POCSO Act

An Overview

It is a comprehensive law to provide for the protection of the children:

- from the offences of sexual assault, sexual harassment and pornography.
- to safeguard the interest and well-being of the child at every stage of the judicial process.

It incorporates child-friendly procedures for reporting, recording of evidence, investigation and trial of offences and provision for establishment of Special Courts for speedy trial of such offences.



PREAMBLE

• Whereas it is necessary for the proper development of the child that his or her right to privacy and confidentiality be protected and respected by every person by all means and through all stages of a judicial process involving the child

Offences covered under the Act...

- q Penetrative Sexual Assault (Section 3)
- Aggravated Penetrative Sexual Assault (Section 5)
- q Sexual Assault (Section 7)
- Aggravated Sexual Assault (Section 9)
- q Sexual Harassment of the Child (Section 11)
- Use of Child for Pornographic Purposes (Section 13)

PUNISHENTS UNDER POCSO

Sr.no.	Type of Crime	Punishment
01	Penetrative Sexual Assault	Not less than 10 yrs Imprisonment for life & fine & When victim less than 16 yrs, Not less than 20years - Imprisonment for life & fine
02	Aggravated Penetrative Assault	not less than 20 yrs Imprisonment for life & fine or with death
03	Sexual Assault	Not less than 3 yrs 5yrs. And fine
04	Aggravated Sexual Assault	Not less than 5 years-7 years and fine
05	Sexual Harassment	Upto 3 yrs. & fine

POCSO Amendment Act, 2019

Key Amendments

- Incorporated the definition of Pornography
- Increased quantum of punishment
 - o From minimum 7 years to minimum 10 years
 - o Minimum 20 years in case of child below 16 years
- Inclusion of penetrative sexual assault during natural calamity and similar situations and causing death of child;
- Increased quantum of minimum punishment from 10 years to minimum 20 years and introducing death penalty as an option;
- Increase punishment to minimum five years and to synchronise with IT Act, 2000;
- Introduced fine (Rs. 5000/- on first occasion, Rs. 10,000/- on second occasion) for not reporting child porn
 material, which could be extended to imprisonment if such material is propagated

- More than 750 Fast Track Special Courts (FTSCs) including 408
 Exclusive POCSO Courts for expeditious trial and disposal of cases related to rape and POCSO Act, 2012 have been set up
- Provision of Support Person for the victim during trial
- Provision of Victim Compensation through the JJ Fund and other State Government schemes

Section 3 –

- "(2) Whoever commits penetrative sexual assault on a child below 16 yrs. shall be punished with imprisonment for a term which shall not be less than 20 yrs., but which may extend to imprisonment for life, which shall mean imprisonment for the remainder of natural life of that person, and shall also be liable to fine.
- (3) The fine imposed under sub-section (1) shall be just and reasonable and paid to the victim to meet the medical expenses and rehabilitation of such victim.".

Section 5 –

(1) Whoever commits aggravated penetrative sexual assault shall be punished with rigorous imprisonment for a term which shall not be less than 20 yrs., but which may extend to imprisonment for life, which shall mean imprisonment for the remainder of natural life of that person, and shall also be liable to fine, or with death.

Section 6 –

"(v) whoever persuades, induces, entices or coerces a child to get administered or administers or direct anyone to administer, help in getting administered any drug or hormone or any chemical substance, to a child with the intent that such child attains early sexual maturity;". 8-10 yrs

Section 7 -

Whoever uses a child or children for pornographic purposes –

1. shall be punished with imprisonment for a term which shall not be less than 5 yrs. and shall also be liable to fine, and in the event of second or subsequent conviction with imprisonment for a term which shall not be less than 7 yrs. and also be liable to fine.

