

[1] The Sikkim State Legal Services Authority, under the direction of Hon'ble Mrs. Justice Meenakshi Madan Rai, Judge, High Court of Sikkim and Executive Chairperson, Sikkim SLSA and as per the State Plan of Action, organized a Debate Competition on ***“Penalty Or Rehabilitation: Options To Be Exercised For Substance Abusers”*** for the Students Of Colleges/Universities of Sikkim, on ***5<sup>th</sup> August, 2019*** at the ***Auditorium*** of the ***Hon'ble High Court of Sikkim***.

[2] The programme commenced with a welcome note by Mrs. Matilda Isaacs, Special Secretary, Sikkim SLSA who gave a brief introduction about the rising menace of drug addiction. The debate competition was held in compliance of the National Legal Services Authority (Legal Services to the Victims of Drug Abuse and Eradication of Drug Menace) Scheme, 2015 to raise awareness on the topic. It was also informed that the Hon'ble Executive Chairperson has initiated detoxification, counselling and rehabilitation programmes for UTP's and convicts in the State Jail at Rongyek and Namchi Jail. A Drug De-Addiction-cum-Rehabilitation Centre is being set up at Kitchudumra, South Sikkim along with Vocational/Livelihood Centre for skill development of chemically dependent persons, with the initiation of the Hon'ble Executive Chairperson, in tandem with the Social Welfare Department.

[3] Shri Sonam Tenzing Bhutia, Deputy Inspector General, Range, Sikkim Police, Mr. T.R. Barfungpa, Panel Advocate, Sikkim SLSA and Mr. K.C. Nima, President, Freedom Facility, Tathangchen judged the competition, where **18** students from Sikkim Government Law College, Burtuk, I.C.F.A.I. University, Sichey and Sikkim University, Tadong, participated. **81** students from the above College/University were the audience to the programme apart from others.

[4] The first position went to Ms. Neha Gupta, Sikkim Government Law College and Mr. Iaiihsame C.R. Kharmujai from Sikkim University while the second position went to Ms. Kinchok Choden Bhutia of I.C.F.A.I. University and the third position to Ms. Deeti Acharya, Sikkim University.

[5] The vote of thanks was proposed by Shri Bikash Sharma, Deputy Secretary, Sikkim SLSA.