

2. NCRB Data 2024 – Polity/Governance

1. Why in News

1. National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB) released 2024 crime data
2. Overall crime rate declined 6% but cybercrime surged 17%
3. 13,396 cases registered under crimes against women
4. 7,662 cases under crimes against children
5. Drug overdose deaths increased 50%
6. Delhi recorded highest crimes against women and senior citizens among metro cities
7. Economic offenses up 4.6%

2. Major Findings from NCRB 2024 Data

Overall Crime Rate

1. Declined by 6% in 2024 compared to 2023
2. Positive trend in general crime reduction
3. However, specific crime categories showed concerning increases

Cybercrime Cases

1. Increased by over 17% in 2024
2. Reflects growing digitalization and online vulnerabilities
3. Major concern despite overall crime decline
4. Includes financial fraud, phishing, hacking, online harassment, identity theft
5. Inadequate cybersecurity awareness and enforcement

Crimes Against Women

1. Declined by 1.5% in 2024
2. Crime rate – 64.6 per lakh population (down from 66.2 in 2023)
3. Total cases – 13,396 registered under crimes against women
4. Despite decline, absolute numbers remain high
5. Underreporting – Actual incidence likely much higher due to social stigma, fear, lack of trust in system
6. Categories include – Domestic violence, dowry deaths, rape, sexual harassment, acid attacks, trafficking

Drug Overdose Deaths

1. 50% increase in 2024 compared to previous year
2. Alarming public health crisis indicator
3. Tamil Nadu recorded most fatalities
4. Reflects drug abuse, addiction epidemic
5. Inadequate de-addiction infrastructure and awareness
6. Nexus of illegal drug trafficking
7. Youth particularly vulnerable

Crimes Against Children

1. Increased by 5.9% in 2024
2. Total cases – 7,662 registered
3. Composition –
 1. Kidnapping – 40% (highest category)
 2. Sexual offenses – 36.9% (second major category)
 3. Other crimes – Trafficking, child labor, abuse
4. Growing concern for child safety
5. POCSO Act cases increasing
6. School safety, online exploitation issues

Economic Offenses

1. Increased by 4.6% in 2024
2. Over 2.14 lakh cases registered
3. Includes - Cheating, forgery, breach of trust, counterfeiting, money laundering, banking frauds
4. White-collar crimes rising
5. Corporate frauds, Ponzi schemes
6. Enforcement challenges due to complexity

Metropolitan Crime Data - Delhi

1. Delhi recorded highest -
 1. Crimes against women among 19 metro cities
 2. Crimes against senior citizens
 3. Theft cases - Nearly 30% of all national theft offenses
2. Reflects urban crime concentration
3. Population density, anonymity factors
4. Inadequate policing infrastructure relative to population
5. Migrant population vulnerabilities

3. National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB)

Overview

1. Government agency responsible for collecting, analysing, publishing crime and criminal data
2. Central repository of crime statistics in India
3. Functions under Ministry of Home Affairs

Establishment and History

1. Established - 1986
2. Recommendation basis -
 1. National Police Commission Task Force (1977-1981)
 2. MHA Group of Experts on Crime Records (1985)
3. Purpose - Systematic crime data collection for evidence-based policing and policy

Functions

1. Collect crime data from states and Union Territories
2. Analyse trends and patterns
3. Publish annual reports and statistics
4. Maintain national databases (fingerprints, criminals, missing persons, stolen vehicles)
5. Support investigation through information sharing
6. Training and capacity building in crime analysis

Important NCRB Reports

Crime in India (Annual) -

1. Comprehensive crime statistics
2. State-wise, category-wise data
3. Trends analysis
4. Most referenced crime report

Accidental Deaths & Suicides in India (ADSI) -

5. Annual report on unnatural deaths
6. Suicide statistics by causes, demographics
7. Road accidents, other accidental deaths
8. Public health and safety insights

Prison Statistics India -

9. Prison population data
10. Undertrial prisoners' statistics
11. Prison conditions and infrastructure

12. Occupancy rates, demographic profiles

Specialized Tools

CyTrain – Training portal for cybercrime investigation; capacity building for law enforcement; online courses and resources

Cri-MAC (Crime Multi-Agency Centre) – Facilitates inter-agency coordination; information sharing platform; real-time crime data access; supports multi-jurisdictional investigations

