

Report on ‘Redressability Workshop: Addressing Acquired Disability Claims under the MACT’ organised by Centre for Disability Studies and Health Laws (CDSHL), in collaboration with District Legal Service Authority (DLSA), Amingaon.

Road accidents continue to be a significant concern worldwide, causing severe injuries and disabilities that have a profound impact on the lives of individuals and their families. The Motor Accident Claims Tribunal, established under the Motor Vehicles Act, provides a legal framework for compensating victims of road accidents. However, many individuals with acquired disabilities face various challenges in navigating the MACT system and accessing the support and compensation they rightfully deserve.

On 28th March, 2023, beginning at 3:00 p.m., the Centre for Disability Studies and Health Laws (CDSHL) of National Law University and Judicial Academy (NLUJA), Assam, conducted a workshop in collaboration with District Legal Service Authority, Amingaon. The event was organised under the guidance of the Centre’s Research Associate, Dr. Tanwi Shams. The main objective of the workshop was to foster awareness on the workings of the MACT, and to get a better understanding of what type of cases qualify for compensation, and if deemed appropriate, how cases in their Court are redressed.

The panel for the workshop was constituted by Hon’ble Mrs. Mallika Dutta (Member of the MACT), Mrs. Pranami Goswami (Secretary, DLSA, Amingaon) and Mr. Hafizur Rahman (Senior Government Advocate, Amingaon). The event brought together a varied group of individuals, consisting of various responsibility holders, to showcase the thought-process and rationale involved at different stages of addressing a claim under the Motor Vehicles Act, i.e., consultations, preparation, pleading, and decision-making. This helped foster a comprehensive understanding of the issues at hand.

After Sneha Ahmed, a fourth-year student at NLUJA and senior-member of CDSHL, delivered the welcome address and introduced the resource-persons, they felicitated by the Hon’ble Vice-Chancellor of the University, Prof. Dr. V.K. Ahuja, assisted by two of our Centre Members-Debarati Chattopadhyay and Tapesh Chauhan. Quickly followed, the workshop kicked-off into the discussions and deliberations.

Through interactive sessions, presentations, participants shared experiences, identified gaps in the current system, and explored strategies to improve the MACT process for individuals with acquired disabilities. The participants were sensitised and made aware of the harsh-realities of the situations in cases of redressing acquired disabilities through anecdotes from professional lives, through pictures, and through the analysis of certain prominent judicial pronouncements.

Once the speakers had concluded, the floor was opened for the audience to interact and have their queries sought out. The questions and answers session saw eager participation from the Vice-Chancellor himself, along with the students of our University. According to the responses of the people present at the venue, the program was helpful to them.

At the end, Shrey Goyal, a fourth-year student at NLUJA and senior-member of CDSHL, delivered the concluding remarks and the vote of thanks. Assisted by Mr. Prakhar Prabhat Srivastava, a third-year student at NLUJA and member of CDSHL, and Tushar Azad, a first-year student at NLUJA and member of CDSHL, the participants were served with refreshments, and the workshop was wrapped-up with this.

Aditya Jha, a third-year student at NLUJA and senior-member of CDSHL, acted as the rapporteur for the event by clicking photographs, jotting-down the proceedings of the programme and by preparing the reports.