challenges in India's Financial Sector

- **Fragmented Nomination Framework Across BFSI:** Across banking, mutual funds, and insurance, nomination rules vary widely — for example, single nominee is allowed in some instruments and multiple in others with differing legal rights.
  - This lack of consistency leads to confusion among ordinary savers and often results in litigation due to legal ambiguities.
- **Shallow and Opaque Corporate Bond Market:** Despite several policy pronouncements, India's corporate bond market remains underdeveloped, with **limited liquidity and transparency**.
  - The cost of capital remains high; a deeper bond market could reduce funding costs by **2–3%**, significantly benefiting industries.
  - RBI once mandated the development of a secondary bond market was **not effectively implemented**.
- **Inadequate Disclosure of Ultimate Beneficial Owners (UBOs):** Current UBO thresholds — **10% for companies** and **15% for partnerships** — allow entities to stay just below the radar, avoiding full disclosure.
  - This loophole hampers regulatory oversight, especially when foreign portfolio investments are routed via opaque jurisdictions like Mauritius.
  - For instance, **Elara India Opportunities Fund** and **Vespera Fund** resisted SEBI's repeated requests to disclose granular shareholder data, delaying regulatory action.

- **Expensive and Inefficient Retirement Planning Instruments:** Retirement plans are largely annuity-based, which are costly due to a **2% intermediation margin** charged by insurance firms.
  - Over 30 years, this eats into significant returns for savers.
  - Cheaper options like **long-dated zero-coupon government securities** are available but not promoted by the government or RBI.
- **Unchecked Rise of Shadow Banking:** Non-Banking Financial Companies (NBFCs), brokers, and repo traders now provide bank-like services with limited regulatory scrutiny.
  - Brokers finance retail investors through margin loans disguised as investments, often at interest rates exceeding **20%**, without clear disclosures.
  - There is little to no data on the scale of these shadow banking operations, making systemic risk assessment difficult.

#### Reforms Required in India's Financial Sector

- **Unified and Transparent Nomination System:** Introduce a harmonised nomination regime across all BFSI sectors with clear definitions of nominee rights versus legal heir claims.
  - If divergence exists, government should provide rationale supported by data and case studies.
- **Revamp and Deepen the Corporate Bond Market:** Enforce the RBI's earlier mandate to the NSE to develop an active secondary bond market.
  - Improve transparency, reduce trading opacity (e.g., curb algorithmic manipulations), and create incentives for greater issuer and investor participation.
- **Strengthen Ownership Disclosure Norms:** Revise UBO thresholds to close evasion gaps and ensure full disclosure of economic interest, in line with **FATF's 2022 guidelines**.
  - Mandate accurate, accessible, and up-to-date ownership records to improve capital market integrity and investor confidence.
- **Promote Low-Cost Retirement Options Based on Sovereign Bonds:** Strip principal and coupon components from government securities to create **zero-coupon bonds** suitable for long-term retirement savings.
  - Remove the 2% insurance intermediation layer to deliver higher net returns to savers.
- **Regulate and Monitor Shadow Banking Activities:** Conduct comprehensive data collection on activities of NBFCs, brokers, and margin lenders.
  - Follow the **European Union's model** of first gathering data to assess risks and then regulating based on evidence.
  - Ensure transparency precedes regulation to avoid unintended market disruptions.

Source: [The Hindu: India's financial sector reforms need a shake-up](#)

## Detailed Coverage

### France's National Assembly Adopts Bill Legalizing Assisted Dying

#### Context

France's lower house of parliament adopted a bill to allow adults with incurable illness to take lethal medication.

#### What is Euthanasia?

- It refers to the **practice of an individual deliberately ending their life**, oftentimes to get relief from an incurable condition, or intolerable pain and suffering.
- It is also known as '**Mercy Killing**' which is an act where the individual who is in an irremediable condition or has no chances of survival as he is suffering from painful life, ends his life in a painless manner.
- **There are primarily two types of Euthanasia:**
  - **Active euthanasia:** refers to the physician's deliberate act, usually the administration of lethal drugs, to end an incurably or terminally ill patient's life.
  - **Passive euthanasia:** refers to withholding or withdrawing treatment which is necessary for maintaining life.



