

## **The Supreme Court in a case involving the unreported abuse of 17 young girls, failing to report POCSO offences is a serious crime**

*The Maharashtra High Court's throttling of the case at the threshold, according to the Court, was painful to observe.*

On 02 of November, the Supreme Court noted that failing to file incidents of sexual offences against children is a heinous felony that is frequently done in an effort to protect offenders. (State of Maharashtra v. Dr. Maroti, et al.)

Even though a prima facie case was established against the alleged perpetrator, a bench of Hon'ble Justices Ajay Rastogi and CT Ravikumar expressed concern about the Bombay High Court's decision to dismiss out a FIR and chargesheet in a case involving the unreported sexual abuse of 17 young tribal girls.

The court noted that the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act's Sections 19(1) and 21 allow for prosecution of those who fail to report such offences to the appropriate authorities.

The case was brought about by a criminal complaint from 2019 alleging POCSO Act violations against young tribal girls in Rajura, Maharashtra's Chandrapur district.

The main suspect was the head of the hostel at the school where the girls attended. After it was discovered that the survivors had approached one of the school's doctors after the incidents, but he had not responded, the doctor was also accused.