

# **Report on Workshop on Igniting Hearts and Minds for Social Action**

**(20 March, 2023)**

**CCELELAC, NLUJAA**

The Legal Aid Cell of National Law University and Judicial Academy, Assam (NLUJAA) in collaboration with The Buddha Institute, conducted a workshop on 20<sup>th</sup> March 2023 at the seminar hall of NLUJAA. The workshop aimed at creating awareness among students and sensitizing them with respect to the social realities and its different forms, like poverty, gender, caste, injustice, inequality, marginalization etc.

Amongst the panelists of the workshop were Ms. Enakshi Dutta (Director of Institute of Development Action which aims to support and organize efforts of civil society to hasten the pace of development in Northeast India) and Mr. Pradyut Bhattacharjee who is currently associated with The Buddha Institute as a Theme Leader.

The workshop was meant for the student-volunteers of CCELELAC, NLUJAA. They were excited to participate in the workshop. Many students got registered for the workshop and attended its sessions. They interacted with the panelists and discussed solutions to the problems, such as gender inequality, poverty, class divide, among other issues.

The workshop began with the introduction of the panelists. Thereafter, Prof. V.K. Ahuja, Vice Chancellor of NLUJAA delivered a welcome speech and explained the role of law students in contributing to the society.

In one of the sessions in the workshop, a short video from the rural region of Northeast India was screened which depicted the issues of sexual abuse and domestic violence among the rural population, and the steps taken by Buddha Institute in collaboration with the local stakeholders in order to address these problems.

Ms. Enakshi Dutta explained the nuances of gender inequalities in detail. She underlined the ideas that gender assigned to a person may be different from sex at the time of birth and such perceived notions of gender may lead to stereotypical imposition of gender roles on individuals. Further she highlighted the effects of gender roles on men. She explained that gender roles build up pressure on men to live up to the masculine stereotype. Individual choice of men is subordinated to fit in the larger social image of men.

Continuing further, she discussed the relevant provisions from the Constitutional of India, and statutes especially meant to address women related issues. She said that the performance of Assam on various key indicators, such as crime against women, maternal mortality ratio etc is not satisfactory.

Mr. Pradyut Bhattacharjee introduced the students to various facets of the lives of people in rural areas. The students were asked to portray a rural setting where each student was assigned a role of a rural person with limited resources who had to obtain maximum utility using the minimum resources available to him. Through this engaging and informative activity, students gained insights into the challenging lives of people who dwell in rural areas.

Overall, the workshop provided the students with useful insights into various ways of social evils and social life, and encouraged students to take the required legal recourse to address social evils of today's age.