Section 8 –

Any person, who stores or possesses pornographic material in any form involving a child -

- 1. but fails to delete or destroy or report the same to the designated authority, as may be prescribed, with an intention to share or transmit child pornography, shall be liable to fine not less than Rs. 5,000, and in the event of second or subsequent offence, with fine which shall not be less than Rs. 10,000.
- 2. for transmitting or propagating or displaying or distributing in any manner at any time except for the purpose of reporting, as may be prescribed, or for use as evidence in court, shall be punished with imprisonment of either description which may extend to 3 yrs., or with fine, or with both.
- 3. for commercial purpose shall be punished on the first conviction with imprisonment of either description which shall not be less than 3 yrs. which may extend to 5 yrs., or with fine, or with both, and in the event of second or subsequent conviction, with imprisonment of either description which shall not be less than 5 yrs. which may extend to 7 yrs. and shall also be liable to fine."

Procedure for Reporting of Cases......

- Failure to report commission of offence punishable with imprisonment of six months or with fine or both
- Failure to record an offence also punishable with imprisonment of six months or with fine or both
- Failure to report by a person, who is in charge of any company or an institution, in respect of offence committed by subordinate under his control, also punishable with imprisonment of one year and fine
- Failure to report not punishable in case of a child

- False complaint against any person with malicious intent punishable with imprisonment of 6 months or with fine or both
- False complaint against child, punishable with imprisonment of one year or with fine or with both
- No civil or criminal liability for giving information in good faith

Procedure for Reporting of Cases.....

- Media not to disclose the identity of the child, except when permitted by the Special Court
 - Identity includes: name, address, photograph, family details, school, neighbourhood or any other particulars which may lead to disclosure of identity of the child
 - Punishment in case of contravention is imprisonment for not less than 6 months which may extend to one year

- FIR or permission from a magistrate, police or any other authority cannot be demanded by any medical facility or centre for providing emergency medical care to a child.
- In a case of sexual assault informed consent must be taken from the child above 12 years of age, or, where the child is below 12 years of age, the child's parent/ guardian, before medically examining the child. In case consent is not given, informed refusal must be documented by the doctor.
 - Lack of medical evidence DOES NOT mean no sexual offence was committed. Evidence may have been lost due to healing of older injuries, use of condom by the offender, and post-assault activities such as washing, douching, urination and defecation.
- Doctors must provide appropriate care and treatment to the survivor of sexual assault.
 - In a case of sexual assault doctors should help the process of justice delivery by conducting accurate and complete forensic medical examination and be willing to testify in court.

- **WAII trial under this Act should be In-camera only.**
- **Frequent breaks should be** given for the child during trial.
- **Child not to be called** repeatedly to testify.
- W No aggressive questioning or character assassination of the child be allowed by the Court.
- Under POCSO the burden of proof is shifted on the accused.

Duties of the court



- Evidence of the child to be recorded within a period of 30 days & complete the trial within a period of one year.
- Rule 7 makes provision for facilitating compensation by special courts for the benefit of the victim which can be granted at any stage after filing of the FIR, meaning thereby that an interim compensation can be granted as well.

Duties of the court





Nirbheek – Stages



- § Ice Breaking sessions with children to build rapport with them
- § Participative interactions to eliminate the hesitation that generally prevails in speaking up regarding these complaints
- § Utilize this opportunity as an appropriate occasion to shed the negative image of police force

Nirbheek – Stages



- § Explain the concepts of Good Touch and Bad Touch
- § Audio & Visual media tools

Free Legal Aid

- Under Section 12(C) of the Legal Services Authorities Act, 1987, child shall be entitled to legal services under this Act.
- The POCSO Act confirms the right to free legal aid under Section 40, wherein child shall be entitled to a legal counsel of their choice, wherever unable to afford, they shall be entitled to receive one from the Legal Services Authority.
- Section 40: Right of child to take assistance of a legal counsel of their choice for any offence under this Act.

