

CONCEPT NOTE

4th GNLU Annual Legal Services Forum

5TH - 6TH APRIL, 2019

GUJARAT NATIONAL LAW UNIVERSITY



Gujarat National Law University



CENTRE FOR LAW AND SOCIETY





ABOUT GUJARAT NATIONAL LAW UNIVERSITY

Gujarat National Law University (GNLU), Gandhinagar, established under the GNLU Act, 2003, is a premier law university in the country. With its motivated staff and committed students, the University endeavours to impart quality legal education, contextualising it within the latest policy and practical developments in the fields of arts, commerce, business administration, social work and science and technology. GNLU is the largest NLU in India in terms of student, faculty and research associates' strength and the only Indian National Law University to offer integrated law degrees in five streams including B.S.W. L.LB, and LL.M., MBA, PhD and diploma programmes in law and interdisciplinary fields.

ABOUT CENTRE FOR LAW AND SOCIETY & THE LEGAL SERVICES COMMITTEE

GNLU Centre for Law and Society (GCLS), established in 2015, undertakes research, legal studies and field work at the confluence of law and society. The Centre functions with two wings – the Legal Services Committee (LSC) and the Law and Society Wing. The Legal Services Committee, set up in 2007, functions as a “community legal clinic”, providing assistance through traditional casework, summary advice, self-help, community legal education, community development and policy reform initiatives, in line with its motto “Awareness, Assertion, Action”.



ABOUT THE 4th GNLU ANNUAL LEGAL SERVICES FORUM

The GNLU Annual Legal Services Forum is an annual event organized by the Legal Services Committee under the aegis of GCLS. It aims to facilitate deliberation, collaboration and contribution by Legal Aid Committees to achieve the objective of providing free and competent legal services to the underprivileged by sharing their unique experiences. The Forum shall witness panel discussions and research paper presentations oriented to the objective of the Legal Services Authorities Act, 1987, and project presentations by LSCs competing for the “GNLU Legal Services Funding Grant”. Apart from the above, the Forum will also feature presentations by leading NGO’s in India which have undertaken activities related to the themes of the panel discussions. Each panel discussion will be followed by a question and answer session, paper presentation and presentation by a leading Indian NGO which carries out activities specific to that particular theme. The underlying idea of the Forum is to bridge the gap between academics and grassroots level field work carried on in each theme, and to aid the collaboration of LSC/LAC’s around India with leading NGO’s which specialises in each of the themes.

PANEL DISCUSSIONS

Right to Healthcare

Health and wellbeing are fundamentals to quality life and recognised within the ambit of the Fundamental Right to Life in the Constitution of India. Yet, India forms one of the world’s lowest spending countries in the health sector, and is a long way from providing quality health care in line with international standards. Recently, various measures have been taken to improve the same with the introduction of the Draft Pharmaceutical Policy 2017, the Mental Healthcare Act,

Ayushman Bharat-National Health Protection Scheme, and the unveiling of National Health Stack by NITI Aayog. The Panel shall explore the steps needed for affordable healthcare and necessary institutional changes, the viability of health insurance for the poor, the stigma surrounding mental illness, the interface between medical law and ethics, and a framework for a digital healthcare system to promote transparency and the ways in which legal services in this sector can facilitate the same.

Redefining the Best Interests of the Child

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, 1989, which is the magna carta of the rights of children aims to provide for the holistic development of the child in all fields while focussing on children in conflict with the law. This aim has been domesticated according to the unique experience of countries which has raised questions of redefinition from the perspective of transitioning economies and their views on the agency of children, the obligations of the State and the growing influence of the digital era on the rights of children. The Panel shall discuss the role of legal services in aiding the interests of a child in light of efficacy of child friendly procedures contained within penal laws relating to children, the Trafficking of Persons (Prevention, Protection and Rehabilitation) Bill, 2018, and the POCSO Act, 2012. The Panel will also debate the inadequacy of the UNCRC to regulate interests of the child in the digital age, Framework of rights for orphan children in India, and examine methods of combating delinquency and crime among foster children.

Relationship between Minorities and the State

Adhering to the spirit of the Constitution, which extends special provision for Minorities to ensure their upliftment, various measures have been taken for the benefit of Minorities. However, despite these measures several sections of Minorities regularly come in conflict with the State and society. In light of this the Panel shall discuss the meaning and relevance of the term “Minorities” in the present day, the evolving jurisprudence of relationship between the State and its Minorities, the problems faced by various minority communities in context of the judgement on Section 377 of IPC by the Supreme Court, the call for separate anti-lynching law due to the spate of lynchings in the name of religion, Maratha community’s demand for reservation, the treatment meted out to minorities by the Police, and the right of women to enter places of worship as decided in the Sabarimala Temple case by the Supreme Court and discuss the responsibilities of legal service committees in

Right to Healthy Environment

Environment, which forms the very core of sustenance for all living beings, is being alarmingly degraded despite a plethora of national and international legislations and conventions on the same. The recent events such as the Great Smog in Delhi, anti-Sterlite protests in Tuticorin, and the chemical pollution of lakes in Bangalore prove the point further. This Panel shall inspect and deliberate on the shortcomings of the present legal system concerning the environment, discuss the effects of environment degradation on vulnerable communities and migrations caused due to it, linkages between disaster management and legal services in the context of climate refugees, role of Peoples’ Movements in effecting change in environmental policy and contextualise the concept of corporate social responsibility and environmental protection while deliberating on methods of intervention by legal service committees.

Special Panel Discussion on “Amendments to RTI Act, 2005 and its Implications”

The Right to Information provided through the RTI Act and recognised as being integral to Right to Expression under Article 19(1) of the Constitution of India has been an effective tool in enforcing accountability and ensuring transparency in the administration of the State. However, the Notice of Intention which was issued by the current Central Government to introduce “The Right to Information (Amendment) Bill, 2018” in the Rajya Sabha seeks to nullify these provisions, and in effect grant tremendous powers to the government. This Panel shall discuss the consequences of the amendment sought to be enacted, and the measures that can be taken to strengthen the culture of ensuring accountability of the government to the public at large on a regular basis, within the wider context of Right to Speech and Expression guaranteed by the Constitution.



GUIDELINES FOR REGISTRATION

1. Students, faculty members, academicians and LSC/LAC are eligible to take part in the Forum.
2. LSC/LAC may nominate a maximum of 2 Representatives as participants for the Forum.
3. Interested participants may register by filling the following Google form-

<https://goo.gl/forms/dJcbCl4C6idNWdmF3>

4. The fee (inclusive of GST charges) for the Forum is as follows:

- Single Author: INR 1000
- Co-authors: INR 2000 (Please mention details of co-author during payment)
- LSC/LAC: INR 2000
- Additional representative of LSC/LAC: INR 1000

For Individual participants (Individuals not presenting papers): INR 1000

5. Last date for registration is 29th March 2019. Individuals not presenting a paper or representing an LSC/LAC may register on the spot during the Forum to become eligible to attend the Panel Discussions.
6. Payment of registration fee is due by 29th March 2019.

Note: The link for the payment of Registration fee will be emailed to the participants upon registration through the above Google form.



CONTACT US

For any queries, you may leave us an e-mail at legalservices@gnlu.ac.in or contact:

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