

# District Level Meeting on Acid Attack

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**Topic: Issues related to treatment and rehabilitation of Acid Attack Survivors**

**25.10.2019 | Sheroes Hangout Café, Agra.**

Under the aegis of Bread for the World programme, 5<sup>th</sup> District level meeting was organized at Agra, Uttar Pradesh on 25<sup>th</sup> October 2019. This meeting was conducted in collaboration with Chaany Foundation, a not for profit organization working for the empowerment of Acid attack survivors.

At the outset, we extend our heartiest gratitude to Hon'ble Justice (Retd.) Mukhtar Ahmad, who accepted our request and graced the occasion with his esteemed presence.

We are thankful to Mr. Ashish, Director Chaany Foundation & Mr. Ajeet who extensively helped us to successfully organize the meeting and provided us the meeting venue for free. The program was primarily attended by acid survivors, activists, lawyers and students.

The meeting started with welcome and felicitation of the chief guest by the acid survivors. After the introductory session the meeting proceeded with the agenda. The first session was an address by the Hon'ble Chief Guest wherein he shared his vast experience at the bar and subsequently on the bench. Saluting the courage of acid survivors he said that the courage with which the survivors lead their lives is unmatched and their spirit is unimaginable.

Highlighting the Laxmi and Parivartan Kendra judgment he stressed that cases of acid attack must be dealt with utmost urgency and as laid down by the Hon'ble Supreme Court in the aforesaid cases, hospitals are supposed to ensure that the victim gets immediate and

effective treatment. He further added that it is high time that a strong compensation and rehabilitation scheme is formulated wherein all the expenses incurred in corrective and other surgeries are borne by the government.

Justice Ahmad said that existing laws have now become more stringent after the 2013 amendment, however, he stressed that it is required that these laws are strictly implemented. He also advocated a strict monitoring system on unregulated sale and supply of acids and other corrosive substances.

The second session was a documentary on the lives of acid attack survivors. The documentary detailed the circumstances under which various survivors became victim of the horrendous act. In some cases the perpetrator was a jilted lover; in some it was disgruntled family member who committed the crime in the name of honor. The documentary records as to how the attack changed the lives of the victims and despite all odds how they decided to stand up on their feet again. The documentary also touches the socio-economic constraints faced by the survivor family, keeping the human element in focus.

The next session consisted of presentation on acid attack cases in India. Mr. Ashish, Director Chaany foundation presented a study report on various dimensions of acid attack like easy procurement and unregulated sale of acid, access to first aid and quality medical assistance, expenses in surgeries and financial assistance by the state, compensation & rehabilitation of the survivor and prosecution of the perpetrator etc. According to the study

Advocate Ali Qambar Zaidi briefly introduced the functioning and initiatives undertaken by HRLN. He added that apart from litigating cases at the Supreme Court and High Courts HRLN also works in

coordination with other government agencies like DLSA, AHTU, Mediation Centres, Women Cells etc. and carry out quasi legal activities like jail visits, organizing legal literacy and legal aid camps etc. HRLN also publishes informative literature for common people so that they know their basic rights.

Advocate Danish Siddiqui conducted a training session on legal issues involved in cases related to acid attack. He discussed the necessity of lodging of FIRs under proper sections and emphasized upon the existing laws ensuring immediate medical attention and interim monetary relief by the local administration. He further explained legal provisions and process for compensation under the Victim Compensation Schemes and procurement of necessary documents and certificates. The session was followed by a brief session involving questions and queries which were addressed by the panel.

The meeting concluded with an action plan resolving thereby to form a group of activists, doctors and lawyers who can come together and contribute as much as they can in their respective capacities. It was resolved that we should focus on spreading awareness about the rights and entitlements related to health and the remedies which are available in case of violations of such rights. Necessary legal intervention may also be taken recourse of in case authorities fail to discharge their statutory duties.

## PHOTOGRAPHS















