

STATE LEVEL CONSULTATION WORKSHOP ON  
'PROTECTION OF CHILDREN FROM SEXUAL  
OFFENCES' (POCSO) ACT 2012 & CHILD RIGHTS  
AND CHILD TRAFFICKING IN TEA GARDENS,  
27TH & 28TH MARCH, 2017



*Organised by:*  
West Bengal Commission for  
Protection of Child Rights



*Supported by:*  
National Commission for  
Protection of Child Rights



# STATE LEVEL CONSULTATION WORKSHOP ON ‘PROTECTION OF CHILDREN FROM SEXUAL OFFENCES’ (POCSO) ACT 2012 & CHILD RIGHTS AND CHILD TRAFFICKING IN TEA GARDENS, 27TH & 28TH MARCH, 2017

## **Context**

The West Bengal Commission for Protection of Child Rights organized and implemented a two day ‘State Level Consultation Workshop on POCSO (Protection of Children from Sexual offences) Act, 2012 & Child Rights and Child Trafficking in Tea Gardens’, on 27th and 28th of March, 2017 at Bhanu Bhawan , Darjeeling. This workshop was supported by National Commission for Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR).

As per the directive of Ministry of Women and Child Development to curb the maltreatment and extreme atrocities on children, the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act, 2012 has come into being. This is with a strong expectation to strike against the exploitation of the children and to let them exercise their right to have healthy physical, emotional, intellectual and social life.

To fight the challenges, necessary provision and laws are inexistence and are evolving. This needs to reach the concerned authorities. It is extremely indispensable to educate the actors at various levels which would help them to play their role to the utmost, with proper knowledge and information base. Child sexual abuse is a grave and a multidimensional concern. It is prudent to deal with this not only at legal or medical level but also through, social and psychological intervention.

Thus the Consultation workshop was intended to establish a wide network of stakeholders who are involved along with the care providers to generate awareness on the POCSO Act, 2012 and Child Rights and Child Trafficking in Tea Gardens.

## **The objectives for the consultation workshop were**

- To create greater sensitivity and awareness on the issues of Child Sexual Abuse among the stakeholders
- To enable them for appropriate intervention while handling such cases with greater capacity

## **Geographical area coverage of the workshop:**

A total of seven districts of North Bengal namely : Malda, South Dinajpur, North Dinajpur, Coochbehar, Alipurduar, Jalpaiguri, Darjeeling and Kalimpong were covered under this consultation workshop.

WBCPCR would be organizing two more such workshops covering the remaining districts of West Bengal.

## **Stakeholders / participants**

The workshop was for stakeholders who play a significant role and are primarily or secondarily dealing with, as well as connected to the children. They were from various sections such as:

- Members from judiciary
- District Child Protection Officers
- Members from Child Welfare Committees
- Shelter Home Superintendents
- Academicians
- Medical professionals
- Media professionals / journalists
- Children from schools, shelter homes and NGOs

Approximately of 150 participants were present for the workshop.

## **Methodology used**

It was basically presentation by the dignitaries along with panel discussion and broad sharing on the subject. On both days the forum was kept open for children to share, discuss and question. Study materials (Bare Act -on POCSO Act,2012 and Juvenile Justice Act) were distributed.

The interactive session was the major challenge as well as the success, as not only the adults present in the consultation but also the children participated very actively.

## **Day 1 (27th March,2017)**

### **The POCSO Act,2012**

#### **Features**

The Act defines a child as any person below eighteen years of age. It defines different forms of sexual abuse, including penetrative and non-penetrative assault, as well as sexual harassment and pornography. It deems a sexual assault to be “aggravated” under certain circumstances, such as







when the abused child is mentally ill or when the abuse is committed by a person in a position of trust or authority like a family member, police officer, teacher, or doctor.

The Act also casts the police in the role of child protectors during the investigative process. Thus, the police personnel receiving a report of sexual abuse of a child are given the responsibility of making urgent

arrangements for the care and protection of the child, such as obtaining emergency medical treatment for the child, placing the child in a shelter home, and bringing the matter before the CWC, as the need may be.

