

Vulnerable Witness Courtroom aimed at overcoming barriers: Justice Mittal

RK News [Save it](#)

Last updated: May 19, 2024 2:14 am



— {"remix_data":[],"source_tags":
[],"origin":"unknown","total_draw_time":0,"total_draw_actions":0,"layers_used":0,"brushes_used":0,"photos_added":0,"total_editor_actions":
{},"tools_used":{"transform":1},"is_sticker":false,"edited_since_last_sticker_save":true,"containsFTESticker":false}

Srinagar, May 18: Justice Gita Mittal, former Chief Justice of the High Court of J&K and Ladakh on Saturday said the Vulnerable Witness Courtroom has been conceptualised and operationalised to overcome several disadvantages and barriers confronted by vulnerable witnesses in conventional courtrooms.

She was speaking, as the chief guest, at a training programme on 'Conversion of Court Room into Vulnerable Witness Deposition Centre (VWDC)' organised by the High Court (HC) of Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh in association with Jammu & Kashmir Judicial Academy here.

The programme was organized under the patronage of Chief Justice, High Court of J&K and Ladakh, Justice N. Kotiswar Singh, and Vulnerable Witness Committee for UT of J&K comprising of Chairperson, Justice Sanjay Dhar; members, Justice Mohammad Akram Chowdhary and Justice Rajesh Sekhri. Justice Sanjeev Kumar and Justice Mohammad Yousuf Wani were also present on the occasion

whereas Justice Sindhu Sharma joined the programme virtually.

Justice Gita Mittal, who is also the Chairperson of the Vulnerable Witness Committee constituted by the Supreme Court of India, gave a detailed presentation regarding the conversion of courtrooms into Vulnerable Witness Deposition Centres. "The guidelines lay down several stages from investigation to adjudication for the purpose of ensuring that the vulnerable witnesses feel safe and comfortable while deposing," she said, adding, "There is a necessity of maintaining an environment in the courts which is suited to the best interest of vulnerable witnesses so that they are addressed and treated sensitively from their homes to and inside the vulnerable witness deposition complexes." In his welcome address, Justice Sanjeev Kumar, Judge, High Court of J&K and Ladakh, highlighted the importance of Vulnerable Witness Deposition Centres as safe places for witnesses of a vulnerable nature so that they can depose fearlessly and without any pressure. "There is a necessity for strengthening up the existing courts so as to convert them into Vulnerable Witness Deposition Centre and also to upgrade the existing facilities which are operating in J&K," he said.

Justice Mohammad Akram Chowdhary, Judge, High Court of J&K and Ladakh and Member, Vulnerable Witness Deposition Centre Committee, UT of J&K in his vote of thanks described that the witnesses are imperative aids, eyes and ears of the justice system. "The stakeholders must respond proactively to the vulnerability aspects and the distinctive requirement of each vulnerable witness in an effective manner without any further delay," he stressed.

The programme was organised for the guidance of judges and other stakeholders including legal aid lawyers, architects, engineers who are associated with the construction and alteration of court buildings.