



EDITORIALS - 28TH SEP 2026

1. The paradox of de-Sinification in global production (GS Paper III Economy)

This editorial '**The paradox of de-Sinification in global production**' was published in **The Hindu** on 28th Sep 2026, highlights why **relocating factories** cannot easily remove or reproduce China's industrial ecosystems.

De-Sinification: The Ecosystem Challenge

- SpaceX's reported July 2026 effort to remove Chinese components highlights that **de-Sinification** requires identifying, replacing and verifying **deep-tier suppliers**, beyond relocating assembly.
- Foreign firms seek to escape **Chinese production networks**, while Chinese firms expanding abroad must transfer or rebuild **industrial ecosystems** supporting their competitiveness.
- China's **technological self-reliance** makes disengagement a moving target: CXMT is the fourth-largest **DRAM** producer globally but trails advanced-memory leaders and depends on foreign chipmaking equipment.
- Overseas expansion involves choosing between **existing suppliers**, local sourcing or both, with differing costs and **localisation** outcomes; BYD develops European suppliers alongside Hungarian manufacturing, while Xpeng contracts Magna for Austrian assembly.
- **Industrial capabilities** combine supplier relationships, specialised skills, tooling, production knowledge, logistics and adaptability built through repeated interaction; replacing suppliers or moving factories cannot automatically eliminate or transfer **ecosystem dependence**.

India's Opportunity and Priorities

- TDK's Haryana battery expansion under **China-plus-one** and Murata's manufacturing expansion indicate India is receiving parts of **production ecosystems** previously concentrated in China.
- India needs competitive **domestic suppliers**, reliable logistics, skilled workers and critical inputs; investments, including Chinese investments, should deepen local linkages, specialised capabilities and **intermediate production**.

BEYOND EDITORIAL

The Economic Costs of Fragmented Global Supply Chains

- **Higher production costs:** American steel tariffs raised domestic steel prices by 2.4% during 2018–2021, illustrating how trade barriers increase input costs.
- **Consumer price pressures:** Tariffs on Chinese computer equipment increased American computer-equipment prices by 0.8%, demonstrating the price effects of import restrictions.
- **Fiscal burdens:** International Monetary Fund (IMF) modelling estimated that substantial European clean-technology reshoring could require annual subsidies approaching 0.4% of gross domestic product (GDP).
- **Technology barriers:** IMF research estimated that fragmentation involving technological decoupling could reduce output by 8–12% in some countries through restricted knowledge flows.
- **Developing-country vulnerability:** An IMF study estimated fragmentation-related welfare losses equivalent to roughly 4% of GDP in sub-Saharan Africa, highlighting unequal regional costs.
- **Employment disruption:** IMF modelling projected employment losses reaching 7% in contracting Asian sectors under an illustrative trade-fragmentation scenario.

- **Small-business disadvantage:** Britain's Federation of Small Businesses highlighted how fixed customs costs disproportionately burden low-value shipments, disadvantaging smaller exporters.

2. The pitfalls of mandatory FIRs (GS Paper II Polity and Governance)

This editorial 'The pitfalls of mandatory FIRs' was published in **The Hindu** on 28th Sep 2026, highlights how mandatory FIRs for **missing adults** may **undermine adult agency** by presuming criminality without evidence.

Judicial Directions on Missing Persons

- In *G. Ganesh v. State of Tamil Nadu and Others*, the **Supreme Court** reiterated on August 5 that **First Information Reports (FIRs)** must cover every missing person, including adults.
- May directions required registration without **preliminary enquiry**, a Ministry of Home Affairs trafficking portal, activation of **Anti-Human Trafficking Units (AHTUs)**, lawful restoration of recovered children and Aadhaar verification or issuance.
- *Bachpan Bachao Andolan v. Union of India* (2013) mandated FIRs for **missing children**, initially presuming abduction or trafficking unless disproved, and required **Special Juvenile Police Units** at police stations.
- Child-protection directions also required a trained **Juvenile Welfare Officer** under Section 63 of the Juvenile Justice Act, 2000, and **AHTU referral** if a child remained untraced four months after FIR registration.

Adult Agency and Blanket Criminal Presumptions

- Extending the child-specific **presumption of criminality** to adults overlooks **adult agency**, since adults may voluntarily leave home to marry or live with partners against parental wishes.

- Mandatory tracing can expose consenting couples to **honour killings** or parental coercion; even recorded willingness to leave may not prevent intrusive **police verification**.
- The underlying case concerned a child missing since **2011**, untraced for 14 years despite specialised investigations; the Madras High Court dismissed the petition in March 2025, citing police efforts and the inapplicability of **2013 guidelines** to the disappearance.
- Extending a child-related dispute to **missing adults**, without the May judgment indicating consultation with States, raises concerns about **blanket criminal presumptions** unsupported by evidence.

BEYOND EDITORIAL

The Case for Immediate Registration of Missing-Person Complaints

- **Timely intervention:** United Kingdom police reject a mandatory 24-hour waiting period for missing-person reports, enabling earlier risk assessment and protective action.
- **Evidence preservation:** British guidance includes surveillance footage, phone checks and last-seen-location searches among initial enquiries, underscoring the value of prompt reporting.
- **Police accountability:** British guidance requires police to explain why a report is not treated as a missing-person investigation, offering a safeguard against unexplained refusal.
- **Vulnerable-adult protection:** The Herbert Protocol records information about people with dementia to support missing-person searches, recognising vulnerability beyond childhood.
- **Interjurisdictional coordination:** United Kingdom guidance provides for sharing missing-person details with other police forces within 48 hours, supporting searches across jurisdictions.