The Act further makes provisions for avoiding the re-victimisation of the child at the hands of the judicial system. It provides for special courts that conduct the trial in-camera and without revealing the identity of the child, in a manner that is as child-friendly as possible. Hence, the child may have a parent or other trusted person present at the time of testifying and can call for assistance from an interpreter, special educator, or other professionals while giving evidence.

Above all, the Act stipulates that a case of child sexual abuse must be disposed of within one year from the date the offence is reported.

The Act also provides for mandatory reporting of sexual offences. This casts a legal responsibility upon a person who has knowledge that a child has been sexually abused to report the offence; if he/she fails to do so, he/she may be punished with six months' imprisonment and/ or a fine.

## Proceedings / Sessions

The first day started with a welcome note to all the guests and dignitaries present at the venue. After felicitating the guests there was lighting of lamp with the expectation of spreading the rays of information and awareness among the mass.

A programme presented by school children was followed by a welcome speech of the Chairperson WBCPCR, Smt. Anannya Chakraborti.

She shared the necessity and objectives behind organizing such a consultation workshop,



especially focussing on children. She asked all to proactively utilise these two days to ask questions and be informed, along with their friends, family members, community peers.

The participants were informed that the National Commission for Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR) as well as the State Commission for Protection of Child Rights (SCPCR) monitors the formulation of the guidelines described in section 39 of the Act by the state government, for the use of non-governmental organizations, professionals and experts on child development to be associated with the pre trial and trial stage to assist the child and to monitor the application of these guidelines.

Further NCPCR as well as SCPCR is to monitor and support the central and state government for the dissemination of information relating to the provision of the Act through media (T.V, radio, print) at regular intervals, so as to make the general public, children as well as their parents and guardians aware of the provisions of the said Act.

Key Note address : Smt. Rupa Kapoor, Member NCPCR

Smt. Rupa Kapoor, during her key note address mentioned that NCPCR is a statutory body under the CPC Act, 2005 and under the administrative control of the Ministry of Women & Child Development, Government of India. The Commission's Mandate is to ensure that all Laws, Policies, Programmes, and Administrative Mechanisms are in consonance with the Child Rights perspective as enshrined in the Constitution of India and also the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.



Elaborating on the topic she said that POCSO and JJ (Juvenile Justice) are two areas which are very important to NCPCR (National Commission for Protection of Child Rights), which is the highest monitoring body in India that protects child rights and NCPCR and SCPCR are mandated to monitor the POCSO Act, Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children Act 2015) & Right to Education Act. POCSO is very important because 90% of women and children are facing child abuse within their locality. It is very difficult to talk about child sexual abuse even to family members and others. But things are changing and people are getting aware. Cases of child abuse are being reported to the concerned Police Stations. But the offence of child sexual abuse is everywhere, children and women are facing sexual abuse in a taxi, educational institution, at home, colleges even from the people they respect. Once she had visited a hospital to see a victim of a gang rape and the child was only 5 years old, media had already covered the victim who was suffering. The Member NCPCR was requested not to see the girl, but as her role and responsibility required, she had seen the girl who was completely ruptured. Ms. Kapoor was shown some videos and the victim gave her a feeble smile. When she met the mother of the Victim Girl

she had to deal with many questions from her. She was asked by mother of V.G. to give her a sum of Rs. 50/- or 100/-so that she may take her daughter back home. She was in a dilemma as NCPCR does not provide financial support to the victim of rape. She returned to her office reported the matter to her chairperson.

The chairperson told her that the entire stakeholder should come forward to help the victim of sexual abuse. Now NCPCR is giving all kind of support to the victim of sexual abuse.

### ONLINE COMPLAINT MANAGEMENT SYSTEM



NCPCR is also organising POCSO awareness campaigns. In case of sexual abuse of a child, immediate medical attention has to be given to the victim. In Karnataka every hospital is paying extra care to the victim of Child abuse.

Ms. Rupa Kapoor elaborately discussed the POCSO and the role played by NCPCR. She also spoke about ***‘One Stop Crises Centre’*** for Children where all kinds of support can be provided under one roof. Also for convenience and easy access an online provision for lodging complains.

