

[1] The Sikkim State Legal Services Authority organized a Sensitization Programme on “Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act (POCSO), 2012 with Special Focus on Medical Examination of Victims”, the Valedictory Session of which was chaired by Hon’ble Mrs. Justice Meenakshi Madan Rai, Hon’ble Executive Chairperson, Sikkim SLSA as **Chief Guest** . The Resource persons for the Programme were Dr. Rajeev Seth, Pediatrician, Delhi and Project Lead, Indian Child Abuse, Neglect and Child Labour (ICANCL) and Dr. Shaibya Saldanha, Obstetrician and Gynecologist, Bangalore and Founder of Enfold India and Dr. Mani Gurung, Additional Director-cum-Consultant Gynecologist, Health Care, Human Services & Family Welfare, Government of Sikkim as Guest Speaker.

[2] Hon’ble Mrs. Justice Meenakshi Madan Rai in her Ladyship’s valedictory address stated that the POCSO Act, 2012 is a special Act for children under the Constitution of India. Her Ladyship also requested the Medical Officers, Police Officers as well as the Ld. Judicial Officers to be sensitive while questioning the child victims whenever such victims of sexual assault come before them. The Health and Social Welfare Department were also requested to train Counselors for counseling such victims.

Her Ladyship also informed that the process of justice for such victim is very arduous and painful and as such the parents, Police, Doctors as well as the judiciary should be sensitive enough to support the victim child.

[3] Dr. Rajeev Seth, spoke on **“Introduction to Child Sexual Abuse/Child Sexual Exploitation: a public health problem, Protection of Children from Sexual Offences(POCSO) Act: Important facts and Effects of Sexual Violence on Children”** while Dr. Shaibya Saldanha spoke on **“Child Sexual Abuse : Approach to Trauma Informed Care & Taking a History, Medical Examination & Collection of Forensic Evidence, Documentation and Writing a report”** and Dr. Mani Gurung on **“Overview of Centers in Sikkim; Childline, SJPU, SSLA support systems & partners available for affected children and families”**

[4] Also present during the programme were Registrar, High Court of Sikkim, Member Secretary, Sikkim SLSA, Director and Additional Director, Sikkim Judicial Academy.

[5] The participants for the sensitization programme comprised of Ld. Judges of Special Courts under POCSO Act, 2012, Gynecologists, Medical Officers, Police Officers, District Child Protection Officers, Probation Officers, Counselors, Coordinators, In-Charges of Child Care Institutions, Outreach Workers, Press and Media and staff of Sikkim SLSA.

[6] The welcome address was delivered by Shri Suraj Chettri, Member Secretary while the vote of thanks was proposed by Mrs. Matilda Isaacs, Special Secretary, Sikkim SLSA.