

## Press Release

### **“We must Ensure a Dignified Life and Protective Environment for Children with Disabilities”**

#### **Hon’ble the Chief Justice Mr. Ramesh Sinha**

Bilaspur, Chhattisgarh, August 10, 2024 – The 9th Round of the State Level Stakeholders' Consultation on the Protection of Children with Disabilities was successfully organized by The High Court Juvenile Justice Committee in collaboration with Chhattisgarh State Judicial Academy and Chhattisgarh State Legal Services Authority on August 10, 2024, at the Auditorium of the High Court of Chhattisgarh.

The Inaugural session commenced with the ceremonial lighting of the lamp by the Esteemed Chief Guest, Hon'ble Mr. Justice Ramesh Sinha, Chief Justice, High Court of Chhattisgarh. In his Inaugural address, Hon'ble The Chief Justice highlighted the challenges faced by children with disabilities in accessing education, healthcare, and societal integration. He emphasized the need for concerted efforts in legislative enforcement, inclusive education practices, healthcare improvements, and societal sensitization to ensure a more equitable future for all children. Hon'ble The Chief Justice also stressed the significance of social safeguards for child victims in the form of Victim Compensation Schemes. Citing Mahatma Gandhi's quote that, **“The true measure of any society can be found in how it treats its most vulnerable members,”** Hon'ble the Chief Justice called for collaboration among stakeholders and inter-departmental cooperation to enhance policy effectiveness, securing a dignified life for every child with disabilities as a fundamental right under Article 21 of the Indian Constitution. Hon'ble The Chief Justice quoted words of Justice P.N. Bhagwati, **“The human rights of persons with disabilities are as sacred and inviolable as those of any other person. The Constitution of India guarantees this in no uncertain terms.”**

In his address, Hon’ble The Chief Justice also deliberated upon need for sensitization and awareness among various stakeholders and common people regarding Medical Termination of Pregnancy (MTP) Act

to ensure that rape victims receive quick and necessary assistance for termination of pregnancy caused due to rape.

Furthermore, an informative **flip chart** was also released during the event, documenting the roles of each stakeholder to create awareness and support for medical termination of pregnancy of rape victims, including minors and mentally disabled pregnant rape victims. The flip chart was distributed amongst all the stakeholders, participants, and representatives from concerned departments to ensure proper implementation of Medical Termination of Pregnancy Act at grassroot level.

In the event Special Address was delivered by Hon'ble Mr. Justice Goutam Bhaduri, Chairman of the High Court Committee on Juvenile Justice, key-note Address was delivered by Hon'ble Mr. Justice Sanjay K. Agrawal, Welcome & Introductory Address was delivered by Hon'ble Mr. Justice Sanjay Agrawal. The inaugural session concluded with vote of thanks proposed by Hon'ble Mr. Justice Deepak Kumar Tiwari.

Additionally, today's event provided an excellent platform to showcase the artistic talents of children with disabilities. Their artwork, including painted canvases, jute bags, and various crafts, was displayed in the High Court gallery. This exhibition served as a significant source of promotion, inspiration, and encouragement for these young artists. Hon'ble The Chief Justice personally interacted and encouraged these young artists.

The Inaugural Session was followed by two technical sessions that deliberated upon issues to address the availability of services for the well-being of disabled children in Special Homes and Child Care Institutions and the provision of judicial process information to children in conflict with the law and child victims.

The first technical session delving upon well-being of Children with Disabilities in Child Care Institutions was chaired by Hon'ble Mr. Justice Goutam Bhaduri, with Hon'ble Mr. Justice Deepak Kumar Tiwari and Hon'ble Mr. Justice Rakesh Mohan Pandey serving as co-chairs. The session was co-chaired along with the Additional Chief Secretary, Health and Family Welfare Department, Director, Women and Child

Development Department, and Director, Social Welfare Department. Presentations were made by representatives from the Women and Child Development Department, Social Welfare Department, Health Department, and the State Commission for Protection of Child Rights. Following the presentations and an open house discussion, concluding remarks were delivered by Hon'ble Mr. Justice Rakesh Mohan Pandey.

The second technical session was chaired by Hon'ble Mr. Justice Sanjay Agrawal and co-chaired by Hon'ble Mrs. Justice Rajani Dubey. The session was also co-chaired by key dignitaries, including the Principal Secretary, Panchayat and Rural Development Department, Secretary, School Education Department, and Inspector General of Police, Bilaspur. During this session, presentations were made by representatives from UNICEF, Department of Police, Department of School Education, Principal Magistrate of the Juvenile Justice Board, and Chhattisgarh State Legal Services Authority. The session concluded with remarks from Hon'ble Mrs. Justice Rajani Dubey.

The Event concluded with Vote of Thanks proposed by Mr. Sirajuddin Qureshi, Director, CSJA.

The consultation provided a platform for insightful discussions and strategic planning to enhance the welfare and rights of children with disabilities across Chhattisgarh. The event was graced by the presence of Hon'ble Judges of the High Court and was attended by officials from UNICEF, Registrar General and Officers from the High Court Registry, Director and Officers from CSJA, Member Secretary and Officers from CGSLSA, Principal District Judges, Add. Chief Secretary of Public Health and Family Welfare, Inspector General of Police, Principal Secretary of Panchayat and Rural Development, Secretary from Department of School Education, Director from Department of Women and Child Welfare, Director from Department of Social Justice Secretaries from DLSA, Principal Magistrates and Members of Juvenile Justice Boards, District Programme Officers, Chairpersons and Members of Child Welfare Committees, Child Protection Officers, Officers from various State Government Departments, and law students.