Other Systems

1. Crime and Criminal Tracking Network & Systems (CCTNS)
2. National Database on Sexual Offenders (NDSO)
3. Inter-operable Criminal Justice System (ICJS)

4. Analysis of Crime Trends

Positive Developments

1. Overall, 6% crime rate decline encouraging
2. Slight decline in crimes against women
3. Improved reporting and registration mechanisms
4. Greater awareness about legal remedies

Areas of Concern

17% cybercrime surge – Digital infrastructure and awareness gaps; inadequate cybersecurity measures

5.9% increase in crimes against children – Child safety mechanisms failing; online grooming, exploitation

50% drug overdose death increase – Public health crisis; inadequate de-addiction centers; drug trafficking unchecked

Economic offenses up 4.6% – White-collar crime enforcement weak; corporate governance issues

Delhi's crime concentration – Urban policing challenges; migrant vulnerability; safety infrastructure gaps

5. Challenges in Crime Prevention and Control

Underreporting Issues

1. Crimes against women and children significantly underreported
2. Social stigma, victim-blaming culture
3. Lack of trust in criminal justice system
4. Fear of reprisal and social ostracization
5. Long, traumatic legal processes

Investigation and Prosecution

1. Low conviction rates despite registrations
2. Delayed trials, pending cases
3. Evidence collection and preservation issues
4. Witness protection inadequate
5. Legal aid accessibility limited

Cybercrime Challenges

1. Rapid technological evolution outpacing enforcement
2. Jurisdictional complexities (borderless crimes)
3. Technical expertise shortage in police
4. Digital evidence collection and preservation
5. International cooperation needed

Resource Constraints

1. Police-population ratio inadequate (151 per lakh vs UN recommendation 222)
2. Infrastructure deficits (stations, equipment, technology)
3. Training gaps in specialized crimes

4. Forensic laboratory backlogs
5. Budgetary limitations

Social and Structural

1. Gender inequality and patriarchal attitudes
2. Economic disparities breeding crime
3. Urbanization strains on infrastructure
4. Drug trafficking networks
5. Political-criminal nexus

6. Way Forward

Strengthening Cybercrime Response

1. Enhance cyber forensic capabilities
2. Train police in digital investigation
3. Public awareness campaigns on cyber safety
4. Stronger data protection laws enforcement
5. International cooperation on cyber offenses
6. Dedicated cybercrime police stations

Protecting Women and Children

1. Fast-track courts for POCSO and sexual offenses
2. One-stop crisis centres expansion
3. Gender-sensitization training for police and judiciary
4. Effective implementation of Nirbhaya Fund
5. School safety audits and awareness programs
6. Mandatory background checks for child-facing roles
7. Online child safety protocols

Addressing Drug Menace

1. Expand de-addiction and rehabilitation centers
2. Border security against drug trafficking
3. Community-based intervention programs
4. Awareness campaigns, especially in educational institutions
5. Harm reduction strategies
6. Coordinated enforcement across states

Police Reforms

1. Increase police-population ratio
2. Infrastructure and technology upgradation
3. Specialized training (cyber, economic, gender crimes)
4. Community policing models
5. Accountability mechanisms
6. Separation of investigation from law and order

Judicial Reforms

1. Fast-track courts for specific offenses
2. Reduce pendency through more judges, courts
3. Witness protection programs
4. Victim compensation schemes
5. Legal aid accessibility
6. Alternative dispute resolution for appropriate cases

Data-Driven Policing

1. Leverage NCRB data for predictive policing
2. Crime mapping and hotspot identification

3. Evidence-based resource allocation
4. Regular crime audits
5. Inter-state coordination through Cri-MAC

Social Measures

1. Gender equality education
2. Economic opportunities reducing crime incentives
3. Urban planning considering safety (lighting, CCTV, design)
4. Community engagement in crime prevention
5. Mental health support systems

7. Conclusion

NCRB 2024 data reveals mixed crime trends – overall 6% decline positive but 17% cybercrime surge, 5.9% increase in crimes against children, and 50% drug overdose deaths alarming. Strengthening cybercrime response, protecting vulnerable groups through fast-track justice, addressing drug menace, implementing police and judicial reforms, and leveraging data-driven policing essential for comprehensive crime prevention and safer society.

Source – <https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/rise-in-cybercrime-but-overall-crime-rate-dropped-in-2024-says-latest-ncrb-report/article70948292.ece>