

**REPORT ON WEBINAR ON THE TOPIC “SURGE IN
DOMESTIC ABUSE WITH THE ONSET OF THE
GLOBAL PANDEMIC- KEY CHALLENGES AND
MEASURES”**

SUBMITTED BY:

LEGAL AID CENTRE



SYMBIOSIS LAW SCHOOL, HYDERABAD

SYMBIOSIS INTERNATIONAL (DEEEMED) UNIVERISTY,
PUNE



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Date & Time : 30th April, 2020 , 4:00pm – 5:00pm

MEMBERS PRESENT :

Faculty-in-charge: Prof K. Shanti

1.	Sriharshitha Chada
2.	Chaitra P
3.	Haswhita Inuganti
4.	Srinidhi Reddy
5.	Akshaya Chintala
6.	Bhakti Khule
7.	V.S. Bharat Ram
8.	Deepthi Reddy
9.	Anushka A.
10.	Manogya Chava
11.	Sandra Lisa Philip
12.	Tanisha Banerjee
13.	Vinitha Reddy
14.	Yuktika Kadali
15.	Sanjana S
16.	Rahul Shambhu
17.	Jaishuk Reddy
18.	Meghana Mishra
19.	Harish Kesav
20.	Nidhi A.K.

INTRODUCTION

The Legal Aid Centre organised a webinar on the topic “ Surge in domestic abuse with the onset of the global pandemic key challenges and measures” to bring awareness and throw light upon the unreported domestic violence cases throughout the country during the National Lockdown. The guest speakers for the webinar were Mrs. Ekta Viiveck Verma and Mrs. Saritha Nittala. Ekta Viiveck Verma is a social entrepreneur and the founder of a support group for women in domestic abuse situations called “ Invisible Scars” and also a core member for TEDxHyderabad group. Saritha Nittala is an entrepreneur, Counselling psychologist, and MBTI certified Relationship Coach. Dr. Sarfaraz Ahmed Khan, Director of Symbiosis Law School, Hyderabad and Dr. Anuradha Binnuri, Deputy Director has also graced this occasion with their presence in this webinar. The event was being moderated Sriharshitha Chada.

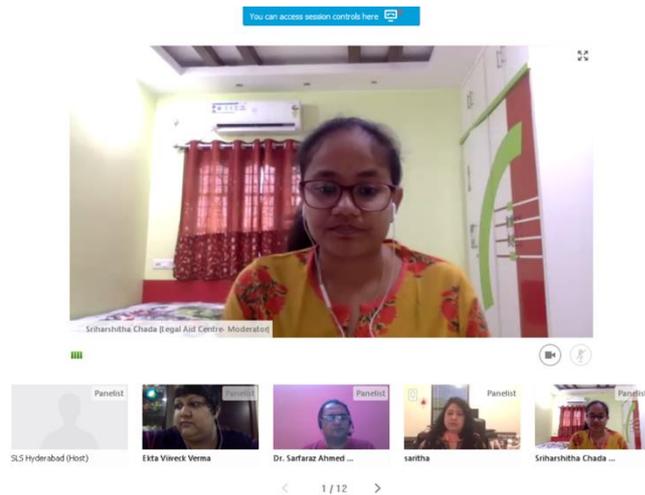
PURPOSE OF THE EVENT

1. To discuss how confinement is a breeding ground for domestic abuse
2. To analyse the various immediate resources that an individual can avail if he/she is subjected to domestic abuse
3. To understand the role of organisations and NGOs while responding to domestic violence during the pandemic
4. To understand the function of the law enforcement to ensure the safety of the victim and how the cases of domestic shall be handled post lockdown.

EXPERIENCE

Mrs. Ekta shared her views on the questions the moderator asked. She expressed her views on how India is one of the leading countries in all the spheres but unfortunately ranks down in curbing the Gender based violence where people consider it as a taboo. These cases could be curbed only if there is a change in the mindset. She further stated the lack of awareness on these issues would never let the violence come into limelight. Henceforth women tolerate the violence without knowing what actually she is going through and all the onlookers and the neighbours normalize the behaviour by not thinking it as their moral responsibility to reach out to the victim. Mrs. Ekta further added to the webinar by stating that there is a dire need of a National Level Campaign on these violence's, small skits by individuals which portray domestic violence to be shared with people through which they can be aware of it. She

expressed her views on the immediate establishment of temporary Safe Shelter homes for both women & children wherein the victim can be transferred immediately during this kind of situation where people cannot move freely and ensured that the gaps in the safe homes must be identified like sanitation and infrastructure for better living. She also explained the dire need of National Level campaigns which can bring a clever change in the society and the need of awareness in the rural areas through their grassroot levels such as Anganwadi teachers where the villagers accept them rather than the outsiders with whom the villagers might not be comfortable with. The young minds can bring out a drastic change in the society if they start working on the behaviours that lead the abuse and empower lots of people and stand by the victim along with them in this fight. She emphasized on the issue of gender sensitisation and the education system should also impart these values to the students.



