

“If you've got nothing to dance about, find a reason to sing.” Melody Carstairs

NATIONAL**NATIONAL CONFERENCE OF DISTRICT DISABILITY REHABILITATION CENTRES**

The Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities (Divyangjan), Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment is organising a ‘National Conference of District Disability Rehabilitation Centres’.

The conference is organized for taking the message of DDRCs further, which play a crucial and central role for the wellbeing of Divyangjan and to give clarification about the mechanism of schemes and disseminate its success stories.

DDRC:

District Disability Rehabilitation Centre (DDRC) provide comprehensive services to persons with disabilities and facilitate creation of infrastructure and capacity building at the district level for awareness generation, rehabilitation and training of rehabilitation professionals.

The District Disability Rehabilitation Centres are set up under the Plan Scheme- “Scheme for implementation of Persons with Disabilities (Equal Opportunities, protection of Rights and Full Participation) Act 1995 (SIPDA).” 310 districts have been identified and 263 DDRCs have been set up.

Objectives of the District Disability Rehabilitation Centres are as under:

- Awareness generation, early intervention and assessment of the need of assistive devices to divyangjans.
- Therapeutic services such as Physiotherapy, Occupational Therapy and Speech Therapy etc. to divyangjans through rehabilitation professionals.
- Equipment for rehabilitation services.

ACCUSED CAN NOW SEEK ANTICIPATORY BAIL IN 498A

Taking note of the ‘misuse’ of Section 498A, the Supreme Court has said that the accused can now seek anticipatory bail.

The apex court, while modifying the verdict given by its two-judge bench, said that there is no scope for courts for constitutionally filling up gaps in penal law. The earlier order had provisions for setting up of a committee to deal with complaints of dowry harassment.

Erasing role of NALSA (National Legal Services Authority) and NGOs, the apex court said courts are there to protect harassed husbands and their relatives, who are not remotely connected to matrimonial cruelty, by granting them anticipatory bail.

A batch of pleas were filed in the Supreme Court seeking revisiting of a judgement that had reduced the severity of the anti-dowry law on the offence of subjecting a married woman to cruelty by spouse and in-laws.

A two-judge bench of the apex court in July last year had voiced concern over “abuse” of section 498 A (subjecting a married woman to cruelty) and passed a slew of directions, including that no arrest should “normally be effected” without verifying allegations as violation of human rights of innocents could not be brushed aside.

Section 498A of the Indian Penal Code deals with husband or relatives of husbands subjecting a woman to cruelty. Punishment under the Section is a maximum of three years and was so far a non-bailable offence.

A growing trend is being observed among women involved in marital discord to abuse Section 498A of IPC to rope in their husbands’ relatives — including parents, minor children, siblings and grandparents — in criminal cases. Therefore, it is high time such frivolous cases which violate the human rights of innocent is checked.

This is a shift from the dominant judicial conception of women as victims who would silently suffer injustice rather than bring disrepute to their family by taking domestic conflict outside the four walls of the home. Going by the popular portrait, it is only the worst victim of abuse among women who approach the court for redress. With its latest observations, the court broke away from the

reigning perception to rule that in dowry cases, the account of the alleged victim need not be taken at face value.

Way ahead:

Though Section 498A of the IPC was enacted to protect women from cruelty in matrimonial homes, its misuse to harass the other side too is causing social unrest. There should be gender justice for women as dowry has a chilling effect on marriage on the one hand. On the other hand, there is right to life and personal liberty of the man.

'EXPORTING CORRUPTION REPORT' 2018

The 2018 edition of the 'Exporting Corruption Report' has been released by anti-corruption organization Transparency International. The classification of enforcement is based on the convention countries' enforcement actions in the period 2014-2017.

In this 2018 report, China, Hong Kong, India and Singapore -- all with 2% or more of world exports, but not parties to the OECD (Anti-Bribery) Convention -- are classified for the first time and all fall into the lowest level (little or no enforcement).

This poor performance argues for these countries' accession to the OECD Anti-Bribery Convention. They are, however, parties to the UN Convention against Corruption, which also calls for enforcement against foreign bribery. Transparency International urges them to join the OECD Anti-Bribery Convention.

India is among four countries with "no or little enforcement" mechanism to check foreign bribery. The report asks India to criminalize foreign bribery and introduce effective legislation to protect whistleblowers in the private sector.

The Indian government does not publish statistics on its foreign bribery enforcement and does not disclose such statistics on request.

The authorities do not disclose any information about unpublished cases related to bribery of foreign public officials by Indians. India is also not clear whether the governmental enforcement and investigative

agencies collect information related to foreign bribery, separately or not.

There are also inadequacies in implementation of Mutual Legal Assistance (MLA) Treaty. The translation of documents into foreign languages is a major factor slowing down the MLA process.

Challenges ahead:

As foreign bribery is not yet criminalized in India, the adequacy of the enforcement system in relation to this specific offence cannot be assessed. However, certain shortcomings in the enforcement system, in particular those evident from current enforcement of domestic corruption, are also a concern for foreign bribery enforcement. In particular, while the Indian Penal Code and Prevention of Corruption Act prescribe criminal and civil liability for domestic corruption, the reality is that actions taken against the perpetrators have been few.

NASA COMPLETED FINAL TEST ORION'S SPACE CAPSULE

NASA has successfully completed the final test to qualify Orion's space capsule's parachute system for flights with astronauts, ahead of its mission to send humans to the Moon and beyond.

The parachute system is the only system that must assemble itself in mid-air and must be able to keep the crew safe in several failure scenarios, such as mortar failures that prevent a single parachute type to deploy, or conditions that cause some of the parachute textile components to fail.

NASA's Orion spacecraft is built to take humans farther than they've ever gone before. Orion will serve as the exploration vehicle that will carry the crew to space, provide emergency abort capability, sustain the crew during the space travel, and provide safe re-entry from deep space return velocities. Orion will launch on NASA's new heavy-lift rocket, the Space Launch System.

Orion will first fly with astronauts aboard during Exploration Mission-2, a mission that will venture near the Moon and farther from Earth than ever before, launching atop NASA's Space Launch System rocket — which will be the world's most powerful rocket.