The next speaker was Hon'ble District and session Judge, Jalpaiguri, Sri Somnath Bandhopadhyay, who spoke about section 3 to section 11 of POCSO Act. (a) Section 3. Penetrative sexual assault. (b) Section 4. Punishment for penetrative sexual assault. (c) Section 5. Aggravated penetrative sexual assault. (d) Section 6. Punishment for aggravated penetrative sexual assault. (e) Section 7. sexual assault. (f) Section 8. Punishment for sexual assault. (g) section 9. Aggravated sexual assault. (h) Section 10. Punishment for aggravated sexual assault. (i) Section 11. sexual harassment.

With regard to protection, the Special Court has been given power to try the offences.

During his tenure as POCSO





discussed about an accused being convicted by him and the punishment was to hang the accused till death. He discussed about investigations to be conducted by female officers and the medical examination to be done by a Lady Doctor. He also shared thoughts on section 22 of the POCSO Act which deals with the punishment for false complaints. The cases relating to POCSO should not be compromised.

## **PANEL DISCUSSIONS AND INTERACTIVE SESSION**

Moving forward to the next section of panel discussion, the Judicial Magistrates representing their respective districts shared their experiences and discussed on the topic.

Hon'ble Principal Magistrate J.M, Darjeeling Sri. Joydeep Bhattacharya, during his Panel Discussion mentioned that POCSO act came into play on 14th November 2012 after getting assent from the President of India. The Principal Magistrate talked about Section 19 of POCSO Act 2012. The section 19 of POCSO laid down the provision for reporting of offence to special Juvenile Police Unit or to the local police.

Moving forward Principal Magistrate J.M Malda, Smt. Sumana Garain, talked about section 7 of POCSO. Section 14, Rule regarding trial of cases, to be tried by special court established under the act. The Magistrate highlighted Section 36 of the POCSO wherein it is stated that child need not see the accused at the time of testifying which means that the Special Court shall ensure that the child is not exposed in any way to the accused at the time of recording of the evidence.

Further Principal Magistrate Alipurduar Court Sri Saurav Adak, highlighted on 164 statement of Crpc statements recorded by him during his tenure as Judicial Magistrate. The 164 statement is part of an investigation, where a victim is produced in the Court of the CJM or in the court of JM and the Court takes the statement of the victim on a particular case which will be taken as corroboration during the period of trial. The Court shall also record the statement of a victim by way of audio or video. The Principal Magistrate also explained section 24 of POCSO Act wherein it is stated about mode of recording of a statement of a child. The statement of a child shall be recorded at the residence of the child or at the place where he/she usually resides or at the place of his/her choice and as far as practicable by women Police Officers not below the rank of Sub-Inspector. According to sub section 5 of section 24 of POCSO Act the Police Officer shall ensure that the identity of the child is protected from the Public Media, unless otherwise directed by the special court in the interest of the child.

The Principal Magistrate further highlighted the section 23 of the POCSO Act. According to section 23 of the Act, no report in any media shall disclose the identity of a child including his/her name, address, photograph, family details, school, neighbourhood or any other particulars which may lead to disclosure of the identity of the child. The violation of such provision shall be imprisonment which shall not be less than six months but which may extend to one year or with fine or with both.

The next speaker Principal Magistrate JM 1st Court Coochbehar, Sri Saurav Dey in his presentation mentioned that both the male and female can be accused and both of them can be victims under the preview of the POCSO Act. He reiterated that section 4 is punishment for penetrative sexual assault. Whoever commits penetrative sexual assault shall be punished with imprisonment of either description for a term which shall not be less than seven years or which may extend



to imprisonment for life and shall also be liable to fine. He further stated about the punishment in section 6 i.e. aggravated penetrative sexual assault. The punishment for the offence under section 6 which is not less than 10 years but may extend to life. Even if someone tries to commit an illegal act upon a minor that is also an offence Under Section 20/21. If after seeing an illegal act being committed, the person who has seen the act does not report to the Police, he/she is also an offender. The section 27 of the POCSO has made it compulsory for a lady doctor to examine a victim in any condition.

Next, the Principal Magistrate JM, 1st Court Jalpaiguri Sri Himanil Bhattacharjee concluded by mentioning that any one can complain before the CWC, against sexual assault. CWC shall provide one person to guide the victim of POCSO to visit the Thana or the Court.

