Kerala plans statewide child vulnerability mapping

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News

After the suspected malnutrition death of a two-year-old at Karthikappally, Alappuzha district (18 Oct 2026), following a meeting convened by Kerala's Women and Child Development Minister Bindhu Krishna on 23 Oct, the department decided on statewide 'child vulnerability mapping' to identify children whose health, education or safety is at risk. District Women and Child Development Officers, with the Local Self-Government, Health and Police departments, will ensure their safety and rehabilitation; social investigation reports will reach Child Welfare Committees (CWCs) within a set time; every child in a care institution will get an individual care plan; and protection will continue even if parents do not cooperate.

Key facts

Decision	23 Oct 2026 – Kerala Women & Child Development Dept (Minister Bindhu Krishna)
Trigger	18 Oct – suspected malnutrition death of a two-year-old, Karthikappally, Alappuzha
Aim	Early identification of children at risk in health, education, safety
Follow-up	Anganwadi workers, ICDS supervisors, counsellors track nutrition & growth

Commission	Kerala State Commission for Protection of Child Rights (KeSCPCR) took suo motu case
Legal basis	Juvenile Justice (Care & Protection of Children) Act 2015 – Sec 27: a CWC for every district

Background

- Constitution: Article 39(f) – children to be given opportunities to develop in a healthy manner, in freedom and dignity, and protected against exploitation (Directive Principle). Art 21A – free and compulsory education for 6–14; Art 24 – no employment of children below 14 in factories; Art 45 – early childhood care and education up to 6 years.
- Laws & bodies: The National Commission (NCPCR) was set up on 5 March 2007 under the Commissions for Protection of Child Rights Act 2005 (Ministry of Women and Child Development, HQ New Delhi). It monitors the RTE Act 2009, POCSO Act 2012 and JJ Act 2015. Under POCSO, everyone below 18 is a 'child'.
- Schemes: 'Mission Vatsalya' (from 2021–22) – the Centre's umbrella child-protection scheme; the child helpline 1098 runs under it and is integrated with emergency number 112 (ERSS). Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) provides supplementary nutrition and growth monitoring through anganwadi centres.

Tamil Nadu link: The Tamil Nadu State Commission for Protection of Child Rights (TNSCPCR) was constituted by G.O. (Ms) No. 45 dated 28.03.2012 (Social Welfare & Nutritious Meal Programme Dept). For child nutrition, the 'Chief Minister's Breakfast Scheme' was launched on 15.09.2022 at Adhimoolam Corporation Primary School, Madurai. The 'Oottachathai Uruthi Sei' scheme, which identifies and treats malnourished children, was launched on 21 May 2022 in the Nilgiris district; its second phase was launched at Ariyalur in November 2024.

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