

Webinar Report

Media reporting on children with vulnerabilities: Perspectives from the JJ Act and POCSO Act including reporting of cases under The Mental Healthcare Act, 2017

10 March 2021

The Department of Mass Communication and Journalism, Tezpur University organised a webinar titled 'Media reporting on children with vulnerabilities: Perspectives from the JJ Act and POCSO Act including reporting of cases under The Mental Healthcare Act, 2017' in collaboration with the Judicial Academy, Assam and Gauhati Press Club on 10th March, 2021.

WEBINAR
organised by

**Department of Mass Communication and Journalism,
Tezpur University**
in collaboration with

Gauhati Press Club

TOPIC

Media reporting on children with vulnerabilities:
Perspectives from the JJ Act and POCSO Act including reporting of cases under The Mental Healthcare Act, 2017

10th MARCH, 2021
1:30-3:00 pm

WHO CAN ATTEND?
Media professionals, legal professionals, Media and Communication students

SPEAKERS

Mr Satya Prakash
Legal Editor, The Tribune

Mr Sushanta Talukdar
Editor, NEZine

Certificates of participation will be awarded to all participants

Mr. Justice N. Kotiswar Singh, honourable judge, Gauhati High Court delivered the inaugural speech. The resource persons for the webinar were- Mr Satya Prakash, legal editor of The Tribune and Mr Sushanta Talukdar, the Editor of Nezine. Over 300 participants including media and law students and faculty, media professionals and legal professionals from across the country participated in the webinar.

Dr. Anjuman Borah, Assistant Professor, Department of MCJ, Tezpur University invited the resource persons and introduced them to the virtual house comprising of more than 200 participants.

Mr. Satya Prakash spoke on three important acts: The Juvenile Justice Act, the POCSO Act and the Mental Healthcare Act, which came into effect from May 29, 2018. He spoke that the journalists need to take care of the differences between Activism and Journalism. He also laid down focus on the balance between media freedom and the responsibility of the journalists. Adding on the JJ Act, he spoke that the ambit of maintaining the anonymity of the victims needs to be extended. He was very optimistic of this joint collaboration made between Judicial Academy, Gauhati Press Club and the MCJ Department at Tezpur University.

Mr Sushanta Talukdar started his part of the discussion accepting the realities of current scenario of media, where the outlets are taking part in a mad-rush of headlines and deadlines. This in turn doesn't allow the reporting to be sensible enough and leads to

breakage of many rules of the JJ Act or POCSO Act. He added the importance of proper gate-keeping in the organisations so that a sensitive reporting can be done, unlike the current ways where the media houses intensifies the trauma of the victims. He spoke that the journalists need to be crucial on reporting the geographical location of the victims. If a crime like that happens in Guwahati, they should report it as Guwahati, rather than mentioning the exact location, which makes it easier for the people to identify the victim. Mr. Talukdar laid down many important guidelines that media organisations need to adopt as self-regulatory measures.

The speeches were followed by a question-answer session where the resource person addressed the queries of the students. The session was followed by a brief deliberation from Mr. Sanjoy Ray, the General Secretary of Gauhati Press Club. The session came to an end with Professor Joya Chakraborty, Head of the Department of MCJ, giving a vote of thanks to all the resource persons, collaborators and participants attending the webinar.