Finally Sister Sudeshna Thapa, Chairperson Child Welfare Committee (CWC) concluded the discussion session by sharing the role of CWC towards such cases as well as their interventions at the Child Care Institutes (CCIs). She shared her journey and experiences along with the hardships faced by the CCI. Thus she appealed each stake holder to actively play their roles to fight out the odds.

The session was concluded with a song , by the differently abled children from the Blind school, Darjeeling.

After the lunch break the session was open for sharing and discussion.

### **Open forum / Interactive Session**

The session consisted of all the magistrates present in the Consultation workshop.

### **Question & Answer**

**1. Question:** *If any sexual offence happens to a person who is disabled and above 18 years old will that offence come within POCSO?*

**Answer:** Such offence would not come under the POCSO Act, but will come within the purview of section 376, Indian Penal Code.

2. **Question:** Is there is any provision for compensation?

**Answer:** There is provision for compensation but only after enquiry is conducted by District Legal Service authority with regard to the offence (if any), committed to the minor.



3. **Question:** One minor child was sexually abused by her step father in Kalimpong, victim came to CWC. The CWC team separated the child from her parents. CWC tried to go for 164 statement of the child. But the police refused to do so. What is the remedy?

**Answer:** The matter has not been subjudice. The responsibility of police station is to first register the case of sexual offence and to investigate the case. CWC can take cognizance of matter and can lodge a complaint.

4. **Question:** Whether the victim or complainant is entitled to get 164 statements from the I.O. of the case?

**Answer:** Only after completion of investigation of the case complainant or the victim is entitled for 164 statements, recorded by LD. Judicial Magistrate, during the course of investigation.

5. **Question:** Why the trial of POCSO case is not completed within the stipulated period?

**Answer:** There is no such court in India where only the trial of POCSO is done. Criminal courts in India are already overburdened. Thus there are delays in trial of POCSO Case. But so far as the trial in POCSO Court in Darjeeling is concerned special Judge is disposing of the case quite speedily, giving conviction to the accused in maximum cases.

## Child Rights and Child Trafficking in Tea Garden

**Day 2 : (28th March, 2017)**

### Child Rights and Child trafficking Act

Human trafficking is the third largest organized crime after drugs and the arms trade across the globe. Close to 80% of the human trafficking across the world is done for sexual exploitation and the rest is for bonded labour and India is considered as the hub of this crime in Asia. As per the statistics of the government – in every eight minute a child goes missing in our country. In 2011 about 35,000 children were reported missing and more than 11,000 out of these were from West Bengal. Further, it is assumed that only 30% of the total cases are reported, so the actual number is pretty high.

Human trafficking is one of the major problems in India. Till date no concrete study has been conducted so far to know the exact number of trafficked kids in India.

Every year more than 100 missing cases are reported in West Bengal. As per the data, more than half of the human trafficking cases are from the states of West Bengal, Jharkhand, Bihar, Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu. As per the data from Home Ministry, 1379 cases of human trafficking were reported from Karnataka in a period of four years, in Tamil Nadu the number is 2,244 whereas Andhra Pradesh has 2,157 cases of human trafficking. Delhi is the hub of human trafficking trade in India and half of the world's slaves live in India. Delhi is the hotspot for illegal trade of young girls for domestic labour, forced marriage and prostitution. Delhi is also the transit point for human trafficking.

Kids, especially girls and young women, mostly from Northeast are taken from their homes and sold in faraway states of India for sexual exploitation and to work as bonded labour by the agents who lure their parents with education, better life, and money for these kids. Agents do not send these kids to school but sell them to work in brick kilns, carpentry units, as domestic servants, beggars etc, whereas girls are trafficked for the purpose of sexual exploitation. Even these girls are forced to marry in certain regions where female to male sex ratio is highly disturbed. *Children from tribal areas are at greater risk of human trafficking.*

### **Why Human Trafficking is increasing in India?**

Fundamental theory of demand and supply is applicable to this situation as well. Men for work generally migrate to major commercial cities and from here the demand for commercial sex is created. To fulfill the supply all sorts of efforts are made by the suppliers like abduction, threat etc. Young girls and women belonging to poor families are at higher risk.

Then comes the economic injustice and poverty.

