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Judge lauds police initiatives on protecting minors' rights, but says long way to go

27 thanas boast child-friendly status

OUR CORRESPONDENT

A total of 27 police stations across Jharkhand have bagged the child-friendly status for taking concrete measures to effectively deal with juvenile crime, trafficking and minor labourers, drawing appreciations from Jharkhand High Court Justice D.N. Patel, among others.

Justice Patel, who along with state DGP D.K. Pandey on Tuesday felicitated officers from the 27 thanas for the feat, lauded the state police for taking steps to protect child rights.

"The state police have made a very good progress in

this respect. In fact, they are doing better than many other states in the country," he said.

He was speaking at a review and certification programme on child-friendly police stations organised by the state CID in collaboration with Unicef at a Ranchi hotel.

CID IG Sampat Meena and state Unicef's child protection officer Preeti Shrivastava, among others, were present.

Justice Patel added that the police's child-friendly roles were not clearly defined in the rules but the state Unicef had laid down 21 indicators that were well regarded as guidelines.

"However, a lot more have to be done and the police officers need to be trained properly so that they perform their job more efficiently," the high court judge pointed out.

CID IG Meena said the 27 out of 495 thanas across the state had been declared child-friendly after they qualified in all the 21 indicators.

"This is, however, a continuous process and the police stations will have to maintain the status during the next review as well," she added.

DGP Pandey cited the example of London Metropolitan Police to stress on community policing.

"The police do not have a friendly image. This needs to change," the DGP explained.

Pandey added women counselling officers would be deployed at girls' schools and colleges who would meet students and counsel them whenever required.

Shrivastava made a power-point presentation to explain the 21 indicators that had been drawn up keeping in mind the specific areas of vulnerability of children. He also emphasised on the need for police preparedness with respect to infrastructure, procedure, attitude, resources, community connect and coordination.



High court judge DN Patel felicitates an officer from a child-friendly thana in Ranchi on Tuesday as DGP DK Pandey looks on. Picture by Prashant Misra