

## **Report on Awareness Programme on Gender Sensitization, POCSO Act, Domestic Violence and POSH Act**

A highly insightful and thought-provoking session was organized at S.C.V.B. Government College, Palampur on the crucial themes of gender sensitization, the POCSO Act, domestic violence, and the POSH Act on 15<sup>th</sup> February 2025. The session was delivered by **Advocate Arti Sood**, an eminent legal expert and social activist, who shared her knowledge and experience on these socially significant issues.

The event began with a warm welcome extended to the guest speaker by **Prof. Manisha Sharma**. In her introductory address, she emphasized the relevance of such awareness sessions in educational institutions, especially at a time when conversations around gender equality and safety are gaining momentum. **Principal Prof. Pankaj Sood** also addressed the audience and expressed his appreciation for the efforts of the organizing team. He encouraged both male and female students to engage in meaningful discussions on gender-related issues and become responsible and sensitive individuals in society.

The session witnessed enthusiastic participation from around 275 students, both male and female, along with faculty and staff members. Advocate Arti Sood's talk was informative, engaging, and deeply impactful. She began by discussing the importance of **gender sensitization** in educational spaces, highlighting how early awareness can prevent biases and discriminatory behaviour. She spoke about the need to break down traditional gender roles and stereotypes and emphasized the role of youth in building an inclusive society.

Moving on to the **Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act**, Advocate Sood explained its objectives, key provisions, and the role it plays in safeguarding children from abuse. She shared real-life case studies to underline the importance of awareness and prompt reporting in such cases. Her presentation helped demystify legal jargon and made the audience more familiar with their rights and responsibilities.

The next part of her address focused on **domestic violence**, where she spoke about the various forms it can take — physical, emotional, economic, and psychological. She explained the legal protections available under the Domestic Violence Act and stressed the importance of speaking up and seeking help without fear or shame. The students were particularly moved by the real-world implications of silence and the societal norms that often prevent victims from seeking justice.

Advocate Sood concluded her talk by elaborating on the **POSH Act (Prevention of Sexual Harassment at Workplace)**. She clarified its scope, the complaint process, and the importance of Internal Complaints Committees in institutions and workplaces. Her discussion emphasized that awareness and implementation of such laws are essential to create safe, equitable, and respectful environments for all. The session concluded with a heartfelt vote of thanks delivered by **Prof. Kalpna Rishi**, the Convener of the event. She expressed her gratitude to Advocate Arti Sood for her enlightening talk, to the principal for his continued support, and to all students and staff for their active participation.

The session was not only educational but also deeply empowering. It succeeded in igniting awareness and fostering a culture of sensitivity, equality, and respect among the college community. During the session Dr. Anupama Dogra, Dr. Anita Surroch, Dr. Anuradha Sharma, Dr. Meenakshi, Prof. Vivek, Prof. Sunita Katoch, Prof. Kamlesh, Prof. Poonam, Prof. Pooja, Prof. Kiran, Prof. Manju were also present.

Prof. Kalpna Rishi

Convener WGR Cell

