

ILS Human Rights Cell

Introduction: Human rights are the bedrock of our existence, essential for our very survival as a species. Recognizing this fundamental truth, ILS Law College took a bold step in 2008-09 by establishing the Human Rights Centre. With the distinguished leadership of Justice S. Rajendra Babu, former Chief Justice of India and Chairman of the National Human Rights Commission, this center stands as a beacon, championing the cause of human dignity and justice. The cell is a student run body who are engaged in several activities, catering to the interests of students who want to learn and explore more about human rights. The cell aims to provide a “forum where students are able to further their knowledge of modern correctional issues and to bring their classroom learning to life”

Faculty Coordinators: Dr. Tejaswani Malegaonkar and Ms. Parul Raghuwanshi

Student Coordinators: Shitanshu Mathur and Kanupriya Singh (Both V BA LLB)

Student Members:

Shitanshu Mathur, Kanupriya Singh, Aditi Dhabe, Reet Namjoshi, Anupa Kharbe (all V BA LLB), Anushka Singh, Ananya Upadhye, Charvee Jha (all IV BA LLB), Deepak Varandani (II LLB), Bhoomi Jain, Khushi Verma (both II BA LLB), Rughvedra (I BA LLB).

Details of the activities conducted:

SEMINARS:

- **Student Seminar I**

Title: Constitutional validity of the 2019 amendment to the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, 1967.

Date: August 14, 2023.

Mode: Hybrid.

Resource Persons: Ananya Upadhye and Anushka Singh (both IV BA LLB)

No. of Participants: 15.

Report: The Human Rights Cell of our college organized a group discussion on August 14, 2023, addressing the constitutional validity of the 2019 amendment to the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, 1967. The event aimed to encourage students to critically analyze and discuss the implications of this amendment on human rights.

The participants engaged in a lively exchange of viewpoints, analyzing the constitutional aspects of the 2019 amendment to the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, 1967. The discourse covered concerns related to the balance between national security and individual rights, the potential impact on freedom of speech and association, and the need for safeguards to prevent misuse of the Act.

Key points discussed included the definition of 'unlawful activities,' the broadening of the government's power to designate individuals and organizations as 'terrorists,' and the implications of such designations on fundamental rights. Students expressed varying opinions on whether the amendment strikes the right balance between security concerns and safeguarding individual rights. The group discussion highlighted the significance of informed conversations about laws that affect the fundamental rights of citizens and proved to be an intellectually stimulating and enlightening event.

- **Student Seminar II**

Title: Orientation For the batch of 2028.

Date: September 21, 2023.

Mode: Offline.

Resource Persons: Shitanshu Mathur (V BA LLB) and Charvee Jha (IV BA LLB)

No. of Participants: 25.

Report: The orientation session, conducted by Shitanshu Mathur and Charvee Jha, highlighted the diverse array of activities and initiatives undertaken by the HRC in previous years. Through a comprehensive presentation. The session aimed to familiarize the students with the objectives, activities, and past accomplishments of the HRC, providing them with insights into the workings of the Cell.

The orientation session served as an informative platform for the new batches to understand the mission and activities of the HRC. By providing an overview of past initiatives and sessions, the Cell aimed to inspire and engage the students in promoting human rights within the college community and beyond.

- **Student Seminar III**

Title: Human Rights of the Female Sex viz a viz Constitutionality of Menstrual Leave.

Date: November 25, 2023.

Mode: Offline.

Resource Persons: Anish Padhye and Khushi Verma (Both II BA LLB)

No. of Participants: 15.

Report: This session was organized by Anish Padhye and Khushi Verma (II BA LLB). It was concerned with the human rights of Female sex and the constitutionality of menstrual leave. The session began with the discussion of what constitutes the female sex, followed by the human rights of the same. The session also discussed why and how menstrual leave falls within the ambit of human rights. The speakers also talked about the positive and negative aspects of menstrual leave, legislations all around the world and ended the session with recourses to help tackle the negative aspects of the same.

- **Student Seminar IV**

Title: Refugee Crisis: The Position of International Human Rights Law.

Date: December 1, 2023.

Mode: Offline.

Resource Persons: Bhoomi Jain and Anish Padhye (both II BA LLB)

No. of Participants: 20.

Report: The session provided an overview of the refugee crisis and its intersection with international human rights law, focusing on the example of the Syrian refugee crisis. It defined who qualifies as a refugee according to the UNHCR and highlighted the causes and consequences of the crisis. The session also mentioned the influencing factors related to the human rights of refugees, the laws protecting their rights, and key legal principles, such as non-refoulement. Additionally, it referenced significant legal cases, including Gambia vs Myanmar in the ICJ and the UK vs Indian Supreme Court cases, to illustrate the application of international human rights law in the context of refugee protection.

OTHER ACTIVITIES

- **Title: Educational Visit**

Topic: Regional Mental Hospital Visit

Date: September 7, 2023

Organized by: Dr. Tejaswani Malegaonkar and Shitanshu Mathur(V BA LLB)

No. of Participants: 20

Report: The field visit to YERWADA MENTAL HEALTH HOSPITAL was a part of the annual visit conducted by the ILS Human Rights Cell. The purpose of the visit was to create awareness amongst the students about the life of those neglected in such centers and one on one interaction with the patients to have a better understanding of the people's experiences and their daily life. The patients talked about how some of them were abandoned by their family and faced other harsh conditions.

The main problem that they talked about was their families not understanding what they were going through and the lack of mental health awareness amongst the older generation at large. The students had a hands-on experience in talking to the staff that helped them in understanding the workings of the place and the various measures they take in order to ensure the safety and welfare of all the people living inside the centre. There was a small store set up by the people in the centre where they made various hand made products like bags, hand paintings etc. Overall it was a great in person experience for all students.

Panel Discussion:

Title: Panel Discussion in collaboration of Sakal Group and ILS Human Rights Cell

Topic: Empowering sex workers and their children

Date: September 27, 2023

Resource Persons: Medha Bhaskaran, Author, Sushma Chavan, Asst. Commissioner Of Police, Adv. Asim Sarode, Advocate And Human Rights Activist, Tejaswini Sevekari, Saheli HIV/AIDSka Karyakarta Sangh, Isha Saxena, Asst. Professor, ILS Law College

No. of Participants: 250

Report: The HRC in collaboration with Sakal Publications organized a panel discussion with Medha Bhaskaran; author of 'Up Against Darkness', Sushma Chavan; Asst. Commissioner of Police, Adv. Asim Sarode; an advocate and a human rights activist, Isha Saxena, Asst. Prof. at ILS Law College and Tejaswi Sevekari, AIDS Karyakarta Sangh. The discussion touched upon the topic of Empowering sex workers and their children. The discussion started with talking about the

existing legal rights of the sex workers and the harsh reality of the lack of implementation of such laws. Medha Bhaskaran focused on how she has been involved with the sex workers in understanding their problems and the difficulties; that are not only faced by them but also their children at large. The panelist even shed light on how their kids face difficulties in fitting in the society and are considered as outcasts. Every panelist gave their views on the truth of the lives of the sex workers and their children and the effect this lack of initiative towards their welfare has on their lives; which hampers their development in the society at large. The session ended with a question-and-answer session by the students which helped them in getting a further insight on the topic of sex workers and their lives.