#### Arguments

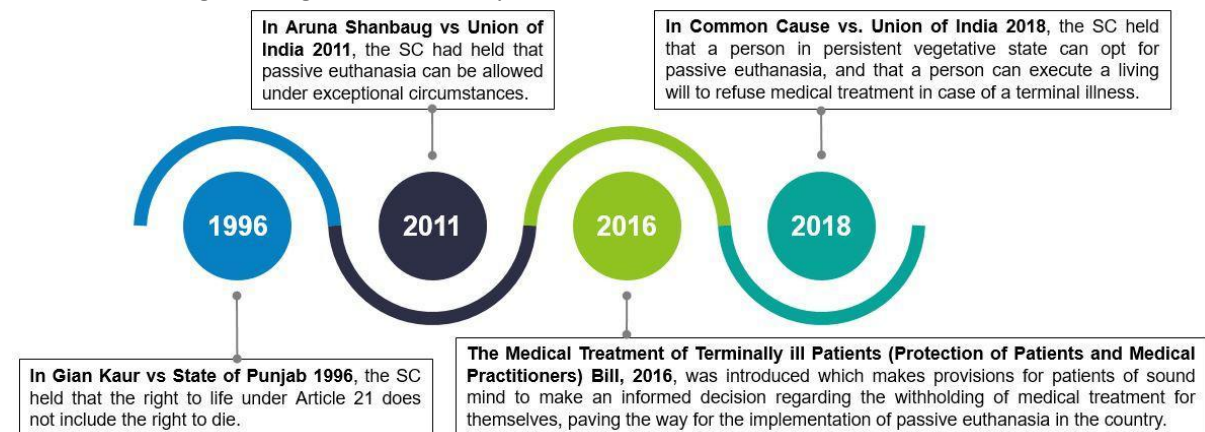
Arguments in Favour of legalizing euthanasia	Arguments against euthanasia
<b>Article 21</b> provides for the <b>right to live a life with at least minimum dignity</b> and if that standard is falling below that minimum level then a person should be given a right to end his life.	The human life is gift of God and <b>taking life is wrong and immoral</b> human beings cannot be given the right to play the part of God.
In countries like India, there is <b>lack of funds and shortage of hospital space</b> . So, the energy of doctors and hospital beds can be used for those people whose life can be saved instead of continuing the life of those who want to die.	It is totally <b>against the medical ethics, morals, and public policy</b> . Medical ethics call for nursing, caregiving and healing and not ending the life of the patient.
Forcing a person to live in an undignified way is against the person's choice. Thus, it <b>expresses the choice of a person</b> which is a fundamental principle.	It is feared that if euthanasia is legalized then other groups of more <b>vulnerable people will become at risk</b> of feeling into taking that option themselves.
It is an act of painlessly putting to death. So, the <b>motive behind this is to help rather than harm</b> .	Legalizing it may lead to a <b>slippery slope effect</b> , resulting in <b>assistive murders</b> .

### Different countries, different laws on Euthanasia

- **Netherlands, Luxembourg, and Belgium** allow both euthanasia and assisted suicide for anyone who faces “unbearable suffering” that has no chance of improvement.
- **Switzerland bans euthanasia** but allows assisted dying in the presence of a doctor or physician.
- **Canada had announced** that euthanasia and assisted dying would be allowed for mentally ill patients by March 2023; however, the decision has been widely criticized, and the move may be delayed.
- **United States** has different laws in different states. Euthanasia is allowed in some states like Washington, Oregon, and Montana.
- **United Kingdom** considers it illegal and equivalent to manslaughter.

### Euthanasia in India

- Active euthanasia is a crime under section **302 or 304 of IPC**.
- **Passive euthanasia is legal in India** under exceptional circumstances. The theory of passive euthanasia got its legal status in the year **2011**.



- **The 2018 judgment** has made it harder to give passive euthanasia an effect as now it involves execution of the **living will** in **presence of two witnesses, authentication by a:**

- Judicial Magistrate
- Permission from two Medical Boards
- Jurisdictional Collector.
- **Note:** A ‘**living will**’ is a concept where a **patient can give advance consent that allows withdrawal of life support systems** if the individual is reduced to a permanent vegetative state with no real chance of survival.

