

Centre for Women and Child Rights inaugurated at GNLU

Gandhinagar, September 15, 2020: Mr Priyank Kanoongo, Chairperson, National Commission for Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR), Government of India inaugurated the Centre for Women and Child Rights at Gujarat National Law University (GNLU), today. The dignitaries present at the function were Ms Leela Ben Ankoliya, Chairperson, Gujarat State Commission for Women, Dr Laxmi Bhawani, Chief, UNICEF Office, Gujarat and GNLU Director Dr Shanthakumar.

The centre has been established to promote active discourse and deliberation in the field of women and child development. The centre is divided into two wings; the research wing will engage in empirical and legal analysis to produce publications and policy briefs while the capacity building wing will organize field-driven activities with the key stakeholders (women and children) to improve their status and condition in society.

In his inaugural address, NCPCR Chairperson Mr Priyank Kanoongo said, “Even before the formation of the United Nations, Mahatma Gandhi spoke of human rights in the concept of Sarvodaya and Swaraj. As a lawyer in modern times, Gandhiji did everything possible to protect human rights all over the world. The rights of children in India needs to be conceptualized from an Indian perspective. We need to change our vision from "child-centric" to "family-centric" where the child is at the centre of the family and the family is strengthened. I congratulate Gujarat National Law University for setting up a Center for the Rights of Women and Children and assure that NCPCR will provide internships to the students of this Center as well as provide all possible assistance in their research work.”

Dr Laxmi Bhawani, Chief, Unicef Office, Gujarat delivered the keynote address. She said, “There are several studies which have time and again indicated and reinforced that the more women are empowered in society, the better it is for overall social well being.” She further said that it is not possible to realize women and child rights without accountability and a strong justice system.

Delivering the special address, Ms Leela Ben Ankoliya, Chairperson, Gujarat State Commission for Women gave an account of the various steps the Government of Gujarat and the State Commission for Women are taking for women empowerment in the state. “Protection of women’s rights and their empowerment is not the task only of the Government or Women Commission; all of us will have to work together to create a better and more equal society,” she added.

Earlier, in his welcome address, GNLU Director Dr Shanthakumar quoted the UN Secretary-General that “Achieving gender equality and empowering women and girls is the unfinished business of our time and the greatest human rights challenge in our world.” He added, “since the founding of the United Nations in 1945, the world started discussing women’s rights as a subset of human rights and yet it is unfortunate that even after 75 years, there is a need to continuously discuss and debate women’s rights as human rights....it is of paramount importance to end the multiple



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forms of gender violence and secure equal access for women to quality education and health, economic resources and participation in political life.”

Dr Asha Verma, Assistant Professor of Law and Centre Head proposed a vote of thanks.

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