If you are born into a poor family in a North Eastern state of India then you are at a higher risk of being sold. If you are born to a poor family and a girl, then these chances further increase. Sometimes parents are also desperate to sell their daughters to earn money.

Social inequality, regional gender preference, imbalance and corruption are the other leading causes of human trafficking in India.

### **Some unknown and shocking facts:**

There are more slaves in this world today than during any other time in history.

There are 30 million slaves in the world today.

99% of trafficking victims are never rescued.

Girls fetch the highest price at the age of seven.

Every 30 seconds, a person becomes a victim of trafficking.



## Forced marriage

Girls and women are not only trafficked for prostitution but also bought and sold like commodity in many regions of India where female ratio is less as compared to male due to female infanticide. These girls are then forced to marry.

## Bonded labour

Though debt labour is not known of much and is illegal in India, it is highly prevalent in our society. According to the International Labour Organization there are more than 11.7 million people working as forced labour in the Asia-Pacific region. People running out of cash generally sell their kids as debt labour in exchange for cash. Both boys and girls are sold for this purpose and generally not paid for years.

Victims of human trafficking have great chances of suffering from issues like mental disorders, depression and anxiety. Women forced into sexual trafficking face a higher risk of getting affected from HIV and other STDs.

## Action against guilty

Under the Immoral Traffick Prevention Act (ITPA) trafficking for commercial sexual exploitation is penalized. The punishment ranges from seven years to life imprisonment. The Bonded Labour Abolition Acts, the Child Labour Act, and the Juvenile Justice Act prohibits bonded and forced labour in India.

After the brutal gang rape of December 2012, government has passed a bill in which laws related to sexual violence and sex trafficking have been amended. But still there is a huge gap between enactment and enforcement of these laws. Because of widespread corruption and bribery it is easy for agents to bring these young boys and girls for their profit. There should be strict disciplinary action against everyone involved in such a crime to address the problem.

## Proceedings / Sessions

The session started with a quick review of the previous day's learnings and objectives for the day, which were important and in context to the children of the hills.

The Hon'ble District and Sessions Judge, Jalpaiguri, Sri Somnath Bandhopadhyaya was invited on stage to share his news on the day's topic.





He mentioned that children were being exploited by some antisocial elements in lieu of money. Tea Garden areas have been the most vulnerable with regard to child trafficking. West Bengal is the hub of Human Trafficking in India followed by Tamilnadu, Arunachal Pradesh, Maharastra etc. Child Trafficking is going on in rapid form in Tea Garden areas. Many countries are well known with respect to child trafficking, they are India, Bangladesh, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Brazil. 9 to 11 children are being trafficked in tea garden areas, mostly girls, every day. The people in the tea gardens, living in tough conditions due to starvation, are often forced to sell their children for survival.

He also spoke about the Plantation Act, 1951 wherein several facilities are provided for the workers, however the Act is not implemented fully.

1956 Immoral Traffic Prevention Act was enacted to combat the vulnerability of child and women trafficking. Article 14, 15, 21, 22, 23, 24, 39, 39A of the constitution are there for the protection of women and children.

**Article 14;** States shall not deny to any person equality before law or the equal protection of law within the territory of India.

**Article 15;** Article 15 directs the State not to discriminate against the citizen on ground of religion, race, caste, sex or place of birth or any of them.

**Article 21;** No person shall be deprived of his personal liberty except according to procedure established by law.

**Article 22;** Article 22 deals with two separate matters (1) The person arrested under the ordinary law of crime and (2) person detained under the law of preventive detention.

**Article 23;** Article 23 of the constitution Prohibits traffic in human being, and begging and other similar forms of forced labour.

**Article 24;** Article 24 of the constitution prohibits employment of children below 14 years of age in factories and hazardous employment.

**Article 39;** Equal pay for equal work.

**Article 39A;** Equal justice and free legal aid to economically backward classes.

Sri. Bandopadhyay also shared how he himself has dealt with cases which are extremely sensitive and need prior attention and calls for pro active action from state authorities. He further mentioned that each responsible member of the society has equal stake and responsibility towards transforming the society into a better place to live in.

