



NHRC Submits

a Memorandum to the Prime Minister

The NHRC submitted a Letter of Memorandum to Prime Minister Girija Pasad Koirala on Nov. 4, 2007. Chairperson Kedar Nath Upadhyay was accompanied by the members of NHRC to the Prime Minister's official residence at Baluwatar where he submitted the memorandum to the PM.

Highlighting on the need for implementation of the Commission's recommendations, NHRC has requested the concerned parties to be responsible in defending and preserving human rights as per the Comprehensive Peace Accord signed by the government and CPN-M.

Pointing at the security problems faced by human rights defenders NHRC has

requested the PM to ensure people's fundamental right to life, and right to freedom of movement including right to pursue profession freely.

Reminding that protection of human rights is a pillar for peace, security and development in the country, the NHRC further recommended to the government to give priority in the issues related to human rights protection.

NHRC also urged the government to provide the Commission adequate resources.

While receiving the memorandum, PM Koirala expressed his commitment to cooperate with the Commission.

NHRC Condemns the Killing of Journalist Birendra Sah

NHRC condemned the killing of Bara based journalist Birendra Sah and recommended the GON to carry out immediately a full and impartial investigation in order to bring perpetrators to justice.

In a press release issued on Nov. 7, 2007, NHRC has stated that: "The hiding of the whereabouts of journalist Sah following his abduction by the CPN-M cadres for a long time, and the perpetrators still enjoying immunity from prosecution is promoting the

spiraling culture of impunity in the country. The Commission calls on the CPN - M leadership to issue strict directives to its cadres in order to



Journalist Sah

prevent repetition of such acts in the future, and to cooperate with all those who are involved in the investigation of the abduction and subsequent killing of journalist Sah".

The NHRC had made public the summary report earlier on Nov 1, 2007 with regard to the abduction of Journalist Sah after carrying out a detail investigation of the incident. In its summary report, NHRC has mentioned that journalist Sah was abducted in a planned manner by the district level CPN-M leaders and cadres. The NHRC had then also recommended the GON and CPN-M to carry out an investigation on the incident and to make public the fate of journalist Sah.

(The detail report is available at <http://www.nhrcnepal.org/pressRelease.php>)

NHRC Releases HR Report of CPA

NHRC has observed that there has been no remarkable achievement in human rights situation in the country even after the signing of the Comprehensive Peace Accord (CPA) between the government and Maoists on 21 November 2006.

NHRC organized a press conference on on Nov 6, 2007 to make its report public on the Status of Human Rights under CPA.

The report has been made public with a view to providing information about status of human rights between the period of 26 February 2007 and 16 July 2007 and the Kapilvastu incident

NHRC has stated in the report that the law and order situation could not improve as expected due to the Tarai movement, Maoist high-handedness and security force's reluctance to step in.

The monitoring and investigations conducted in 37 districts of the country by the NHRC and information received through various sources demonstrate that there has been no remarkable improvement in human rights situation during this period.

Human rights situation became vulnerable after the movement initiated by *Madhesi Janadhikar Forum (MJF)* demanding federal autonomy in the Terai region and due to the other agitations in the Eastern and Mid Terai regions. In Gaur carnage, 27 CPN-M cadres were brutally killed by the MJF cadres injuring over 42 persons. *Chure Bhawar Pradesh Yakta Samaj* also launched agitation demanding federal autonomy and many lives were lost during their agitation. Acts of killings and abductions relatively decreased

NHRC Releases HR Report.....

to some extent on the part of CPN-M but human rights situation could not improve due by the Maoist aligned Young Communist League (YCL).

Human rights situation in the Terai became fragile due to the continuing incidents of killings, abductions, arsons and vandalism by various groups including JTMM (Goit and Jwala Singh) factions, Madhesi Mukti Tigers Group, Terai Cobra, Madhesi Tigers, Terai Bagi and other armed groups. The NHRC has received information over the killings of 115 persons in various incidents in the involvement of various groups during this period. This death toll also includes the Kapilvastu incident. According to the information received by NHRC, 30 persons were killed by MJF, 11 persons by JTMM (Jwala Singh), 9 persons by JTMM (Goit), 5 persons by CPN-M, 16 persons by unidentified groups and other 5 persons by other parties. The NHRC has also received information about the killings of 10 persons by Nepalese Army and Police. The received information also reveals that 15 persons were killed and over 47 people injured in stray bomb explosions. Similarly, killings of 14 persons have been verified in the Kapilvastu incident.

