



UPSC & STATE PCS CURRENT AFFAIRS · UJIYARI.COM

DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS

International Missing Children's Day 2026: India's TrackChild Architecture

25 May 2026

SOCIAL ISSUES**POLITY****GS1****GS2**

CURATED & WRITTEN BY

**Bharat Choudhary**

UPSC Educator & Content Creator

[linkedin.com/in/epicbharat](https://www.linkedin.com/in/epicbharat)**ALSO FROM THE CREATOR****BharatNotes**Free UPSC notes, MCQs, PYQ analysis. **100% Free.**bharatnotes.com →**ADVERTISE****Advertise with Ujiyari**

Reach thousands of UPSC aspirants daily.

epicbharat@gmail.com

International Missing Children's Day 2026: India's TrackChild Architecture

25 May 2026 · 4 min read ·

2 tags ▾

WHY IN NEWS:

International Missing Children's Day is observed every **May 25** worldwide. The date marks the disappearance of **6-year-old Etan Patz** in New York on **May 25, 1979** — a watershed moment in global child-protection consciousness. India recorded **83,350+ missing children cases (NCRB Crime in India 2022)**, with **60%+ being girls**. The 2026 observance comes shortly after the **Supreme Court mandate (May 22, 2026)** on FIR registration in every missing child case.

ABOUT INTERNATIONAL MISSING CHILDREN'S DAY

- First proclamation by **US President Ronald Reagan in 1983**, declaring May 25 a day of awareness
- Globally adopted from **2001**, championed by the **International Centre for Missing & Exploited Children (ICMEC)**
- **Symbol: the forget-me-not flower** (blue)

THE ETAN PATZ CASE — ORIGIN OF THE DATE

- Disappeared **May 25, 1979** in **SoHo, New York City**
- Walked to school bus stop **alone for the first time**
- Body was **never found**; legally declared dead in 2001
- **Pedro Hernandez** convicted in 2017 and sentenced to 25 years to life
- First missing child to be **photographed on milk cartons** (1980s campaign)

INDIA'S MISSING CHILDREN CRISIS

- **NCRB Crime in India 2022: ~83,350** children went missing in 2022
- ~67,000 traced; ~16,000+ remain untraced cumulatively
- **Girls form ~60%** of missing children
- Most vulnerable: girls aged 12–18, marginalised communities, tribal and rural districts

INDIA'S DIGITAL TRACKING ARCHITECTURE

PLATFORM	LAUNCH	AUTHORITY	PURPOSE
TrackChild Portal	2012	MoWCD	Central database for missing/found children
Khoya-Paya Portal	June 2015	MoWCD (citizen corner of TrackChild)	Public participation in tracing
ZIPNET	—	Delhi Police-led	Zonal Integrated Police Network for NCR
CCTNS	2009	MHA	Pan-India crime and criminal tracking
CARA	—	MoWCD	Central Adoption Resource Authority
Childline 1098	—	MoWCD	24×7 toll-free helpline, now linked with ERSS

STATUTORY FRAMEWORK

- **Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2015**
- **POCSO Act, 2012** — Protection of Children from Sexual Offences
- **Immoral Traffic (Prevention) Act, 1956 (ITPA)**
- **BNS 2023 Sections 137–144** — kidnapping and abduction (replacing IPC 359–374)
- **Article 21** — right to life and personal liberty
- **Article 39(e), (f) and 45** — Directive Principles on child welfare

INSTITUTIONAL ARCHITECTURE

- **Ministry of Women and Child Development (MoWCD)** — apex body
- **Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA)** — police, AHTUs, anti-trafficking
- **National Commission for Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR)** — statutory body established 2007 under the **CPCR Act 2005**
- **State Commissions for Protection of Child Rights (SCPCRs)**
- **District Child Welfare Committees (CWCs)**
- **District Child Protection Units (DCPUs)**

ANTI-HUMAN TRAFFICKING UNITS (AHTUS)

- ~788 across India (US TIP Report 2024)
- Under MHA framework
- Supreme Court order of **May 22, 2026** mandated their full functionalisation within 4 weeks

MISSION VATSALYA

- **Renamed and revamped in 2022** from the earlier **Integrated Child Protection Scheme (ICPS)**
- Components: institutional care, family-based care, adoption, foster care, sponsorship

OPERATION SMILE / OPERATION MUSKAAN

- **Annual nationwide drives** by MHA to recover missing children
- Launched in **January 2015**
- Has led to the tracing of thousands of missing children

INTERNATIONAL FRAMEWORK

INSTRUMENT	YEAR	INDIA'S POSITION
UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC)	1989	Ratified 1992
UN Trafficking in Persons (Palermo) Protocol	2000	Ratified 2011
SAARC Convention on Preventing Trafficking	2002	Signatory

