



**Centre for Research in Rural and Industrial Development (CRRID)
2A, Sector 19A, Madhya Marg, Chandigarh**

**Invites you to the
In-Focus
Panel Discussion on
**‘Victim-Centered Law Enforcement:
Gaps and Challenges’****

15 January 2024 (Monday) / 11.00 am to 01.00 pm

Panellists

Shri Rajinder Singh Cheema, Former Advocate General, Punjab (to be confirmed)

Prof. Anil Monga, Chairperson, Centre for Police Administration, Panjab University,
Chandigarh

Ms. Santosh Snehi Mann, Member Secretary, National Legal Services Authority
(NALSA), New Delhi

Shri Manjinder Singh, District & Session Judge-cum-Member Secretary, Punjab State
Legal Services Authority (PULSA), SAS Nagar, Punjab

Moderator

Shri Prabodh Kumar, Special DGP, Punjab State Human Rights Commission,
Chandigarh

Convenors

Dr. Vikash Kumar, Dr. Gurinder Kaur and Dr. Jatinder Singh
Assistant Professors, CRRID, Chandigarh

Victim-centered Law Enforcement - Gaps and Challenges

“Ninety-nine percent of the accused may go scot-free, but one innocent should not be punished” - arguably, our Criminal Justice System (CJS) keeps the accused of crime, along with his rights, at its focus. But what about the victim, whose trauma is the very first by-product of the same crime? The injuries, which are not just physical but also mental, emotional and financial, are inflicted not just upon the victim but also upon his family, friends and witnesses.

It was only in the year 2009, that our criminal law first came up with the definition of a victim, while also introducing the concept of a Victim Compensation Scheme (VCS). Legal provisions for such a compensation have indeed been there earlier as well, but they could be enforced only at the fag end of the criminal trial; that too, if the accused was found guilty, convicted and punished. Since 2009, such VCSs have been formulated in several jurisdictions, but their efficacy is a matter of debate.

Apart from the purely legal angle, it is equally important to examine the social setting in which a victim is placed when a crime is committed upon her, and thereafter also, during the lengthy processes of investigation and trial. In fact, such a setting plays a salient role even prior to the commission of the crime, when she is a “potential victim” due to her inherent vulnerabilities. The simple questions of access to justice, unbiased and fair treatment, assistance and facilitation to negotiate the procedural requirements - all these need to be sympathetically addressed by the other elements of this social setting, namely, the CJS. There is a felt need to candidly assess the capacities, and even willingness and priorities, of various organs of the CJS, most notably the police, in this regard.

To ensure that our socio-legal system is in consonance with the principles of natural justice, it is important to ensure that we do not overlook the victims. The rights of the victims for protecting their interests are equally, if not more, important than those of the accused, and they should rightfully be treated as the cardinal center of any meaningful law enforcement effort, rather than being at its periphery.

In-Focus Panel Discussion: Themes of each of the *In-Focus Panel Discussion* are intended to be of contemporary regional, national and international relevance under the larger framework of social, economic, legal and political issues. The Panel Discussion aims to offer outstanding lectures and debate delivered by eminent professors/scholars/experts, policy makers, social activists, diplomats and distinguished public officials that would help shape social, political and economic policies of the country in general and its north-western region in particular. Therefore, the panel discussion provides an opportunity to all the relevant stakeholders including young scholars and students to engage with experts and policy makers through academic and policy oriented discussions.

About the Host Organisation: The Centre for Research in Rural and Industrial Development (CRRID), an autonomous research institute, was established by Dr. Rashpal Malhotra, in the Union Territory (UT) of Chandigarh in July, 1978. Currently Dr. S K Mangal, is the Chairman of the Governing Body of the Centre and former Union Minister of Education Professor Murli Manohar Joshi is the President of CRRID Society.

Since inception CRRID has been engaged in promoting research, publication, development, training and similar academic and action oriented activities in the northwest region of the country. Many of the research and policy studies carried out by distinguished faculty members of CRRID have been catalytic in formulation of national and state level policies. The Centre was accorded "national status" in 1984 by the Ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD), Government of India (GoI), in recognition of its contribution to the cause of social science research in the broader national perspective. CRRID regularly publishes *Man & Development*, an internationally acclaimed quarterly journal. CRRID is supported by the Indian Council of Social Science Research (ICSSR), New Delhi, (MHRD, GOI), and the Government of Punjab. For more details visit: <http://www.crrid.res.in/>