- **Concerns with the 2018 Judgment:**

- **Complex and Cumbersome Process:** In the five years since the judgment, no family of a terminally ill patient has benefited from it.
- **Time Sensitivity of Matter:** Norms did not take into account the fact that most decisions in intensive care units (ICUs) are required to be made under time pressure.
- **Hospitals exploit the kin of patients** financially by deliberately keeping terminally ill patients on life support, even though they are beyond any chance of recovery.

### 2023 Simplified Guidelines on Passive Euthanasia

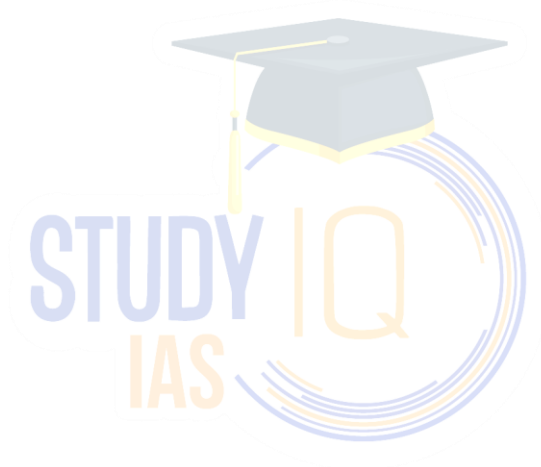
THE CHANGES BROUGHT		
	NOW	EARLIER
<b>Living will</b>	An attestation by a notary or a Gazetted officer to be sufficient for a living will	It was necessary that a judicial magistrate attest or countersign a living will
<b>Access to the living will</b>	Living will a part of national health record which can be accessed by Indian hospitals	Living will was kept in the custody of the district court concerned
<b>Primary board to examine patient's condition</b>	Three doctors, including treating physician and two other doctors with five years of experience in the specialty, will comprise the primary board of doctors	Primary board of doctors needs at least four experts from general medicine, cardiology, neurology, nephrology, psychiatry or oncology with overall standing of at least 20 years
<b>Time taken to decide</b>	Primary/secondary board to decide within 48 hours on withdrawal of further treatment	The 2018 judgment did not specify any outer limit on withdrawal of treatment
<b>Secondary board</b>	Hospital must immediately constitute a secondary board of medical experts	The district collector had to constitute the second board of medical experts

- **Simplified guidelines:** In January 2023, the Supreme Court of India simplified the **rules on passive euthanasia** in cases of terminal illness.

#### Suggestions

- **Enact Specific Legislation:** Parliament should introduce a dedicated law on Euthanasia to address the current legal gaps and provide clarity.
- **Strengthen Living Will Provisions:** A robust legal framework should be established to govern living wills or advance directives, detailing their format, validity, and enforceability.
- **Promote Interfaith Dialogue:** Open discussions within and among religious communities are essential to address differing views on Euthanasia and reduce associated stigma.
- **Raise Public Awareness:** Educational initiatives should be conducted to inform the general public and medical professionals about the legal status and ethical aspects of Euthanasia.
- **Ensure Strong Safeguards:** Strict legal safeguards, clear procedural guidelines, and rigorous ethical review mechanisms must be in place to prevent misuse and ensure Euthanasia is carried out responsibly.

Source: [Indian Express: France's National Assembly adopts long-debated bill legalizing end-of-life options](#)





## Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act

### Context

The Supreme Court chose not to sentence a man convicted under the POCSO Act, acknowledging that the **victim herself didn't perceive the incident as a crime** and experienced greater distress from the legal proceedings.

### Key features of POCSO Act

- **Confidentiality of the victim's identity:** The act lays down a protocol for media and prohibits disclosure of victim's identity, except when permitted by the Special Courts established under the act.
- **A gender-neutral law:** The act defines a **child as "any person" below 18 years of age.**
- **Different forms of sexual abuse:** The Act clearly explains and distinguishes between different forms of sexual abuse, including **non-penetrative and penetrative assault**, sexual assault and aggravated sexual assault, among others.
- **No time limit for reporting abuse:** A victim can report an offence at any time, even a number of years after the incidence of abuse.
- **Consent under POCSO:** The POCSO Act criminalises all sexual activity for those under the age of 18, regardless of whether consent is factually present between the two minors in a particular case or not.
- **Establishment of Special courts for trial of POCSO cases:** To provide speedy delivery of justice. The act stipulates that cases should be disposed of within a year.