- **ICMEC** (International Centre for Missing & Exploited Children): founded **1998**
- **NCMEC** (US National Center for Missing & Exploited Children): founded **1984**

PENDING LEGISLATION

- **Trafficking of Persons (Prevention, Protection and Rehabilitation) Bill** – pending since 2018; revised draft 2021
- Would replace the **ITPA, 1956**

WAY FORWARD

- **Pass** the long-pending Trafficking Bill
- **Integrate TrackChild** with state police FIR systems (per the SC order)
- **Train SHOs** on the new FIR mandate
- Strengthen **inter-state coordination** — Bihar–Bengal–Jharkhand (source) and Delhi–Mumbai–Goa (destination)
- **School-based prevention** modules
- **Public awareness in regional languages** through Childline and ASHA networks

UPSC RELEVANCE

- **GS Paper 1:** Society — vulnerable sections, social issues
- **GS Paper 2:** Governance, welfare of children, statutory bodies
- **Prelims:** TrackChild, Khoya-Paya, ICPS → Mission Vatsalya rename, NCPCR year, UNCRC ratification
- **Mains:** “India’s child-protection architecture is comprehensive on paper but fragmented in implementation.” Examine in light of the Supreme Court’s 2026 directions.

FACTS CORNER:

International Missing Children's Day: May 25 (annually since 1983 in US; global from 2001)

Origin: Etan Patz disappearance, May 25, 1979 (New York)

Symbol: forget-me-not flower (blue)

NCRB Crime in India 2022: ~83,350 missing children

Girls share: ~60% of missing

TrackChild launched: 2012 (under MoWCD)

Khoya-Paya launched: June 2015

CCTNS launched: 2009

Childline 1098: under MoWCD

JJ Act: 2015; POCSO: 2012; ITPA: 1956

BNS 2023 — Sections 137–144 cover kidnapping/abduction

NCPCR established: 2007 (statutory under CPC Act 2005)

Mission Vatsalya: renamed from ICPS in 2022

UNCRC 1989; India ratified 1992

Palermo Protocol 2000; India ratified 2011

Operation Smile/Muskaan launched: January 2015

ICMEC founded: 1998

SC order on missing children FIR mandate: May 22, 2026

Sources: [MoWCD](#), [NCRB](#), [ICMEC](#)

← **NEWER ARTICLE**

World Thyroid Day 2026: India's Hidden Endocrine Burden

OLDER ARTICLE →

IUCN Red List 2026: Four Indian Open-Ecosystem Birds...

RELATED EDITORIALS

BUSINESS STANDARD

[1973 and Now: Indira Gandhi's Self-Destructive Responses Are Instructive Today](#)

23 May

THE HINDU

[Interpreting the 'Rise' of the Cockroach Janta Party](#)

23 May

INDIAN EXPRESS

[For India, Weakening Monsoon and Fertiliser Crisis: A Double Whammy](#)

23 May

THE HINDU

[Ladakh Seeks Belonging Through Representation](#)

22 May

RELATED KEY TERMS

KEY TERM

[42nd Amendment Freeze on Delimitation](#)

The constitutional freeze that locked Lok Sabha seat allocation to the...

KEY TERM

[Active Case Finding \(TB\)](#)

A proactive public health strategy where health workers systematically...

KEY TERM

[Advance Directive \(Living Will\)](#)

A legal document in which a competent adult specifies their medical...

KEY TERM

[AERB](#)

India's regulatory body for nuclear and radiological safety,...



CURATED & WRITTEN BY

Bharat Choudhary

UPSC Educator & Content Creator

[linkedin.com/in/epicbharat](https://www.linkedin.com/in/epicbharat)[Read Full Article on Ujiyari →](#)<https://ujiyari.com/daily/2026/05/25/international-missing-childrens-day-trackchild-2026/>

ALSO FROM THE CREATOR

BharatNotes

Free UPSC study platform — subject-wise notes across all 4 GS papers, Prelims MCQs, Mains answer frameworks, PYQ analysis & progress tracking. **100% Free • No Login Required.**

[Start Preparing → bharatnotes.com](http://bharatnotes.com)

📌 OPPORTUNITY

Advertise with Ujiyari

Reach **thousands of serious UPSC & State PCS aspirants** daily through our PDFs, website, and social channels.

Ideal for: Coaching institutes • EdTech platforms • Book publishers • Exam prep apps

[✉ epicbharat@gmail.com](mailto:epicbharat@gmail.com)

Write to us for rates & media kit

Free UPSC & State PCS Current Affairs · ujiyari.com · bharatnotes.com