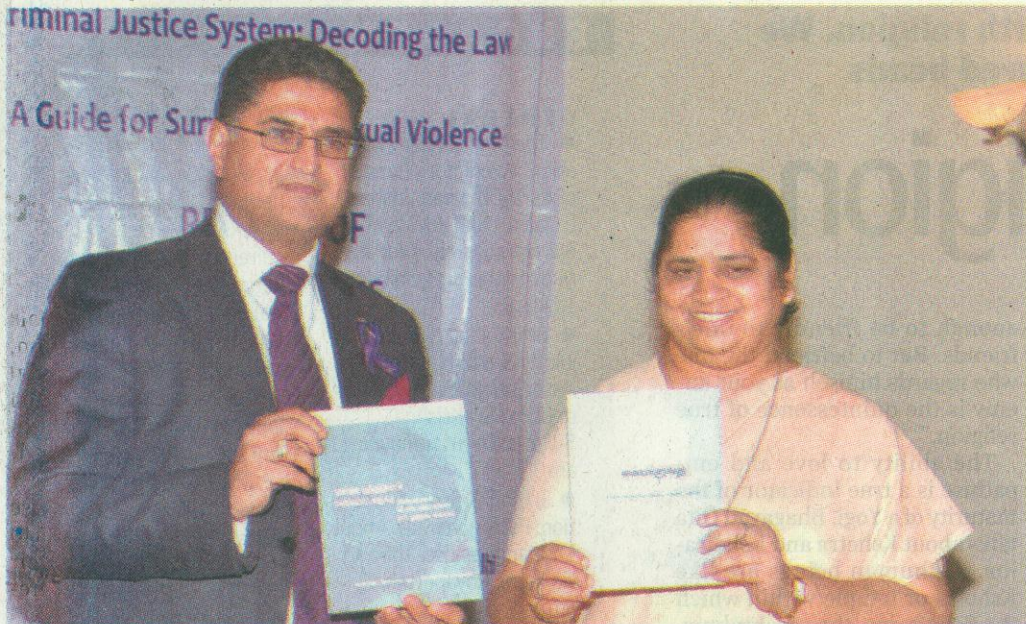


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British DHC Bharat Joshi at the launch of the two translated Tamil books

Violence Against Women is a Global Issue'

The need to curb violence against women was discussed by experts in the judiciary, enforcement specialists and policy makers, at a book launch held in the city recently

Express News service

Chennai: Criticising the judiciary for refusing a training proposal to sensitise the judges of trial courts to the laws dealing with sexual harassment and domestic violence against women, former Madras High Court judge Justice K Chandru said that many judges lacked the perspective to understand the essence of such laws.

Justice Chandru, who moderated a panel discussion on sexual violence against women and children, opportunities and challenges, said, "Judges are not ready to accept that they fail to understand the purpose of laws on sexual harassment and domestic violence in their true essence. Moreover, they are not ready to allow an outsider to sensitise them."

The panel discussion was organised as a part of book release function for Tamil versions of two publications titled *Locating the Survivor in the Indian Criminal Justice System: Decoding the Law* and *A Guide for Survivors of Sexual Violence*. Releasing the books, Bharat Joshi, British Deputy High Commissioner, said, "Tackling the scourge of violence against women is at the heart of the UK Human Rights Policy. But violence against women is not an Indian issue, or a woman's issue. The statistics are as clear as they are

shocking. Globally, one in three women is beaten or sexually abused in her lifetime. It's a global issue that requires a global response."

"A report released in 2012 says that there were 4,500 sexual harassment cases reported throughout the country, out of which 3,800 are from Tamil Nadu. A person blindly going by the statistics would come to the conclusion that such crimes happen only in Tamil Nadu. But the truth is, many States did not bother to provide data on the number of cases reported and thus misled the reader," said Thilagavathy, former Director General of Police, Tamil Nadu, who participated in the panel discussion.

Reaching the victims and educating them about the available legal avenues for redressal against harassment is the primary task and need of the hour, said Jayanthi, Member of Tamil Nadu State Human Rights Commission.

Globally, one in three women is beaten or sexually abused in her lifetime. It's a global issue that needs a global response

— **Bharat Joshi**
British Deputy High Commissioner at Chennai