Compensation

- Special court may provide interim compensation after registration of FIR
- Compensation to take into account
 - Ø type, gravity and severity of abuse
 - Ø expenditure incurred on medical treatment
 - Ø loss of educational opportunity
 - ØLoss of employment

Compensation

ØRelationship of child with offender

ØIf abuse was single isolated or took over a period of time

ØWhether child became pregnant

ØWhether child contracted STD

ØWhether child contracted HIV

ØAny disability suffered by child

ØFinancial condition of child

Issues and challenges

- A.Under reporting of cases
- B.Elopement cases/consensual sex above 16 years/child marriage
- C.Delayed justice
- **D.Inadequate protection Mechanisms**
- E.Delay in submission of charge sheet
- F.Delay in receiving forensic report/no Forensic laboratory
- G.Non-availability of Support person/untrained support person/no T.A and other facilities provided
- H.Complicated medico-legal cases

- Children and family receive threats for compromise
- A.No trauma counselling facility and trained counsellors
- B.No legal aid
- C. No timely compensation
- D.No quality care provided in CCIs
- E.No proper Monitoring
- F.Lack of Sensitivity among Duty Bearers
- G. No post litigation support

- **A.**Transfer of Investigation Officers (IOs)
- **B.Infrastructure up gradation in courts dealing with POCSO Cases**
- **C.Need for more Exclusive POCSO Courts**
- D.Revision of timeline of investigation, recording of evidence and disposal of cases
- E.Lack of Audio-Video Facilities
- F.Delay in disbursal of Victim Compensation
- G.Child Pornography/ Child Sexual Exploitation and Abuse Material (CSEAM)
- H.Testing Facilities under the Act and Rules
- I.Any other by States/UTs

POCSO Rules, 2020

General Amendments

- Police verification and background check on periodic basis, of every staff, or any other person being an employee of any institution housing children or coming in regular contact with children
- CWC to make recommendation to DLSA for legal aid and assistance
- Detailed provisions for providing Medical aid and care
- Special relief, if any, to be provided for contingencies such as food, clothes, transport and other essential needs
- The Special Court may, in appropriate cases, may pass an order interim compensation to meet the needs of the child for relief or rehabilitation at any stage after registration of the First Information Report. Such interim compensation paid to the child shall be adjusted against the final compensation, if any

POCSO Rules, 2020

KEY AMENDMENTS:

- Rule-3: Awareness generation and capacity building: The Central Government, or as the case may
 be, the State Government shall prepare age-appropriate educational material and curriculum for
 children, informing them about various aspects of personal safety.
- Police verification and background check on a periodic basis, of every staff, teaching or non-teaching, regular or contractual, or any other person being an employee of any institution housing children or coming in regular contact with children including schools, rèches, sports academies or any other facility for children.
- Rule- 4: Detailed Procedure regarding care and protection of child.
- Rule-5: Providing Interpreters, translators, special educators, experts and support persons.
- Rule-6 : Detailed provisions for providing Medical aid and care.
- Rule-7: Legal aid and assistance: As per the Rule the CWC shall make a recommendation to the District Legal Services Authority (for legal aid and assistance. The legal aid and assistance shall be provided to the child in accordance with the provisions of the Legal Services Authorities Act, 1987.

POCSO Rules, 2020

KEY AMENDMENTS:

New provision of Special relief: The Rule provides that for special relief, if any, to be provided for contingencies such as food, clothes, transport and other essential needs, CWC may recommend immediate payment of such amount as it may assess to be required at that stage, to any of the following:-

- (i) the DLSA under Section 357A; or;
- (ii) the DCPU out of such funds placed at their disposal by state or;
- (iii) funds maintained under section 105 of the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2015 (20f 2016); Such immediate payment shall be made within a week of receipt of recommendation from the CWC.

Rule-9: Compensation- The Special Court may, in appropriate cases, on its own or on an application filed by or on behalf of the child, pass an order for interim compensation to meet the needs of the child for relief or rehabilitation at any stage after registration of the First Information Report. Such interim compensation paid to the child shall be adjusted against the final compensation, if any.