The act of beating civilians by some members of the Nepal Police still continues. The CPN-M yet continues to take political reprisals by beating and misbehaving various individuals in the name of maintaining law and order, criminal investigations and justice delivery even after having joined the government. They continue to attack government officials, vandalize and torch government offices, threaten and abduct people and seize properties. The effort to return houses and properties confiscated by the CPN-M and security forces in the past is going on, but all those seized properties and houses have not been returned yet. Similarly, Madhesi Mukti Tigers Group, Terai Cobra, JTMM (Goit and Jwala Singh) factions, Madhesi Tigers and other groups under various covers also continue to threaten people and create an atmosphere of fear and terror.

Despite the caste based discrimination being punishable by law, instances of

society giving it continuity are reported frequently. There has been no stop in discrimination, dislike and suppression against the Dalits by the people belonging to so-called upper castes. One student was not allowed to sit in a cookery exam in Parbat district merely for being a Dalit. Dalits of Baitadi district continue to suffer due to discrimination. Similarly, Dalits (Musahars) of 28 houses in Siraha district had to displace due to the life threats issued against them by the JTMM (Jwala Singh). These incidents clearly demonstrate that the socially and economically backward Dalit Community is still facing obstructions in enjoying right to life with dignity.

The law and order situation could not improve as expected due to the Terai Movement, CPN-M's highhandedness and security force's reluctance. The incidents of lootings and robbery including other criminal activities are increasing but the police administration has not been able to arrest and bring the guilty within the confinement of law. Likewise, CPN-M and the Terai based agitating groups have attacked various police stations and beaten and mistreated government staff.

At the beginning of this period, some improvements were observed in the educational sector but in later days, it could not improve as expected due to the closure of educational institutions, lock up programs and strikes called on by various organizations with their own demands. Similarly, Terai movement, almost daily *bandas* and transport strikes including other incidents completely affected the education institutions. Even the education offices at various districts of the country were locked up over the issue that the government failed to implement the agreement reached between the GON and the *Ganatantrik Shikshak Manch*.

Media personnel are being attacked and threatened almost daily. They are deeply dissatisfied over the administration's reluctance to take actions against guilty even upon their identification. The bomb attack on a vehicle carrying media people and incidents of attacks and threats against human rights workers have increased deeper insecurity among human rights defenders and media society.

There have also been some positive improvements in human rights sector during this period. The government's fixing of date to the CA election at November 22, starting of verification of Maoist combatants in the cantonments, government's budget allocation for the maintenance of Maoist combatants and cantonments management, adoption of various acts and legislations related to the CA election, etc can be viewed as some positive efforts made in protection and promotion of human rights during this period.

The NHRC received total 726 complaints related to human rights violations through its various offices during this period. The highest 196 complaints were received by the Commission's central office and the lowest 15 complaints were received by its contact office in Khotang. Among the total complaints, the highest 141 complaints were related to abduction/disappearance. 140 complaints were related to torture and mistreatment and 102 complaints were related to killings. The lowest complaints were received with regard to the violation of right to information. Most of the complaints of killings were related to the period before the report period. However, most of the complaints of abduction, threats and property seizure are related to the report period. The complaints and monitoring facts reflect that abduction, property seizure, torture and mistreatment and threats still persist in the country.

NHRC carried out 104 monitoring and 445 on-the-spot investigations during this period. On the basis of the facts gathered through the monitoring and investigations in relation to the complaints of violations of human rights and atrocities, situation of human rights was made public and the concerned parties were also appealed to be sensitive towards human rights. NHRC has the prime responsibilities to respect, protect and promote human rights and for its effective enforcement. However, the lack of Commissioners at the Commission for a long period seriously affected in the protection of human rights of civilians and in making recommendations for prosecution against the guilty and providing compensation to the victims. Yet, involvement of various parties is increasing for improvement of human rights.



