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# National Creche Standards in Focus After the Bengaluru Daycare Case

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# National Creche Standards in Focus After the Bengaluru Daycare Case

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## WHY IN NEWS

*In early July 2026, a child-abuse case at a Bengaluru daycare centre pushed national creche and daycare safety standards into sharp focus, prompting a tightening of childcare safety and labour-law compliance by the Ministry of Women and Child Development and the Ministry of Labour and Employment.*

## THE TRIGGER AND THE RESPONSE

The Bengaluru case exposed how weak monitoring at a private daycare centre can leave young children unsafe. In response, the **Ministry of Women and Child Development** and the **Ministry of Labour and Employment** moved to tighten enforcement of existing childcare safety norms and labour-law obligations on creches. The episode reopened a wider debate: India has creche standards on paper, but inspection and enforcement on the ground remain thin.

## THE LEGAL AND POLICY FRAMEWORK

The core statutory (<https://ujyari.com/vocab/statutory/>) hook for workplace creches is the **Maternity Benefit (Amendment) Act, 2017**. Alongside raising paid maternity leave from 12 weeks to 26 weeks for the first two children, the amendment made creche provision a legal duty for larger employers.

PROVISION	REQUIREMENT
Creche obligation	Ujijari Current Affairs · ujijari.com · Free Daily Current Affairs for UPSC & State PCS Establishments with 50 or more employees must provide a creche facility
Visits allowed	Working mothers permitted four creche visits a day (including rest intervals)
Caregivers	Only women caregivers and helpers
Staff verification	Mandatory police verification of staff
Staff certificates	Character certificate and medical-fitness certificate for staff
Location	Preference for a ground-floor location
Facilities	Proper ventilation and child-friendly toilets
Paid maternity leave	26 weeks for the first two children (under the same 2017 Act)

Under the Act, **establishments with 50 or more employees must provide a creche facility**, and **working mothers are allowed four creche visits a day**, including their rest intervals, so that they can feed and check on their infants. The supporting norms prescribe **only women as caregivers and helpers**, **mandatory police verification** of staff, and **character and medical-fitness certificates** for those employed. They also recommend a **ground-floor location**, **proper ventilation** and **child-friendly toilets**, so the physical environment itself is safe for very young children.

## The Anganwadi-cum-Creche Push

On the public-provision side, the government is expanding childcare through **Mission Shakti** (<https://ujijari.com/schemes/mission-shakti/>), its umbrella scheme for women's safety, security and empowerment. Under Mission Shakti, the government targets about **17,000 Anganwadi** (<https://ujijari.com/terms/anganwadi/>)-**cum-Creches (AWCCs)**, which combine the existing Anganwadi network with daycare so that children of working mothers, including informal and rural workers, have a safe place while their mothers work.

## ANALYSIS AND WAY FORWARD

The case sits at the intersection of child safety and the **care economy**. Childcare is not a private afterthought; it is **enabling infrastructure** for the economy. When safe, affordable creches are unavailable, the burden of unpaid care falls disproportionately on women, and many step out of paid work altogether. This directly depresses India's **Female Labour Force Participation Rate (FLFPR)**. Reliable childcare is therefore central to **women-led development**, letting mothers stay in the workforce without trading off their children's safety.

The Bengaluru case highlights the real weakness: not the absence of standards, but **gaps in inspection and enforcement**. Rules on police verification, women-only staff and safe premises mean little if no agency regularly checks compliance, and if private, unregistered daycares operate outside any registry. The way

forward is a mandatory registration and licensing regime for all daycare centres, periodic and surprise inspections, a public complaints and grievance channel, CCTV and safety audits, and clear accountability shared between the labour and women-and-child-development machinery. Scaling the Anganwadi-cum-Creche network under Mission Shakti must go hand in hand with a genuine quality and safety guarantee.

This agenda maps directly onto **Sustainable Development** (<https://ujivari.com/terms/sustainable-development/>) **Goal 5 (gender equality)**, which recognises unpaid care and domestic work, and **Sustainable Development Goal 8 (decent work and economic growth)**, which includes safe workplaces and labour rights.

## UPSC RELEVANCE

**GS Paper 1:** Role of women and women’s organisations; social empowerment; issues related to the care burden and women’s participation in the workforce.

**GS Paper 2:** Welfare schemes for vulnerable sections (women and children); mechanisms, laws and institutions for their protection and betterment; issues relating to the development and management of the social sector.

### Prelims pointers:

- Under the Maternity Benefit (Amendment) Act, 2017, establishments with 50 or more employees must provide a creche facility.
- Working mothers are allowed four creche visits a day, including rest intervals; paid maternity leave is 26 weeks for the first two children.
- Creche norms require only women caregivers and helpers, police verification, and character and medical-fitness certificates for staff.
- Physical norms favour a ground-floor location, proper ventilation and child-friendly toilets.
- The government targets about 17,000 Anganwadi-cum-Creches (AWCCs) under Mission Shakti.
- Relevant goals: SDG 5 (gender equality) and SDG 8 (decent work and economic growth).

**Mains question:** “Safe and affordable childcare is enabling infrastructure for women’s workforce participation, not a private concern.” In light of recent daycare safety failures, examine India’s creche standards and the gaps in their enforcement. (15 marks, 250 words)

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**Trigger:** A child-abuse case at a Bengaluru daycare centre in early July 2026 put national creche and childcare safety standards in focus.

**Response:** The Ministry of Women and Child Development and the Ministry of Labour and Employment moved to tighten childcare safety and labour-law compliance.

**Legal basis:** Under the Maternity Benefit (Amendment) Act, 2017, establishments with 50 or more employees must provide a creche facility; the Act also gives 26 weeks of paid maternity leave for the first two children.

**Mother's access:** Working mothers are allowed four creche visits a day, including rest intervals.

**Safety norms:** Only women caregivers and helpers; mandatory police verification; character and medical-fitness certificates; preference for ground-floor location; proper ventilation and child-friendly toilets.

**Public provision:** About 17,000 Anganwadi-cum-Creches (AWCCs) targeted under Mission Shakti.

**Why it matters:** Central to the care economy, women-led development and the Female Labour Force Participation Rate (FLFPR).

**SDG linkage:** SDG 5 (gender equality) and SDG 8 (decent work and economic growth).

*Sources: Ministry of Women and Child Development (<https://wcd.gov.in/>), Ministry of Labour and Employment (<https://labour.gov.in/>), PIB (<https://pib.gov.in/>)*

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Specialised district-level police units tasked with investigating...

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### KEY TERM

#### [Anganwadi](#)

A government-run village-level child care and mother care centre under...

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