Rule-11: Reporting of pornographic material involving a child: The POCSO Rules also provides that any person who has received any pornographic material involving a child or any information regarding such pornographic material being stored, possessed for taking necessary action.



Scheme for Care and Support to Victims under Section 4 & 6 of the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act, 2012

Background: Why this Scheme?

- The **Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act** was enacted in 2012 to protect all children below the age of 18 years from sexual crimes.
- As sexual crimes are unfortunately associated with social stigma for the victims, **a large number of cases remain unreported denying justice to victims**. However, with mandatory reporting provision under the POCSO Act, the reporting of cases has increased.
- These girl child victims often fail to receive timely help and support. Therefore, this needed to be addressed on priority.
- Additionally, **Section 4 and Section 6 of the POCSO Act** cover the offence of rape where the punishments are severest (Section 5 is aggravated form of rape titled as "Aggravated Penetrative Sexual Assault" under POCSO Act where the punishment includes death penalty for the offender).
- In many of these cases, **girls become pregnant and bear several physical and mental health concerns**, which are further aggravated when they are disowned or abandoned by their own families or are orphaned.
- This **centrally funded scheme from NIRBHAYA fund** is therefore, being introduced **to address the challenges faced by the minor pregnant girl child victims** and fill the gaps of the existing schemes. The scheme shall be implemented through the State/UT Governments.

Objectives

- To provide integrated support and assistance to minor pregnant girl child victims under one roof; and
- To facilitate immediate, emergency and nonemergency access to a range of services for long term rehabilitation in terms of access to education, police assistance, medical (also comprising maternity, neo-natal and infant care),
- psychological, mental health counselling, legal support, Non-Institutional Care monthly support,
- place of stay in CCI/Aftercare facilities and health insurance cover for the girl child victim and her newborn under one roof to enable access to justice and empowerment of such girl child victim.



Eligibility Criteria

- Any girl below the age of 18 years, who is a victim of:
 - Ø Penetrative Sexual Assault Section 4 of the POCSO Act,
 - Ø Aggravated Penetrative Sexual Assault Section 6 of the POCSO Act,
 - Ø Section 376, 376A-E of Indian Penal Code, 1860 (IPC)

And becomes pregnant due to such assault or rape is covered under the Scheme. The Scheme shall extend support to every minor pregnant girl child victim.

- It is not mandatory for the girl child victim to have a copy of the FIR for availing the benefits under the Scheme. However, it shall be the responsibility of the State/UT to ensure that information is provided to the police and that an FIR is registered, as per section 19 of POCSO Act, 2012.
- A girl child victim is a 'Child in Need of Care and Protection' as defined under Section 2(14) of the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act (JJ Act), 2015 and is therefore entitled to avail all the benefits/support provided under Mission Vatsalya Scheme and the JJ Act along with the POCSO Act and IPC under which the offence has been committed upon her.

Type of Services

1. Safe space to live

Health Services and medical examination

Counselling and Mental Health Services

3.

4.
Education and Vocational Skills

5.
Safe Transportation & Police Protection

6. Legal Aid and Assistance

7. Police Assistance

8.
Monitory and other
Entitlements

9. Health Insurance Cover

Institutional and Non-Institutional care under Mission Vatsalya

10.

11.Support Person

Process of Availing Benefits under the Scheme

- A child in need of care and protection is **produced before Child Welfare Committee (CWC)** constituted under section 27 of JJ Act, 2015 (as amended in 2021).
- The Committee has the final authority to dispose of cases for the care, protection, treatment, development and rehabilitation of the children as well as to provide for their basic needs.
- Any child in need of care and protection may be produced before the Committee by one of the following persons:
 - Any police officer or Special Juvenile Police Unit or a designated Child Welfare Police Officer or any officer of District Child Protection Unit or inspector appointed under any labour law for the time being in force;
 - ii. Any public servant;
 - iii. Child Helpline Services or any voluntary or non-governmental organization or any agency as may be recognised by the State Government;
 - iv. Child Welfare Officer or probation officer;
 - v. Any social worker or a public-spirited citizen;
 - vi. By the child himself; or
 - vii. Any nurse, doctor or management of a nursing home, hospital or maternity home.

