

Report on Special Lecture on PoSH Act, 2013

The Internal Complaint & Gender Sensitisation Committee of Sri Guru Gobind Singh College of Commerce, University of Delhi, in collaboration with the Internal Quality Assurance Cell (IQAC), organised a special lecture titled “From Awareness to Action: A Comprehensive Session on PoSH Act” on 24th September 2025 (Wednesday) at 1:30 PM in the college Amphitheatre. The session was conducted by Advocate Seema Joshi, a renowned legal expert, who shared valuable insights on workplace safety, women’s rights, and legal recourse under the PoSH Act.

The PoSH Act (Prevention of Sexual Harassment at Workplace Act), 2013, was enacted by the Government of India to ensure a safe and dignified working environment for women. It was formulated in response to the landmark Vishakha Guidelines issued by the Supreme Court of India in 1997, which laid down the framework for addressing sexual harassment at workplaces. The Act defines sexual harassment broadly and covers unwelcome physical, verbal, or non-verbal conduct of a sexual nature. It mandates every employer to create an Internal Complaints Committee (ICC) to receive and address complaints. In places where the number of employees is less than ten, a Local Complaints Committee (LCC) is constituted.

Advocate Seema Joshi highlighted that harassment is not limited to offices alone — it can occur at homes, worksites, or any place where a professional relationship exists. She emphasised the importance of understanding that impact matters more than intent; even if the offender claims no harmful intention, the act is judged based on its effect on the victim. She urged participants to maintain a record of incidents — including date, time, location, and the nature of the professional relationship — to strengthen complaints.

The speaker explained the complete complaint redressal process, starting from the occurrence of the incident to filing a complaint, acknowledgment and forwarding, optional conciliation, formal inquiry, submission of the inquiry report, employer’s action, and finally, the appeal process. She also discussed Section 14 of the PoSH Act, which deals with false complaints and prescribes punishment if a complaint is proven to be deliberately false. However, she clarified that a mere inability to prove allegations does not attract punishment.

The session also focused on preventive measures to create a respectful and inclusive work environment. Advocate Joshi encouraged participants to remain professional, think before speaking, avoid inappropriate jokes, and say “no” clearly when something feels unacceptable. She reminded everyone to be proactive: “Be unsilent, report the incident, and do not feel overwhelmed.” Harassment cases, if proven, can lead to strict actions including suspension.

To make the discussion more engaging and relatable, the speaker shared several real-life case studies, examples, and landmark judgments that illustrated how the PoSH Act has been implemented in different contexts. Short videos on consent, harassment, and perception were also played to deepen understanding. An interactive question-and-answer session followed, allowing students and faculty to clarify their doubts.

Overall, the session was highly informative and empowering. It not only enhanced awareness of legal protections available under the PoSH Act but also inspired participants to contribute to building a safe and respectful workplace. The lecture successfully conveyed that the ultimate aim of the PoSH Act is to ensure harmony and equality between men and women at the workplace and to build confidence among women to speak up against harassment.