NHRC Makes the Report on the Kapilvastu Violence Public

The National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) made public the preliminary report on Kapilvastu incident on September 26, 2007. The report stated that after the killing of Mohamud Abdul Mohit Khan on September 16, 2007 in Kapilvastu, the violence emerged with the initiatives of different groups in Chandrauta, Bisanpur, Shivaghad, Khurhuria, Devipur and Ganeshpur etc areas which resulted loss of lives, and damage of houses and properties of the individuals of the respective areas. The report revealed the poor situation of security in the areas. The report also brought the factual data of loss of



lives and damage of properties due to the violence. The NHRC had also issued a press release on September 20, 2007 showing its serious concern on the violations of human rights on Kapilvastu incident. Expressing sorrow on the killings and

destroys of properties, the NHRC appealed to the Government of Nepal to provide humanitarian relief to the victims and the families. Likewise, the NHRC urged the government and concerned agencies to take effective steps to guarantee the security and not to expand the violence in other parts of the country as well as to punish the perpetrators and to provide the compensation to the victims conducting thorough investigation. The NHRC also requested to all stakeholders to play effective roles to maintain the social harmony in the affected areas.

NHRC Monitoring on Incidents of HR Violations

Monitoring on Kantipur Incident

The NHRC monitored the incident of vandalism that had taken place at Kantipur Publication House (KPH) on October. The officers from NHRC visited KPH and its printing press located at Tinkune and Koteswar respectively on October 1 and 2, 2007 and gathered the necessary information. They also conducted interviews with management, workers, journalists and other eyewitnesses of the incident. The KPH was not being able to bring their newspapers to the readers on regular basis due to dispute between management and workers affiliated to All Nepal Communication and Press Trade Union for a few days. Similarly, the NHRC Western Regional Office Pokhara visited the KPH's regional office in Pokhara in the course of investigation on October 1, 2007.

NHRC NPJ Monitors Incidents in Dang

The NHRC NPJ conducted monitoring of the different incidents in Dang district from 25 -26 September 2007 in connection with Kapilvastu incidents. The office had conducted monitoring in the district after observing the impact of Kapilvastu incident in the district. The monitoring team gathered necessary information during the inspection visit in Lamahi, Bhagawanupur, and Ghorahi. The team gathered the data of displaced people due to threat and fear and also collected the information about the overall situation.

NHRC Takes Initiative to get of Abducted Released

The NHRC Mid-Western Regional Office Nepalgunj took an initiative to release Mr. Hira Lal Loniya, Vice President of MPRF Youth Central Committee and President of Banke district. He was abducted by the cadres of YCL and the Maoists jointly on 30 August 2007 from Nepalgunj. He was released after 3 days from Manpur Khajura by the effort of the NHRC NPJ in cooperation with local human rights organizations.

HR Exhibition in Nepalgunj

The Mid-Western Regional Office Nepalgunj organized the regional human rights exhibition on 23 and 24 Sept. 2007 in Nepalgunj. In total, 40 human rights organization from Banke, Bardiya, Surkhet, Pyuthan, Rolpa, Dang, Dailekh and Salyan districts participated in the exhibition. These organizations and the NHRC displayed various materials (Print and audiovisual) related human rights and the organizational activities in own respective stall. About 30 thousand persons visited the exhibition.

The objectives of the programme were to raise public awareness on human rights and promote the works of HR NGOs in the region. "Such kind of exhibition is very impressive to raise public awareness on human rights in the respective area," the regional director of NHRC Mr. Bed Bhattarai shared his feelings to the e-bulletin team.

Before organizing the programme, the NPJ Office had organized the discussion meeting with the journalists and the media houses, and HR NGOs/INGOs/OHCHR/FNJ/NBA etc.

Trainings/Workshops

Training on Mediation for the NHRC Staff

NHRC organized a five days residential mediation training for its staffs in Bhaktapur from 6 to 10 Aug. 2007. The training provided extensive knowledge, techniques and tools on the subject to the participants. The training covered human



rights mediation, international practices on mediation, national and international legal mechanisms of mediation and mediation experiences of different countries. A total of 37 staff members of the Commission participated the training. Eleven persons from different organizations

including experts facilitated the training.