Duration, Administration & Fund flow

Duration of access to Services under the Scheme

- The Scheme applies to the pregnant girl child victim from the time of report of the case. As the victim is below 18 years of age, she may like to continue to stay in the CCI till she attains 18 years of age and thereafter, the CCI shall refer the case to the Child Welfare Committee for recommendation for After Care as per Section 46 of the JJ Act. Under After Care, the girl child who leaves a Child Care Institution on attaining the age of 18 years may be provided after care till the age of 23 years.
- In case the girl child delivers her baby, the infant may be placed in the co-located SAA till attaining the age of 6 years.
- In case the girl child wishes to surrender her baby, the new born may be placed in the designated Specialized Adoption Agency (SAA) till the girl child victim attains the age of 18 years.

Administration of the Scheme

 The scheme shall be administered and reviewed by the Ministry of Women and Child Development, Government of India as 100% centrally funded scheme under Nirbhaya Fund and implemented by the States/UTs through the District Magistrate.

Funds under the Scheme

- Sum of Rs. 10.00 lakh per district shall be allocated to the State/UT provided from the Nirbhaya Fund of MWCD.
- States may utilize the fund flexibly as per actual incidence and need of districts.
- At district level DCPU shall utilize this fund under the overall control of District Magistrate/District Collector..

Process flow diagram of the Scheme: The flow diagram of the process and access to services under the Scheme

Girl child

Child Helpline/Women Helpline

District Child Protection Unit

Child Welfare Committee

Child Care Institution/One Stop Centre

Information to police for registration of FIR

Production of girl child before Child Welfare Committee

Safe Space for girl child in a Child Care Institution (CCI) till her delivery and her infant turns 6 months of age or till the girl child attains 18 years of age

Non-institutional care support (Sponsorship/ Aftercare) to the girls who prefer to live with their parents/family members /extended family members Entitlements for Girl child under the Scheme

- Safe space to stay
- •Medical/Health care
- Nutritious food and care
- •Counselling and mental health services
- •Safe commutation to court, hospital, etc.
- •Support in legal case through DLSA
- •Services of Support Person
- Special relief by the CWC
- •Compensation including interim compensation
- •Insurance cover for the girl child victim and her new-born
- •Non -Institutional Care monthly support up to 23 years of age



Landmark Judgments

Alakh Alok Shrivastava v Union of India 2018 (5) SCC 651

- The Hon'ble Supreme Court directed the High Courts of States to ensure that POCSO cases are tried and disposed off by POCSO Special Courts having sensitized Presiding Officers regarding child protection
- Directed the <u>establishment of Special Courts to deal with cases under POCSO Act</u>, 2012.
- Observed that instructions should be issued to Special Courts to <u>fast track POCSO cases by not granting unnecessary adjournments</u> and adhere to procedure laid down by POCSO Act.
- Requested the Chief Justice of High Courts to constitute a 3-judge Committee wherever possible
 or atleast 1 Judge Committee to monitor and regulate the progress of POCSO cases.
- Police Officer of <u>DGP or equivalent rank to constitute a Special Task Force to ensure proper investigation and timely production of witnesses</u> before Courts during trial.
- <u>High Courts to take adequate steps to provide child-friendly atmosphere in Special Courts to adhere to the letter and spirit of POCSO Act.</u>
- The writ petition was filed in this case on 2 points i.e. the treatment of an 8 month old girl child victim of sexual abuse; and speedy trial and monitoring of the trials under POCSO Act in a child friendly manner.