The next speaker Sri. Arif Ahamad, Hon'ble Principal Magistrate, JM 1st Court Dakshin Dinajpur reflected on section 370 of Indian Penal Code ; Trafficking of person - Whoever for the purpose of exploitation (a)recruits (b) transports (c) harbours (d) transfers or receives a person or persons by –

First – Using a threat, or

Secondly –using force, or any other forms of coercion or

Thirdly – by abduction or

Fourthly –by practising fraud or deception or

Fifthly –by abuse of power

Sixthly – by inducement including giving or receiving of payments or benefits in order to achieve the consent of any person having control over the person recruited, transported, harboured, transferred or received, commits the offence of trafficking.

Sri Saurav Hazra, Principal Magistrate JM 1st Court Uttar Dinajpur further mentioned that West Bengal is the centre of human trafficking. A total of 8,000 children and women are trafficked in India out of which 3,500 women and children are trafficked from West Bengal.

Mostly the antisocials, taking advantage of poverty and unemployment of many poor families in the Tea Garden areas take the children from the custody of their parents with a promise of providing them employment, and the victims are unaware of the fact that they have been trafficked. Poverty is the central factor with regard to trafficking. Because of low wages in the Tea gardens, the children are bound to get dropped from their schools. Human traffickers take advantage of all these factors. Government should take initiatives to combat the wrath of trafficking. Low wages of the employee of tea gardens should increase. Low wage is also one of the main factors of poverty. In order to combat human trafficking in tea garden areas we should follow the five important guidelines (i) creation of employment (ii) increase of low wages (iii) stop drop outs (iv) poverty removal (v) spreading awareness about human trafficking.

The next session was sharing of experiences and information by the NGOs working in the sector and ‘Combating Human trafficking’. The Session was moderated by Smt. Rupa Kapoor, Member NCPCR and presented by Smt. Tapati Bhowmick Secretary Sanlaap , Sri Rishi Kant- Shakti Vahini, Ms.Rangu Soria Chief Functionary- Kanchanjunga Uddhar Kendra(KUK), and Deputy Chief Medical Officer Of Health –Dr. Biswas.

Each of the NGO dignitaries shared their tremendous experiences with lots of emotion and vibrance. This had kept the participants very involved and engaged in the session.

Smt. Tapati Bhowmick, while sharing her journey with Sanlaap mentioned that Sanlaap was notified under the Juvenile Justice Act to restore, repatriate and rehabilitate victims of trafficking This was an entry point to Government run homes to extend Sanlaap’s services, beginning with educational support.

The organization has carried out a study of the sexually abused girl children in Kolkata and its suburbs and this revealed that many girls who are sexually exploited when they come in search of employment finally end up in the red light areas. It was this study, which influenced Sanlaap to a great extent to work on the issues of trafficking and commercial sexual exploitation. Smt. Bhowmick also mentioned the challenges while working in such adverse situations as the traffickers are tremendously organized.

Sri.Rishi Kant , Shakti Vahini shared information about the organization and its contribution. It is a National Level Organization working on the Issue of Women and Child Rights, Anti Trafficking, Health, Training of Law

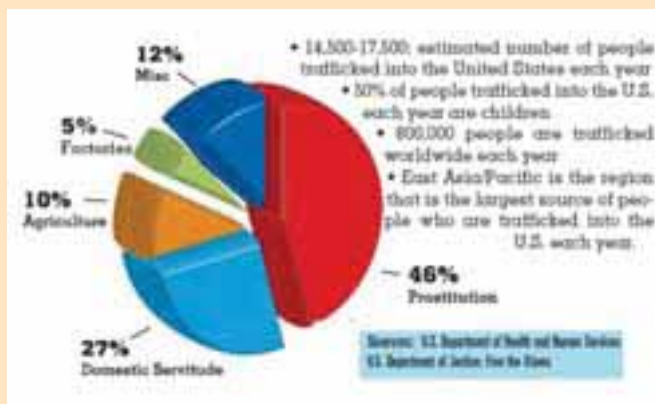


Enforcement Agencies, Legal Aid to Victims and Legal & Social research. They have rescued more than 3800 victims of Human trafficking from across the country.

Sri Rishikant mentioned that ‘Human Trafficking’ is a very sensitive issue and serious violation of Human and Fundamental Rights. It is a borderless organised crime. Every year thousands of young women and children are sexually exploited, sold and abused. The Missing Children data of the National Crime Records Bureau is a clear indicator of the extent to which the crime has increased in India. In a recently released data India reported 19,000 trafficking cases of women and children.

