

UK Government Launches National Strategy to Protect Women



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LONDON, Dec. 14 – The UK government has declared violence against women and girls a national emergency and announced plans to establish specialist investigation teams for rape and sexual offences in all police forces across England and Wales by 2029.

Home Secretary Shabana Mahmood described the initiative as a long-awaited strategy aimed at

halving violence against women over the next decade. Speaking on the Sunday with Laura Kuenssberg programme, she criticized the current criminal justice system for its inconsistent responses, calling it a “postcode lottery” in addressing cases.

Under the new measures, each police force will have officers trained in handling sexual offences, with knowledge of both victim and abuser psychology. While more than half of the forces already have such teams, nationwide coverage is expected by 2029.

The strategy also introduces domestic abuse protection orders, allowing police to restrict offenders from contacting victims, visiting their homes, or posting harmful content online.

Breaches carry criminal penalties, shifting enforcement responsibility from victims to law enforcement agencies.

Additional measures include nearly £2 million for undercover online policing units targeting harassment and abuse of women and girls online, and the potential expansion of Clare’s Law to cover stalking, sexual assault, and harassment.

Metropolitan Police Commissioner Sir Mark Rowley welcomed the strategy, noting that it will adopt tactics from the Met’s V100 programme, which uses data to identify and target high-risk offenders.

The initiative comes amid concerns over delays in publication and gaps in sexual offence

investigations, reflecting a broader government effort to prevent abuse, stop offenders, and support victims while promoting cultural change regarding women's safety.