



Gujarat National Law University

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Dr Rajul L. Desai, Member, National Commission for Women (NCW) visited Gujarat National Law University (GNLU)

Gandhinagar, January 08, 2021: Dr Rajul L. Desai, Member, National Commission for Women (NCW) visited Gujarat National Law University (GNLU) on January 07, 2021. She met GNLU Director Prof (Dr) S. Shanthakumar and discussed matters of mutual interest.

She also chaired a meeting of the members of the Internal Complaint Committees (ICCs) of various universities/academic institutions located in and around Gandhinagar, convened for spreading awareness about the functioning of these committees:

1. Gujarat National Law University
2. IIT-Gandhinagar
3. Rashtriya Raksha University
4. National Forensic Science University
5. Swarnim Gujarat Sports University
6. Kamdhenu University
7. Children's University
8. Pandit Deendayal Petroleum University
9. National Institute of Fashion Technology
10. Indian Institute of Teachers Education

After giving a brief overview of the role of NCW to the members present, Dr Rajul Desai discussed the provisions of Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act and Rules made thereunder. She then explained in detail about the composition of ICC, functions and responsibilities of the members of ICC and complaint procedure in case of sexual harassment of women at workplace. She highlighted that ICCs have quasi-judicial powers.

Stressing on the need of regular training for the members of ICC, she said that mere setting up of Internal Complaints Committee is not enough but its members must be trained to address complaints with a proper mechanism. She requested GNLU to organize such training programmes for universities in Gujarat.

She said that dissemination of information is equally important. "Employees should be made aware of the roles & functions of ICC so that they know whom to approach for cases of sexual harassment," she added.

She called upon the members to discharge their duty as ICC members without fear or favour even when a complaint is against a very senior functionary or even head of an institution. In this connection, she highlighted the actions taken by the commission in the cases of sexual harassment



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against powerful heads of organizations. Dr Desai also reminded the members about the penal provisions in the act should the members of ICC fail in their duties.

She remarked that there are reported instances of research scholars being harassed by their PhD guides. She urged GNLU to incorporate this aspect while designing training programmes so that awareness on this vital issue is spread among academic institutions.

In the end, Dr Rajul Desai alerted the members against incidents of false and malicious complaints and said that in such cases, ICC can consider seeking the help of forensic science experts before reaching to a conclusion.

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