Society & Social Justice · GS - I

Why has the expansion of legal protections not translated into adequate improvements in women's safety in India? Analyse the institutional and socio-cultural barriers.

EXAM YEAR	PAPER	SUBJECT
DAILY PRACTICE 26/11/2026	GS - I	Society & Social Justice

MARKS	WORD LIMIT
15	~ 250 words

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Answer Hint

Constitutional guarantees, gender-based violence, law enforcement, access to justice, patriarchal attitudes, victim-blaming, public infrastructure, institutional accountability

Model Answer

Introduction

Women's safety is integral to constitutional equality, dignity and personal liberty. Despite legislative measures and awareness campaigns, gender-based violence persists because legal protection does not always translate into effective prevention, investigation and justice.

Institutional Barriers

1. **Policing deficiencies:** Inadequate gender-sensitive training, poor investigation and limited accessibility of police services discourage reporting and weaken victim protection.

2. **Delayed justice:** Judicial delays, low conviction rates in several categories of offences and weak witness protection can undermine confidence in the criminal justice system.

3. **Implementation gaps:** Poor coordination among police, healthcare institutions, legal services and support agencies often leaves survivors without comprehensive assistance.

4. **Unsafe public infrastructure:** Inadequate street lighting, unreliable public transport and poorly designed public spaces restrict women's mobility and participation.

Socio-Cultural Barriers

1. **Patriarchal attitudes:** Unequal power relations and normalisation of controlling behaviour can perpetuate violence within households and communities.

2. **Victim-blaming:** Social stigma and fear of reputational damage discourage survivors from reporting abuse or seeking support.

3. **Economic dependence:** Limited financial independence can make it difficult for women to leave abusive situations or pursue legal remedies.

Priorities for Reform

Effective prevention requires gender-sensitive policing, time-bound investigation, survivor-centred healthcare, accessible legal aid, safe urban planning and sustained gender education. Women's economic empowerment must complement legal protection.

Conclusion

Women's safety cannot be secured through legislation alone. It requires accountable institutions, social transformation and an environment in which women can exercise their rights without fear or discrimination.

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