Nipun Saxena v Union of India (2019) 2 SCC 703

- The Hon'ble Supreme Court observed that the <u>name/identity/parentage/address etc.</u> of the victim cannot <u>be disclosed</u> during investigation, trial or judgment.
- Police Officer/Special Juvenile Police Unit must make written record of any offense committed or likely to be <u>committed</u> under POCSO Act and <u>furnish a free-of-cost copy of the same to the victim or their parents</u>; and ensure legal representation. They are also <u>mandatorily required to register FIR</u> for offenses of penetrative sexual assault, aggravated penetrative sexual assault, sexual assault, aggravated sexual assault and sexual harassment.
- Once FIR is registered, police officer <u>must forward the child for immediate emergency medical aid or medical examination</u> wherever necessary. The <u>child's statement must be recorded before Magistrate</u>. Wherever a child qualifies as a child in need of care and protection (CNCP) they must be produced before the <u>Child Welfare Committee (CWC) for care, protection, treatment and rehabilitation.</u> The presiding officer of the Special Court must also ensure these processes are complied with.
- Officer-in-charge of Police Station and Investigating Officer including SJPU are duty bound to ensure that the identity of the child victim is not disclosed throughout investigation to anyone including media or elsewhere without the Court's permission. Any breach shall incur liability.
- POCSO <u>trial cannot take place in an open court</u>. Repetitive, aggressive or harassive questions cannot be asked from the child to assassinate the character of the victim.
- The Special Court can pass directions for the rehabilitation or grant of interim compensation to the victim.
- The Special Court should conclude the trial expeditiously preferably within 1 year from date of cognizance.

Attorney General of India v Satish Crl. A.1410 of 2021

- The respondent in this case was convicted for the <u>offenses of outraging the modesty of a woman, kidnapping and wrongful confinement and sexual assault of minor.</u> He was accused of inviting a minor girl of about 12 years in his quarters, pressing her breasts and attempting to remove her salwar. Hon'ble Bombay High Court's Nagpur bench overturned his conviction for the offense of sexual assault on the ground that there was <u>no skin-to-skin contact with sexual intent without any penetration, the offense of sexual assault of a minor is not made out.</u>
- This <u>order of the High Court was set aside by the Hon'ble Supreme Court</u>. Supreme Court observed that <u>the legislative intent behind the enactment of POCSO Act, 2012 is to provide protection to children</u> in addition to the protection already provided for in other laws. The provisions of <u>law cannot be interpreted in a way that which disjoints from the legislative intent</u> which is evident from the Act itself.
- The Court also observed that the <u>intention of touching a child inappropriately in an offending behavior is sufficient to attract the offense of sexual assault</u>. The reasoning of no direct physical contact to acquit the accused, insensitively trivializes the statute; and legitimizes the unacceptable behavior that undermines a child's dignity and autonomy by unwanted intrusions.

Jagbir v State of NCT of Delhi [Bail Appn. No.111/2022]

- Above-mentioned is a case of aggravated penetrative sexual assault as a result of which victim had given birth to a child and was pregnant with another. Victim was aged 15 years, and the accused was aged 27 years. The accused alleged a voluntary relation between victim and accused and alleged that a marriage persisted between them.
- The Hon'ble Delhi High Court observed that the POCSO Act has been introduced by legislature with sound rationale with important objectives behind the law. Consent of minor is not valid consent and therefore inconsequential in law. A minor may be easily induced into giving consent without understanding the implications thereof. Even if such consent is given, it is un-informed consent. Consent of minor in POCSO Act cannot be treated as a mitigating circumstance.
- It is a <u>settled position of law that sexual relations with a minor is prohibited, even if the same is based on the alleged consent of the minor.</u> Additionally, a minor girl child faces severe adverse challenges in a child marriage.
- Sexual exploitation and sexual abuse of children is a heinous crime which needs to be effectively addressed. If such abuse results in pregnancy and/or marriage between victim and accused, the same cannot be allowed to be a mitigating circumstance.

