

**PRESS RELEASE OF THE COLLOQUIUM ON PROTECTING CHILD RIGHTS: LEGAL PERSPECTIVE
AND TRAINING**

On 17th September, a grand State level Colloquium on Protecting Child Rights: Legal Perspective and Training was organized by Jharkhand State Legal Services Authority, Ranchi, in association with the Department of Women, Child Development and Social Security, Govt of Jharkhand; Kailash Satyarthi Children's Foundation and Bachpan Bachao Andolan at Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam Auditorium at Judicial Academy Jharkhand.

Hon'ble Mr. Justice Sanjay Kishan Kaul, Judge, Supreme Court of India & Executive Chairman, NALSA was the Chief Guest of the event. Hon'ble Mr. Justice Sanjaya Kumar Mishra, Chief Justice, High Court of Jharkhand cum Patron-in-Chief, JHALSA was the Guest of Honour at the event. The Colloquium was also attended by Hon'ble Mr. Justice S. Chandrashekhar Judge, High Court of Jharkhand & Executive Chairman, JHALSA; Hon'ble Mr. Justice Sujit Narayan Prasad; Hon'ble Mr. Justice Rongon Mukhopadhyay and Hon'ble Judges of High Court of Jharkhand.



The Inaugural Address was delivered by Hon'ble Mr. Justice Sanjay Kishan Kaul, wherein he said that 'Children are the future of the nation and their rights must be safeguarded to install them to their fullest vigour, but unfortunately India and many other countries faces some challenges in this regard, there is a need to address these challenges, head on and act

collectively to protect and uphold their rights'. Justice Kaul emphasized that 'every child regardless of gender, caste, social structure they belong to deserves to be treated with dignity, respect and equality. The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child which India ratified in 1992, serves as a patron for protecting child's rights. Consequently, Child Rights are protected in constitutional India in several specific laws such as Juvenile Justice Care and Protection Act, the Prohibition of Child Marriage Act, Right to Education Act, the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act etc. The state has a primary duty to operate in child's special interest, and practically every area of government policy from education to public health affects children to some degree or the other. Justice Kaul quoted K Ramaswami's observations that children's earliest experiences significantly influence their education, hence the focus should be their immediate growth and development of child.

Justice Kaul further stressed that 'one of the pressing issues is of child labour, according to judicial precedents, millions of children are still employed in hazardous and exploitative labour across India. These children are denied the opportunity to seek education, jeopardizing their future prospects and perpetuating the cycle of poverty. Child labour is deeply intertwined with poverty, therefore addressing the issue of poverty is equally important. This requires comprehensive social welfare programs, access to education, skill development, livelihood opportunity for parents of child labour, and empowering families to break the intergenerational cycle of poverty.



The Introductory Address was delivered by Hon'ble Mr. Justice Sanjaya Kumar Mishra, Chief Justice, High Court of Jharkhand, and cited it as a burning issue by saying that 'worldwide children are voiceless victims of physical, emotional and sexual violence, and India is not an exception. Delving upon legal framework he added 'the enactment of POCSO Act in 2012 and J.J Act in 2015 are watershed Acts in the history of child rights in India. These Acts look after the best interest of child. Justice Mishra pointed out that that exist two harmful stereotypes with respect to sexual abuse, first that only girl child can be subjected to sexual or physical abuse, and not boy child and secondly that offender are persons not known to the child. Both these stereotypes are wrong and these has to be set aside by the stakeholders who are involved in the implementation of these Acts. The issues surrounding rights of children are very close to my heart. There are two harmful stereotypes present in society that only a girl child is likely to be sexually abused and second that perpetrator is a stranger. His Lordship said that both these stereotypes are wrong.



The Opening Address was delivered by Hon'ble Mr. Justice Sujit Narayan Prasad, wherein he laid the foundation of the gathering by saying that 'Children constitute the nation's valuable human resources. The future wellbeing of the nation depends on how its children grow and develop. The great poet Milton said "Child Shows the man as morning shows the day". Therefore it is the duty of the society to look after every child with a view to

ensuring full development of its personality. Children are the future custodians and torch bearers of the society: they are the messengers of our knowledge, cultural heritage, ideologies and philosophies’.

The Welcome Address by Hon’ble Mr. Justice Rongon Mukhopadhyay, wherein he thanked all the stakeholders for actively participating in the August gathering.

Towards the end of the Inaugural ceremony, the Vote of thanks was extended by Hon’ble Mr. Justice S. Chandrashekhar Judge, High Court of Jharkhand, to all the participants, delegates, resource persons, dignitaries and volunteers for their august presence. Justice Chandrashekhar lauded Justice Kaul’s efforts, thoughts and guidance in legal aid services as an Executive Chairman, NALSA and applauded his benevolent presence.

The Inaugural ceremony was followed by four technical sessions on the topic - **Schemes and Programmes for development and welfare of vulnerable children in Jharkhand** by Sri Kripa Nand Jha, IAS Secretary, Dept. of Women, Child Development & Social Security, Govt. of Jharkhand

The second technical session was on the topic ‘**The Legal Perspective**’ by Hon’ble Mr. Justice Ananda Sen and assisted by Shri Manoj Prasad Chairman, Commercial Taxes Tribunal, Ranchi.

The third technical session was on ‘**Understanding Children and their vulnerability to abuse and exploitation**’ deliberated upon by Mr. Ravi Kant Senior Advocate, Supreme Court of India & Country Head, KSCF, US.

And the last technical session was on the topic ‘**Preparation of Plan of Action including timeline for sensitization of all the VLCPC members across the state**’ discoursed upon Dr. Sangita Gaur Assistant Director (Training and Capacity Building), KSCF, India.

The Colloquium was a huge success in carving out a future course of action in the area of child rights among its respective stakeholders.