At the inauguration session, Hon' former justice of the Supreme Court of Nepal Mr. Laxman Aryal shed light on the importance of human rights mediation. The NHRC Officiating Secretary Ms. Padma Mathema added that mediation has been the best tool to resolve the complaints

in a speedy manner. The training was led by Mr. Mahendra Prasai (Secretary, Nepal Mediation Centre) as the lead trainer.

The training was quite informative

and fruitful to the staffs for their day today works. In addition, National Human Rights Commission (Complaints, Execution & Compensation Assessment) Regulation - 2000 has mentioned a provision of "compromising letter" on rule 12 besides the draft bill of new HRC Act 2007 has also incorporated the provision of mediation and reconciliation.

Human Rights Defenders' Training

Tanahun

The NHRC Western Regional Office Pokhara conducted a training programme to the local human rights defenders in Damauli, Tanahun from 11 to 13 October 2007. A total of 30 human rights defenders from Gorkha, Lamjung and Tanahun districts participated in the program.

Dhading

The NHRC conducted a five day training programme to the local human rights defenders of Dhading, Makwanpur and Nuwakot districts from 21 to 25 August 2007. The training was conducted in cooperation with Samagra Bikash Kendra.

Human Rights Defenders' Training in Lahan, Siraha

NHRC conducted a human rights training to the human rights defenders of seven districts of eastern and central Terai from 28 to 30 Sept 2007 in Lahan, Siraha district. The participants were selected from Sunsari, Saptari, Siraha, Udayapur, Mohatari, Dhanusa and Siraha districts. And, there were 34 participants in the training.

The objectives of the training were to build the capacity of human rights defenders and bring uniformity in their work. The participants were provided the knowledge and skills on human rights concept and principles, role of human rights defenders, duty and rights, challenges of human rights defenders especially in Terai region, method of human rights monitoring and investigations, linkages between human rights and constituent assembly etc. The facilitators and resource persons were from NHRC Central office, Regional Office Biratnagar and Contact Office Janakpur. At the last day of the training, participants formed a human rights defenders committee. The Committee will work and network in the Terai area for the protection and promotion of human rights in cooperation with local/regional human rights organizations.

Workshop on Constituent Assembly and Human Rights

The NHRC Western Regional Office Pokhara organized a workshop on the election of constituent assembly and human rights on September 16 and 17, 2007 in Pokhara. There were 67 participants from various NGOs, civil society organizations, Nepal Bar Association, journalists, governmental officials, Nepal Police, Armed Police Force and Nepal Army of Kaski, Parbat, Myagdi and Baglung districts in the programme.

The objectives were to make the participants aware on the election of constituent assembly and related human rights issues, role of human rights defenders, electoral system, national and international practices and free and fair election and network building.

At the inauguration session, Mohan Prasad Ghimire, the justice of Appellate Court Pokhara delivering his speech stressed on the participation of all groups and communities in the constitution making process. The resource persons from NHRC and others shed light on various issues relating to the constituent assembly and human rights.

National Peace Education Conference

During National Peace Education Conference on 21 and 22 September 2007 in Lalitpur district, the NHRC conducted different activities such as exhibition of its publications, human rights quiz, workshop on child friendly environment in school, home and society, and documentary show on NHRC activities.. The conference was organized by Bikalpa Gyan Tatha Vikas Kendra. More than 30 organizations participated in the programme. Hon'ble Mr. Pradip Nepal, Minister, Ministry of Education and Sports was the chief guest.

About 150 students, parents and teachers were benefited by the trainings and workshop / HR quiz sessions. The visitors enjoyed with NHRC exhibition and stalls as well as human rights song and documentary show.



UN has declared 2001-10 as a decade for peace and non-violence for the children of the world. The global commitments are to create a safe and better world for children, to cultivate and nurture the culture of peace and non-violence and to promote peace and to end war.

