

PRESS RELEASE



State-Level Consultation on Girl Child Safety

Shillong, 12 September 2025: A State-level Multi-Stakeholders Consultation on “Safeguarding the Girl Child: Towards a Safer and Enabling Environment for Her in India – Reflection on Progress, Challenges, Opportunities, and the Way Forward” was organised today at the Auditorium of the High Court of Meghalaya. The event was a joint initiative by the Juvenile Justice Committee of the High Court of Meghalaya and the Social Welfare Department, Government of Meghalaya.



Hon'ble Mr. Justice Hamarsan Singh Thangkhiew, Acting Chief Justice of the High Court of Meghalaya and Chairperson of the Juvenile Justice Committee, graced the programme as Chief Guest. Also present were Hon'ble Mr. Justice W. Diengdoh, Hon'ble Mr. Justice Biswadeep Bhattacharjee, Chairperson of the Meghalaya State Commission for Protection of Child Rights (MSCPCR) Smt. Agatha Sangma, Commissioner & Secretary of the Social Welfare Shri Pravin Bakshi, IAS, Director of the Social Welfare Smt. Camelia Doreen Langwa, MCS, Deputy Commissioner, senior police officials, teachers, principals, and other government representatives.

In his address, Justice Thangkhiew emphasised the vital role of girls in shaping the future of society, calling them the "backbone of society and the future of the nation." He stated, "When we empower and protect our girls, we not only improve their lives but also build a healthier and stronger society."



Highlighting Meghalaya's matrilineal structure, he noted that while cultural traditions regard women as custodians of lineage and property, gender-based discrimination still prevails across multiple aspects of society.

Justice Thangkhiew also drew attention to the challenges faced by girls in the areas of health, education, and economic opportunity. He stressed the need for collective societal efforts, saying, "Safeguarding the girl child is not solely the responsibility of the government. Communities must come forward and ensure that girls have access to better healthcare and opportunities."

Addressing the gathering, MSCPCR Chairperson Smt. Agatha Sangma underscored the need for united efforts from families, communities, schools, and society to create an environment where every girl can thrive. "Protecting the girl child is not charity; it is justice. It is not a matter of sympathy, but a matter of rights," she asserted.



Sangma also highlighted the urgency of addressing child sexual abuse, noting that despite Meghalaya's progressive social structure, the state still reports a concerning number of such cases. She reiterated that the safety, dignity, and empowerment of girls must be a central national priority.



The consultation provided a platform for dialogue among key stakeholders to reflect on existing mechanisms, identify challenges, and propose actionable strategies for ensuring a safer and more inclusive environment for girls in Meghalaya and across the country.