He further informed the group that the Government of India has taken several initiatives to combat the crime by creating special AHTU and strengthening legislations. Recently the Ministry of Women and Child, Government of India, has finalised the comprehensive draft law on human trafficking, paving the way for creating a National Nodal Authority to combat Human trafficking in India. Also the Ministry of Labour has approved the ratification of ILO Conventions on Minimum Age Convention (No 138) concerning minimum age for admission to employment and the Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention (No 182) concerning the prohibition and immediate action for elimination of the worst forms of Child Labour.

Next, Dr. S. Biswas-Deputy CMOH, Darjeeling was invited to share his views and perspectives on the topic. He stated how information and awareness is important at every stage and level. Proper medical check-up and care of each and every child entering the premise of the Child Care Institutes (CCIs) along with a monthly check is very essential.



Finally, Ms. Rangu Soria- Chief Functionary- Kanchanjunga Uddhar Kendra (KUK) was invited to share the work of KUK as well as her experiences, as not many may have heard the name, but she has helped to rescue over 600 children and youth from traffickers, brothels and bonded labour, through her Siliguri based organization. She is a messiah!

With regard to steps to curb trafficking in the hill areas, they realized that to make a difference they need to be based in Siliguri as Siliguri is the main transit point and girls from all over North-East India, Nepal, Darjeeling region and all of North-Bengal were being trafficked and distributed to various parts of India from here.

Ms. Soria and her organization has been tirelessly and fearlessly fighting against human trafficking. She is prominent by her work not only in Darjeeling region, but also across India.



After the presentations, the moderator opened the session for discussion and interactive session on 'Combating Human trafficking in Tea gardens'.

Finally Sri Soumitra Ray, Honourable member West Bengal Commission for Protection of Child Rights, concluded the session with his melodious folk song and thanked all the stake holders and dignitaries present whose contributions made the event a great success.



## State Level Consultation Workshop on: ‘POCSO Act,2012 & Child Rights and Child Trafficking’

The event was graced by the following speakers’ guests:

1. Chair Person WB-  
CPCR, Ms.Anannya  
Chakraborti
2. Ms.Rupa Kapoor ,  
member NCPCR
3. Hon’ble District and  
sessions Judge,  
Jalpaiguri-Somnath  
Bandopadhyay



4. Hon’ble CJM, Darjeeling-Arup Kr. Das
5. Hon’ble, Principal Magistrate, JM- Darjeeling, Sri Joydeep Bhattacharya
6. Hon’ble Secretary DLSA, Darjeeling- Arindam Dutta
7. Hon’ble, Principal Magistrate, JM- Maldah, Sumana Garain (POCSO rules)
8. Hon’ble, Principal Magistrate, JM ,1st Court Dakshin Dinajpur – Arif Ahmed
9. Hon’ble, Principal Magistrate, JM ,1st Court Coochbehar-Sourav Dey
10. Hon’ble, Principal Magistrate, JM ,1st Court- Jalpaiguri- Sri Himanil Bhattacharya
11. Hon’ble, Principal Magistrate, JM ,1st Court Raigunj, Uttar Dinajpur- Sourav Hazra
12. Hon'ble, Principal Magistrate, J.M 1st Court Alipurduar –Sourav Adak
13. CWC –Chairperson, Darjeeling, Sister Sudeshna Thapa (overview, role of CWC)
14. Chief Medical Officer of Health, Dr. S.Biswas
15. Tapati Bhowmick, Secretary Sanlaap
16. Rishi Kant, Shakti Vahini
17. Ms. Rangu Soriya, Chief Functionary- Kanchanjunga Uddhar Kendra (KUK)

## **Recommendations from the workshop**

- Establishment of Special Court to deal exclusively on the POCSO cases
- Training of Medical practitioners to deal sensitively and effectively with the victims of sexual abuse
- Sensitization of Media
- Emphasis on the greater role of SJPU's
- Establishment of Govt. Protection homes for victim
- Quality education and other facilities to be provided at grass root levels
- Above all attitude towards women and young girls must change.







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