25 Nov: Intl Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women

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News

The International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women is observed every year on 25 November; in 2026 it falls on a Wednesday. It opens the '16 Days of Activism', a worldwide campaign that runs till 10 December. Under the UN Secretary-General's 'UNiTE' campaign, the 2026 theme is 'UNiTE to End Violence against Women and Girls: Ensure justice, protect survivors, end impunity' (UN Women, UN Geneva). Building on 2025's focus on digital violence, this year's campaign covers violence both online and offline, according to UN Women's Asia-Pacific office. UN Women notes that violence affects one in three women worldwide. In India, a nationwide awareness campaign for rural women also begins on this day (details in a separate item).

Key facts for the exam

Point	Details
Date	25 November (every year)
Designated by	UNGA resolution 54/134 (17 Dec 1999)
Commemorates	Mirabal sisters – Dominican Republic, killed 25.11.1960
UN Declaration	Declaration on the Elimination of VAW – 48/104 (20 Dec 1993)
16 Days campaign	25 Nov – 10 Dec (Human Rights Day)

Point	Details
UNiTE	UN Secretary-General's campaign – 2008
2026 theme	Ensure justice, protect survivors, end impunity (UNiTE)
Spotlight Initiative	EU–UN joint initiative, 2017

Background

- History: On 25 November 1960 the three Mirabal sisters, political activists in the Dominican Republic, were murdered on the orders of dictator Rafael Trujillo. Women's rights activists marked the day against violence from 1981. The UN General Assembly adopted the Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women in 1993 and the resolution designating the Day in 1999.
- Constitution: Article 14 (equality), Article 15(3) (special provisions for women) and Article 21 (life with dignity) underpin women's protection. India ratified the UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) in 1993.
- Laws and bodies: The National Commission for Women (NCW) was set up in January 1992 under the NCW Act, 1990. The Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act came in 2005 and the Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (POSH) Act in 2013; the POSH Act builds on guidelines laid down by the Supreme Court in the 1997 Vishaka case. Chapter V of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, 2023 groups offences against women and children together.
- Global efforts: UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon launched the 'UNiTE' campaign in 2008. The EU and the UN launched the 'Spotlight Initiative' in 2017. Gender equality is the core of Sustainable Development Goal 5.

Tamil Nadu link: The 'Tamil Nadu Prohibition of Harassment of Woman Act, 1998' was enacted to curb harassment (eve-teasing) of women in public places and vehicles. In January 2025 the Assembly amended it to make penalties stricter, and passed another Bill raising punishment for sexual offences against women and children.

Frequently asked questions

What is this news about?

The International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women is observed every year on 25 November; in 2026 it falls on a Wednesday. It opens the '16 Days of Activism', a worldwide campaign that runs till 10 December.

What are the key facts to remember for the exam?

Date: 25 November (every year); Designated by: UNGA resolution 54/134 (17 Dec 1999); Commemorates: Mirabal sisters – Dominican Republic, killed 25.11.1960; UN Declaration: Declaration on the Elimination of VAW – 48/104 (20 Dec 1993).

What is the background to this news?

History: On 25 November 1960 the three Mirabal sisters, political activists in the Dominican Republic, were murdered on the orders of dictator Rafael Trujillo.

Practice questions (with answers)

1. The Mirabal sisters, remembered on 25 November, were killed by a dictatorship in 1960 in which country?

A) Cuba

B) Dominican Republic

C) Chile

D) Mexico

Answer: B – Explanation: Dominican Republic – killed on 25.11.1960 on dictator Trujillo's orders. The UN designated the Day in 1999.

2. Which of these December international days is incorrectly matched?

A) World AIDS Day – 1 Dec

B) Human Rights Day – 9 Dec

C) Disability Day – 3 Dec

D) Anti-Corruption – 9 Dec

Answer: B – Explanation: Human Rights Day is 10 Dec (UDHR, 1948) – the day the '16 Days' campaign ends. The other three are correct.

3. Which national statutory body for women's rights was set up in 1992 under a 1990 Act?

A) NCW

B) NHRC

C) NALSA

D) NCPCR

Answer: A – Explanation: National Commission for Women (NCW) – Jan 1992. NHRC – 1993 Act; NCPCR – child rights; NALSA – free legal aid.

4. The Supreme Court laid down the guidelines that led to the POSH Act, 2013 (workplace sexual harassment) in which case?

A) Shah Bano case

B) Mary Roy case

C) Indra Sawhney case

D) Vishaka case

Answer: D – Explanation: Vishaka v. State of Rajasthan (1997) – guidelines to apply until a law came. Shah Bano – maintenance; Mary Roy – inheritance.

5. Which State enacted a 'Prohibition of Harassment of Woman Act' in 1998 to curb harassment of women in public places?

A) Keralam

B) Karnataka

C) Tamil Nadu

D) Andhra Pradesh

Answer: C – Explanation: Tamil Nadu – its 1998 anti-eve-teasing law. It was amended in January 2025 to make the penalties stricter.