

Call to rise against human trafficking

World Day against Trafficking in Persons observed in Palakkad

STAFF REPORTER
PALAKKAD

District Legal Services Authority (DLSA) secretary and sub-judge M. Thushar has underscored the importance of creating awareness in society, particularly among children, about human trafficking and the traps leading to it.

He was inaugurating the district-level observance of World Day against Trafficking in Persons at K.K.M. Higher Secondary School, Vandithavalam, on Tuesday. The Victims Information, Sensitisation, Welfare and Assistance Society (VISWAS) and the DLSA jointly organised the function.

Mr. Thushar said the DLSA would provide free legal aid to women and victims of human trafficking. Delivering the keynote address, VISWAS secretary and Anti Hu-



Pertinent issue: Sub-judge M. Thushar inaugurating district-level observance of World Day against Trafficking in Persons at K.K.M. Higher Secondary School, Vandithavalam, on Tuesday.

man Trafficking master trainer of the Union Ministry of Home Affairs P. Prem Nath said cases of human trafficking and sexual exploitation were steadily on the increase in the country.

He said only one-third of the cases get reported while the rest go unreported. When those in the lowest strata of society often choose

not to report it as they think they cannot afford it, those in the highest strata avoid reporting because of shame.

Mr. Prem Nath touched upon various aspects of human trafficking, including child trafficking, forced child labour, commercial sexual exploitation, sexual slavery, and the trauma suffered by the victims of trafficking.

School PTA president Haridas presided over the function. Former chairman of the Child Welfare Committee V.P. Kuriakose, VISWAS joint secretary R. Devikripa, and staff secretary Biju Vijayan spoke. School Principal P.V. Sreekumar welcomed the gathering. Headmaster A. Sasikumar proposed a vote of thanks.

The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) has been observing World Day against Trafficking in Persons on July 30 since 2013 to raise awareness of the plight of trafficking victims and to promote and protect their rights. 'Responding to the trafficking of children and young people is the theme chosen by the UNODC for this year, throwing focus on the fact that one-third of trafficking victims are children.

According to International Labour Organisation (ILO) estimates, more than 2.1 crore people are victims of human trafficking globally, and every country is affected by it. Women and girls comprise 71% of the human trafficking victims. "This is where we need to create awareness among students," said Mr. Prem Nath.