

The valedictory programme was attended by Mr. Mahesh Bhagwat, Ms. Rekha Abel, CRS, representatives from Dept. of Women Development and Child Welfare, District Administration, and Print Media. Towards the end, all the participants took a pledge with lighted candles reaffirming their faith and to continue the journey to take the movement forward for a better tomorrow.

The Participants were presented with an Aparajita memento and a lamp as a constant reminder of their being part of the movement. The day ended on a very positive note.

### **A MASSIVE LEAP FOR CHILD RIGHTS**

March 23<sup>rd</sup> 2007 is a historical day for child rights activists in Andhra Pradesh. A petition was filed in May, 2006 in the High Court of AP that child rights are being violated with absolutely no sensitivity – making specific note that, names of sexually abused minors are reported in newspapers with no attempts at maintaining anonymity/confidentiality. Reacting to the complaint, His Lordship Chief Justice taking it up as a writ petition demanded that the state respond to the allegations that the Juvenile Justice Act being flouted. He was shocked at the responses which showed total neglect of issues related to children in conflict with law in total disregard of the provisions of the JJ Act.

With deep anguish responding that the State has failed in its duty to protect child rights, His Lordship Justice Singhvi directed the formation of a high level committee including Dr. Sunitha Krishnan as the sole representative of civil society and headed by High Court Judge Justice Rohini. This committee will closely monitor the implementation of JJ Act and report to the high court every month.

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### **Bro. Jose Vetticatil Birthday Celebration**

#### **Marriage of Eight Survivors**

As we all know, 23<sup>rd</sup> March is our dear Bro. Jose Vetticatil's birthday and a very important day for Prajwala Family. This year each department started the day by remembering Bro. Jose and reaffirming our commitment to fulfill his dream to combat Sex Trafficking. In the evening, the family got together to celebrate in a very special way by solemnizing eight marriages of survivors of sex trafficking. Eight girls, all working with Prajwala Enterprises got married in the presence of an august gathering, most notable being His Lordship Hon'ble Chief Justice of Andhra Pradesh, Mr. G S Singhvi. The ceremony was attended by the relatives of couples, friends and supporters of Prajwala.

In keeping with the tradition, the couples were presented with household articles and an amount of Rs.5,000/- to help start off a new life. Prajwala also provided for the bridal wear and jewellery and the grooms wardrobe for their big day. All this was made possible through the contribution received from Ms. Sadhna Singh, Friend of Prajwala. All the staff of Prajwala contributed for the purchase of 'thali' for the brides.

The District Collector made the day even special for the couples by presenting them with Pattas for housing. All the guests came with special gifts for the couples along with loads of blessings and good wishes.

The event was widely covered by the Press Media which has created awareness among the masses about the rehabilitation intervention of survivors.

**We wish them a successful and Happy Married Life**



**Eight Couples with Dr. Sunitha Krishnan**



**Dr. Sunitha receiving the award from Hon'ble Justice K.G Balakrishnan, Chief Justice of India**

### **Dr. Sunitha Krishnan, Felicitated by NALSA**

We share with great pleasure that National Legal Services Authority [NALSA] and the Institute for Gender Justice have jointly honored Dr.Sunitha Krishnan for her remarkable contribution towards empowering citizens, Government and Nations with voluntary support, knowledge of legal and human rights, social justice, reform and developmental social action with gender justice as a core issue. Hon'ble Mr. Justice K.G Balakrishnan, the Chief Justice of India presented the award at a function held in New Delhi on 8<sup>th</sup> March 2007 [International Women's day].

### **Consultation for Survivors on 10<sup>th</sup> March 2007**



**Participants pose for a group photo**

The 'Aparajitas' in collaboration with Prajwala organized a one-day consultation bringing over 100 survivors together under one platform to take stock of the progress made in the past one year after the first National Consultation of Survivors, to discuss and deliberate on various anti-trafficking measures which will impact larger social change.

Two important aspects were discussed in small groups –  
1. Minimum Standards of Care in Homes for Victims of Sex Trafficking and 2. Rescue Protocol.

The deliberations were very interactive, the participants shared many innovative thoughts on the protocols for victims of sex trafficking.