

Report on Workshop in American Centre on Social Justice Day on 20th February 2020.

By: Dr Souvik Chatterji (HOD, Law, JISU)

On 20th February 2020, workshop was organized in American Centre, Kolkata on Social Justice Day. The Workshop was related to Gender Based Violence.

JIS University was represented by Dr Souvik Chatterji with 5 integrated BALLN Honors students namely Amit Saha, Shreya Naskar, Barsha Saha, Kaustav Bhattacharya and Ayanava Acharya.



Dr Souvik Chatterji gave power point presentation on Gender based offences in India. The presentation included offences against marriage like bigamy, juvenile justice offences, dowry death, cruelty and rape. The substantive law and procedural law on Domestic violence was elaborately explained.



Krish Das, Deputy Director, US Consulate General introduced the workshop. In his presentation he mentioned that domestic violence and cruelty were not offences specific towards any jurisdiction. USA and other developed countries are concerned about the offences and India is not facing the problem in isolation.



Dipanwita Sarkar from Dearah Association for Social and Humanitarian Action said that their experience in working at the ground level showcased that human trafficking, child trafficking, kidnapping and child abuse were associated offences which are roadblocks in the way of social justice.



At the end of Workshop there was a panel discussion where the panelists included Dr Souvik Chatterji (HOD, Law), Advocate of Minority affairs and Member of Social organization.

Questions were raised from the audience that if the beneficial legislations were enacted in India then why still gender based violence exists and goal of attaining social justice is still a far reaching goal.



It was answered by the panelists. It was said that laws are subjected to social change. When Juvenile Justice Act was passed in 2000, it was considered that juveniles are at their formative years. India signed the UN Declaration of Child rights. So India could not give death sentence or life imprisonment to any juvenile. But after Nirbhaya case, when a juvenile was also convicted for rape and murder of a girl, it was realized that the maximum punishment of Juvenile Justice Act of years stay in a special home was inadequate. So the Juvenile Justice Act was amended in 2015, and it was mentioned between 16 to 18 years of juveniles committed heinous offences then then could be tried by Criminal courts and imprisonment sentences could be given to them.



Similarly Criminal Law Amendments came up between 2013 to 2018 and new offences which affected the society like acid attack, voyeurism, stalking were legislated in India. Execution of the laws is a challenge in India. Serious awareness creation is required to change the mindset of the people at large then only social justice can be achieved.