Mrs. Saritha Nittala has thrown light on the drastic psychological changes a person undergoes due to domestic violence. During the domestic abuse, the mental status of the victim is hazy, shattered, lack of self-esteem and self-confidence, no will power and are hopeless. During this situation a person needs psychological support and awareness about the violence she faced. She explained the real root cause of the violence is anger, because where everyone is under social pain during this pandemic and displaced anger will definitely increase violence. On a societal level, more and more programmes should be created to empower the people and schools should ask students to express their anger and work in counselling them about anger management since very basic classes through which the younger minds would create an impact in the future. Counselling must be done to the abusers rather than victims because the change has to come within the abuser. She expressed her views on the misconception between the emotions of Men and Women and about the norms set up by the society for both the genders. According to societal norms, men aren't the ones who cry and express their problems to the public at large. There is also a need for men to form up organisations to battle domestic abuse against them like how women do. She explains how the bystander effect makes the society not

to interfere and become an active role in these violence terming it as an issue between both the partners. She appeals to people to raise up, create awareness about the violence because children living in these households would have an impact in their mind and would continue to do so when they are adults. It is a moral responsibility of people to be helpful to the person who really needs help and to open up because it is a high time to work on these issues.

OUTCOME

The webinar with the panellists and the attendees has been very fruitful. The views and the experience that the panellists shared were very enlightening. The webinar keenly emphasized on the ongoing situation and the outcomes in a victims life due to domestic violence. This webinar gave rise to many possibilities where it motivates youth to raise awareness on domestic abuse and stand by the victims, where law students can spread legal awareness on domestic violence being a crime and make people know what their rights are and how one can battle such odds in society.

Ms. K. Shanthi

Faculty in- Charge

Legal Aid Centre, SLS-H

ANNEXURE – I

QUESTIONS FOR THE PANELLISTS

Mrs. Ekta

1. How is the government and the Civil society organizations trying to address the crime of domestic violence especially during the lockdown period?
2. How can one tackle the issue of domestic violence during the lockdown period and protect the victims of such crime? Whether there should be a permanent safe house for the victims of domestic violence to separate them from their perpetrators?
3. Why do majority of the cases of domestic violence go unreported and whether the lockdown has aggravated the problem?
4. Whether the Central government can make a law which ensures that there be a strict provision for the perpetrators of domestic violence specifically during the lockdown period?
5. What are various ways through which we can reach out to the rural areas and make them more aware about the crime of domestic violence?
6. What are the legal loopholes that are present in the Domestic violence act and the measures that various NGOs can undertake in order to alter the attitude of gender stereotypes in combating gender abuse and violence?
7. What role can we as Legal Aid Centre of SLSH play during this onset of the global pandemic. And in what way can an individual contribute to the very same?

Mrs. Saritha

1. How does Domestic Violence affect the mental, physical and emotional wellbeing of the victim and how it can be tackled at different levels?
2. What are the root causes behind the surge in the number of domestic violence cases during the period of lockdown and what can be done to change the mindset in order to avoid commission of such heinous crimes?
3. What are the common misconceptions that we have regarding men being only perpetrators and not the victims of such domestic abuse?
4. What are immediate psychological recourses and the remedies available that a domestic violence victim can avail during a pandemic?
5. Given the present situation of the lockdown, how can assistance be provided to the victims of domestic violence?

ANNEXURE – II

TABLE PLAN

4:00 PM- 4:05 PM	Welcome Address by Dr. Sarfaraz Ahmad Khan (Director, Symbiosis Law School, Hyderabad)
4:05 PM- 4:10 PM	Introduction and Context Setting for the Webinar by Sriharshitha Chada (President, Legal Aid Centre)
4:10 PM- 4: 58 PM	<p>Question and Answer Session on the topic “Surge in Domestic Violence with the Onset of the Global Pandemic”</p> <p>Panel Includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ekta Viveck Verma (Entrepreneur, Founder of “Invisible Scars”)• Saritha Nittala (Counselling Psychologist) <p>Moderated by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• SriHarshitha Chada
4:58 PM- 5:00 PM	Vote of Thanks by Mrs. K. Shanthi (Faculty in-charge, Legal Aid Centre)