

Press Release

The Manipur Commission for Protection of Child Rights & Manipur Alliance for Child Right conducted a one day consultation program on Protection of Children from Sexual Offence (POCSO) ACT 2012 & JJ ACT 2015 at Moreh, Chandel District. The program was participated by 9 police officer from Moreh & Tengnoupal PS, representatives from Meitie Council Moreh, Nupi Khunai Chaokhat lamjing Lup, Minority Muslim Council Moreh, Center for Social development, OSOM also participated in the program, highlighting the key note address the Chairperson – MCPCR S. Saretkumar Sharma emphasised the need to fully understand the POCSO ACT 2012 & JJ ACT 2015 to the police personals as they were the one who will be directly handling the case of child sexual abuse. Seram Neken member, CWC Imphal East spoke on the role of Child Welfare Committee and Mr. Bobby Singh highlighted the overview of the POCSO ACT 2015. Montu Ahanthem, Convener- MACR spoke on the role of NOGs, CBOs, CSOs in protection of child rights, as It has been noted that victims of child sex abuse, and often their families, prefer to approach and seek advice from an NGO/CBO/CSO even before they report the matter to the police. They also play a vital role in identifying child sexual abuse, as a number of them work with children and are aware of the particular problems and behaviour of each child. Montu Ahanthem said that it is mandatory to report under section 21(1) of POCSO Act, 2012, any person, who has an apprehension that an offence is likely to be committed or has knowledge that an offence has been committed, has a mandatory obligation to report the matter i.e. media personnel, staff of hotel/ lodges, hospitals, NGOs, CSOs, clubs, studios, or photographic facilities. Failure to report attracts punishment with imprisonment of up to six months or fine or both. It is also mandatory for police to register an FIR in all cases of child abuse. A child's statement can be recorded even at the child's residence or a place of his choice and should be preferably done by a female police officer not below the rank of sub-inspector. As per this act, the child's medical examination can be conducted even prior to registration of an FIR. This discretion is left up to the Investigation Officer (IO). The IO has to get the child medically examined in a government hospital or local hospital within 24 hours of receiving information about the offence. This is done with the consent of the child or parent or a competent person whom the child trusts and in their presence.

After the program the Chairperson – MCPCR & Montu Ahanthem Convener – MACR had a setting with the Additional SP Mr. Mobi and the Commanding Officer of 11 AR Col. Manoj and discussed the role they could play in safeguarding the rights of the children of living in and around Moreh.