### Amendment in POCSO Act (2019)

- It **introduced death penalty** for the offence of aggravated penetrative sexual assault.
- It introduced offences for transmitting or propagating pornographic materials involving a child.

### The National Commission for Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR)

- It is a **statutory** body constituted by the GoI under the Commission for Protection of Child Rights Act, 2005.
- Composition – **Chairperson (Not necessarily Woman) + 6 members (At Least 2 Women)**
- NCPCR has certain responsibilities in relation to the implementation of the POCSO Act like monitoring designation of Special Courts by State Governments, monitoring the appointment of public prosecutors by State Governments, etc

### Challenges in Implementation

- **Underreporting of Cases:** Despite mandatory reporting provisions, many cases go unreported due to social stigma, fear of retaliation, and lack of awareness, especially when the perpetrator is a family member or known to the child.
- **Judicial Delays:** Although the Act stipulates that trials should be completed within a year, in practice, cases often take much longer, sometimes over 500 days, due to overburdened courts and lack of infrastructure.
  - **E.g.,** As of 2021, **77.77% of POCSO cases in Uttar Pradesh were pending**; Delhi had an average case length of **1,284 days**.
- **Low Conviction Rates:** The conviction rate under POCSO is relatively low, with a significant number of acquittals.
  - Factors contributing to this include inadequate investigation, lack of evidence, and the victim turning hostile during the trial.
  - **E.g.,** As per the "*A Decade of POCSO*" study, **43.44% of POCSO trials end in acquittals**, while **only 14.03% lead to convictions**.



- **Inadequate Support Services:** There is a shortage of trained professionals, such as child psychologists and counselors, to provide necessary support to victims.
  - Moreover, the appointment of support persons, as mandated by the Act, is often neglected.
  - **E.g., In 96% of cases,** victims were **not provided with a ‘support person’**, despite clear provisions. (*A Decade of POCSO* study)
- **Criminalization of Consensual Adolescent Relationships:** The Act does not distinguish between exploitative sexual abuse and consensual relationships between adolescents, leading to criminalization of the latter.
- **Lack of Sensitization and Training:** Investigating officers, prosecutors, and judges often **lack training** in child-friendly procedures and trauma-informed handling.
  - **Insensitive cross-examinations** and courtroom procedures can retraumatize victims.

#### Way Forward (Suggestion by SC)

- **Reconsider Criminalization of Consensual Adolescent Relationships:** The SC has urged the **Government of India (GoI)** to **review whether consensual romantic/sexual relationships between adolescents** (typically aged 16–18) should fall within the purview of the POCSO Act.
  - The Court observed that **penalizing teenagers in consensual relationships contradicts their developmental needs** and emotional maturity.
- **Decriminalization of “Young Love”:** **The intent of the POCSO Act is to protect minors from sexual exploitation**, not to punish adolescents engaging in **natural, consensual, and non-exploitative relationships**.
  - The Court pointed out that **a rising number of POCSO cases involve consensual relationships**, often prosecuted due to complaints from disapproving parents or families.
- **Framing a Comprehensive Sexual and Reproductive Health Education Policy:** The Supreme Court recommended the **formulation of a national policy on sexual and reproductive health education**.
  - This policy should:
    - Educate adolescents about **healthy romantic and sexual relationships**.
    - Be **progressive, inclusive, and sensitively framed**.
    - Involve **consultations with stakeholders**, including educators, psychologists, healthcare experts, and communities.
    - Be **institutionally supported** rather than becoming a bureaucratic formality.
- **Promote Counselling Over Criminalization:** The SC highlighted the need for **counselling and psychological guidance** to help teenagers understand emotional intimacy and sexual health, rather than **subjecting them to criminal prosecution**.

#### Sources:

- [The Hindu: How has SC deviated from POCSO in a recent judgment?](#)
- [Indian Express: 10 years of POCSO Act](#)