Press Release from District Hub for Empowerment of Women Under Women, Child, Senior Citizen & Divyangjan Welfare Department, Namchi District

Awareness Programme on Mission Shakti, Women Helpline 181, Child Help line Number1098 and POCSO Act.

Namchi, 30 September: An awareness programme highlighting key components of the Government of India's flagship initiative Mission Shakti was successfully conducted today at PM Shri Govt. Sr. Sec. School Lingmoo, Namchi District.

The session focused on sensitising the local community on SANKALP: Hub for Empowerment of Women (HEW), the 181 Women Helpline, the One Stop Centre (OSC) scheme, and Protection of Child from Sexual Offences.

The event commenced with a welcome address delivered by Brinda Tamang Gender Specialist she extended a warm welcome to the Smriti Rai,Probation officer DCPU, Tika Singh rai School Principal,the teachers and all the students.

Following the inaugural address, Heema Devi sharma District Mission Coordinator (DMC) delivered a comprehensive overview of all the schemes under Mission Shakti(Shambal and Samarthya). Her briefing detailed the support systems, institutional mechanisms, Nari Adalat, PMMVY, BBBP and welfare services available to women through SANKALP: HEW, emphasizing grassroots level. She outlined the operational framework of the 181 Women Helpline—a 24-hour toll-free emergency response service—and the integrated emergency and non-emergency support provided by the One Stop Centre, ranging from medical aid and legal counsel to temporary shelter and psychological support.

During the programme, Probation Officer Miss Smriti Rai spoke about the provisions of the POCSO Act, which protects children below 18 years of age from sexual assault, sexual harassment, and exploitation. The session highlighted the importance of recognizing unsafe situations, understanding safe and unsafe touch, protecting children's privacy and dignity, and encouraging children to speak up whenever they feel unsafe.

She also spoke about child marriage and emphasized that marriage involving any person below 18 years of age is prohibited by law. She explained that the POCSO Act provides protection against penetrative and non-penetrative sexual assault, sexual harassment, and the use of children for pornography.

The key provisions discussed during the session were:

The Act is gender-neutral, meaning that both boys and girls can be victims.

It provides child-friendly procedures for reporting, investigation, and trial.

The identity and privacy of the child must be protected.

Cases are tried through Special Courts designated under the Act.

Mandatory reporting: Any person who knows or has reason to believe that a POCSO offence has occurred or may occur is required to report it to the appropriate authorities.

The main objective of the Act is to ensure the protection, dignity, safety, and justice of children.

Lastly, Pradeep Rai Account Assistant, concluded the programme with a vote of thanks. He encouraged the students to abide by the rules and regulations,seek help whenever needed and concluded the programme with words of encouragement and motivation.