Sunil Raikwar State of NCT of Delhi [Crl. M.C.186/2021]

- Above-mentioned is a case of aggravated penetrative sexual assault upon a 7 year old boy by his neighbor.
 The accused filed the writ petition for quashing of FIR on ground of amicable settlement of the dispute
 between the parties. In this case, even the complainant has filed an affidavit stating that all disputes have
 been amicably resolved between the parties and they are not opposed to the quashing of FIR registered
 against the accused.
- The Hon'ble Delhi High Court observed that the <u>offense of aggravated penetrative sexual assault is non-compoundable in nature i.e. no compromise is allowed in such cases</u>. The High Court has power to even quash such a case which is non-compoundable in nature (under section 482, CrPC i.e. section 528 BNSS) but the same needs to be done sparingly, fairly and with caution.
- In cases where parties have reached a settlement, an FIR may be quashed to secure the ends of justice and to prevent the abuse of the process of courts but the same <u>cannot be done in case of heinous and serious</u> <u>offenses of mental depravity. Such offenses are not private in nature and have a serious impact on the society.</u>
- In this case, a grave offense was alleged against the accused. The POCSO Act was enacted to provide protection to children from sexual abuse as the existing laws were inadequate to address the issue of sexual abuse of children. The victim's cannot be allowed to settle the dispute. The father of the victim is not the victim. The courts have to safeguard and protect the intertest of children. Deterrence is a must and some offenses cannot be compromised. With this observation, the Hon'ble Court dismissed the writ petition.

Just Rights for Children Alliance v S. Harish Crl. A. 2161-2162 of 2024

- The accused frequently watched child pornography without transmitting/publishing the same. Unintentionally some such videos got downloaded on his device. He was convicted by the District Court for the offenses of storage of pornographic material involving children (s.15 POCSO Act) and publishing or transmitting of material depicting children in sexually explicit act, etc., in electronic form (s.67B IT Act. 2000). Hon'ble Madras High Court overturned the conviction on grounds of non-publication/transmission of the child pornographic material as well as non-use of any child by accused for pornographic purpose.
- The Hon'ble Supreme Court observed that <u>if a person is found to be in possession of child pornographic material</u> and fails to delete it, then possession itself is sufficient to prove that the intention was to posses for <u>transmission unless accused gives a satisfactory reason for not deleting the same</u>. The <u>provision of section 30</u>, <u>POCSO Act regarding reversal of burden of proof is applicable in case of section 15 offenses too</u>.
- The Hon'ble Court looked into the <u>doctrine of "constructive possession"</u> and observed that any form of intangible or constructive possession of child pornographic material shall amount to possession of the same for the purpose of s. 15 POCSO Act. <u>There is no requirement of a physical or tangible "storage" or "possession" of such material in Section 15 of the POCSO Act.</u> Where any child pornographic material is in the constructive possession of an accused, there the failure or omission to report the same constitutes the requisite actus-reus for the offense under s.15(1) of POCSO Act.
- Further directed all courts to <u>replace the word "child pornography" with the word "Child Sexual Exploitation and Abuse Material"</u> (CSEAM) as it more accurately reflects the reality of these videos.
- The conviction of the accused was thus restored.

Categories of Discussion

- 1. Preventive Strategies
- Investigation and Trial
- 3. Case and Protection of POCSO Victims
- 4. Rehabilitation of POCSO Victims
 - Counseling
 - Compensation
 - Legal Aid
 - Medical Examination of POCSO Victims
 - Follow up

Points of Discussion

- A. Transfer of Investigation Officers (IOs)
- B.Infrastructure up gradation in courts dealing with POCSO Cases
- C.Need for more Exclusive POCSO Courts
- D. Revision of timeline of investigation, recording of evidence and disposal of cases
- E.Lack of Audio-Video Facilities
- F.Delay in disbursal of Victim Compensation
- G.Child Pornography/ Child Sexual Exploitation and Abuse Material (CSEAM)
- H. Testing Facilities under the Act and Rules
- I. Any other by States/UTs

THANK YOU.