- **Proportionate response:** British police classify cases by risk, considering age and health, and reassess as circumstances change, avoiding identical interventions for every complaint.
- **Autonomy safeguards:** British police generally respect adults' requests for location privacy, subject to vulnerability-related safeguarding concerns, separating tracing from disclosure to families.

3. Long wait for justice as pendencies in rape cases mount (GS Paper II Polity and Governance)

This editorial '**Long wait for justice as pendencies in rape cases mount**' was published in **The Hindu** on 28th Sep 2026, highlights rising **rape-trial backlogs** and **delayed convictions** despite tougher laws and disposal timelines.

Persistent Incidence and Delayed Justice

- Post-Nirbhaya reforms introduced **tougher punishments** and **disposal timelines**, but National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB) data reveal persistent delays; the analysis excludes cases under the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act.
- Annual **reported rape cases** remained broadly stable during 2018–2024, averaging **84 daily**, while pending trials rose from 1,38,642 to 1,85,785.
- In 2024, nearly **40,000 investigations** included 29,536 newly reported cases, 9,726 carried forward and 12 reopened; roughly **63%** were chargesheeted.

CHART 1: Nearly 30,000 cases of rape were reported in India since 2018, averaging to around 80 rape cases a day

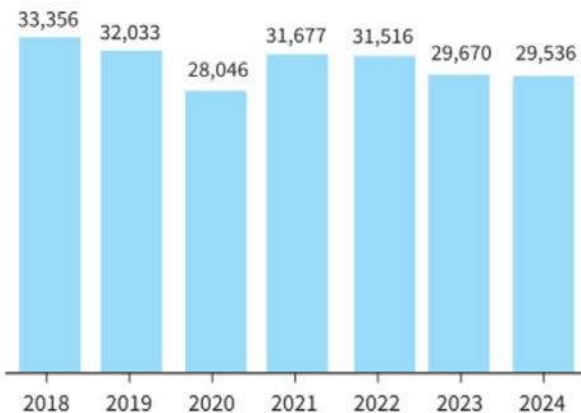
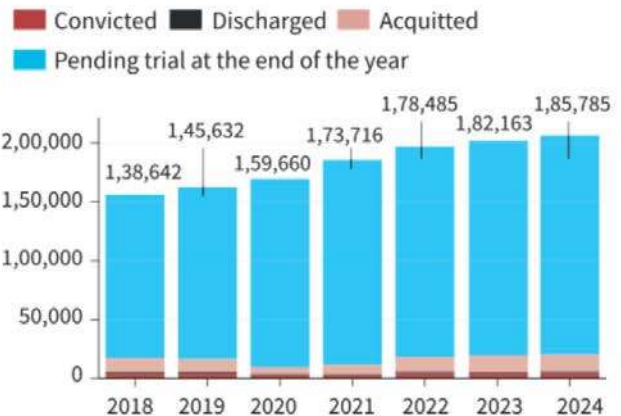


CHART 2: Status of rape cases that went to trial at the end of each year. Values above bars are cases pending trial



Trial Backlog and Conviction Outcomes

- The 2024 **trial pool** reached 2,06,777 cases after adding chargesheeted cases to the existing backlog; nearly **90%** remained pending at year-end.
- Among **20,587 disposed cases**, approximately 68% resulted in acquittal, 8% in discharge and **24% in conviction**, indicating limited convictions even among completed proceedings.
- Only **421 cases** entering trial in 2024 secured **same-year convictions**, under 2% of cases sent for trial and under 1.5% of rape cases reported that year.
- Similarly low **same-year conviction shares** in 2023 (2.3%), 2022 (1.9%) and 2021 (1.2%) indicate persistent delays despite **statutory deadlines**, even allowing for late-year cases spilling into subsequent years.

BEYOND EDITORIAL

A Survivor-Centred Framework for Timely Justice

- **Forensic capacity:** Strengthen laboratories and expedite DNA reports, as recommended by the Department of Justice's evaluation of Fast Track Special Courts.

- **Prosecution capacity:** Provide sufficient public prosecutors alongside specialised courts, addressing staffing gaps identified in the Department of Justice's evaluation.
- **Witness protection:** Apply India's Witness Protection Scheme, 2018, to protect witnesses against intimidation during investigation, prosecution and trial.
- **Continuous legal assistance:** Facilitate survivors' access to free legal aid, for which women may apply under Section 12(c) of the Legal Services Authorities Act, 1987.
- **Psychosocial support:** Expand trauma-informed counselling through initiatives such as Project Stree Manoraksha, which trains One Stop Centre personnel in supporting women facing violence.
- **Sensitive testimony:** Expand Vulnerable Witness Deposition Centres, adopted in Fast Track Special Courts, to provide supportive settings for recording testimony.
- **Integrated assistance:** Strengthen One Stop Centres, which combine medical assistance, legal aid, counselling and temporary shelter, reducing fragmented referrals for survivors.