The objectives of the programme were as follows:

- to attract the attention of Nepali public, pedagogues and media towards various initiatives for the culture of peace and non-violence for children,
- to promote culture of peace and non-violence through peace education,
- to raise awareness about UN decade for the culture of peace and non-violence for the children of the world, and
- to provide space and promote various initiatives on peace and non-violent education in Nepal.

Human Rights Training to Lady Jaycees, Lalitpur

NHRC organized a one day training programme on human rights and women rights to the members of Patan Lady Jaycees on August 15, 2007 at its office. During the program, the NHRC Officers provided knowledge about human rights and women rights to the participants. The objectives of the training program were making the participant familiar with the national and international instruments of human rights and with the role of NHRC for the protection and promotion of human rights in the country.

Visit

Various Groups' Visit to the NHRC Office

Different groups and representatives from national and international organizations visited the NHRC Office on different dates.

A team of Sri Lankan journalists and representatives from NGOs visited NHRC on October 2, 2007. The team interacted with the NHRC staff regarding overall human rights situation, conflict transformation and peace process of Nepal.

On 6 September 2007, Prof. Karthigasen Govender, Human Rights Commissioner, Republic of South Africa visited the NHRC. He briefed about the truth and reconciliation and constituent making process via election of constituent assembly in South Africa.

On 3 September 2007, a team from Naripokko, Bangladesh visited the NHRC. The NHRC staff and the people from Natipokko shared their experiences at the visit.

On 29 May 2007, a team of 14 women from NGO-Federation of Nepalese Indigenous Nationality visited the NHRC. The NHRC officiating secretary and the officers shared the activities of the Commission. Similarly, the focal person on the indigenous rights presented the activities focused on the rights of indigenous people.

NHRC Visit at the Election Commission

A team of NHRC visited the Election Commission on 10 Sept. 2007 and met with the Officials of the Commission. The team raised concerns about ensuring voting rights of the people with disability and the senior citizens as well as other issues related to the election. The team also discussed on the preparation of Constituent Assembly election by the Commission (e.g. voters' education, coordination and collaboration, etc.).

Likewise, a team of NPJ Office visited the office of the Election Commission on Sept 4, 2007 and discussed with the head of the office. In the discussion, the team inquired about the activities undertaken by the EC regarding the voter list, polling stations, awareness campaign about CA, civic education, security situations, temporary voter list, code of conduct and the date it comes into effect, as well as role of NGOs and coordination with NGOs in providing uniformity in the civic education regarding CA, role of UNMIN, etc. The team also briefed about the role of NHRC as enshrined in the constitution and CPA.

Interactions/Discussions

Interaction on the Draft Bill of NHRC Act

NHRC organized an interaction with stakeholders on the draft of National Human Rights Commission Act in Kathmandu on 22 October 2007. The interaction was organized to collect the views on the draft bill so as to the Act could be made strong in terms of protection and promotion of human rights. The former Commissioners of NHRC, the representatives from Government of Nepal, NGOs and civil society including other stakeholders participated in the programme. The draft of NHRC Act is formulated after the Interim Constitution of Nepal 2007 made the NHRC a constitutional body. NHRC Nepal is established in the year 2000 as a statutory body as per the Human Rights Commission Act 1997.

Delivering the speech at the programme, the Chairperson of the Commission Kedar Nath Upadhyay stated that the new act must be in line with the Paris Principles and the Interim Constitution of Nepal.

The participants of the program suggested to make the new law in a way that could guarantee the essence of Paris Principles and the provisions made in the Constitution. They expressed the views that NHRC must be independent from the Executive in terms of both financial and administrative matters.

Interaction on Disappeared Peoples' Day

The NHRC NPJ conducted an interaction program to mark the international day of disappeared person on 30 August 2007. More than 25 participants from HR NGOs, kin of disappeared persons, head of OHCHR, representatives from District Administration Office, District Police Office, political parties and journalists participated at the program. In the programme, the participants raised their concern on inaction of the government towards disclosing whereabouts of the disappeared persons. Similarly, the participants also shed light on the need of law on disappeared persons. At the programme, the kin of victim-Mohammad Jakir Khan, who was disappeared after the arrest by then Royal Nepal Army in 2058 BS and Mr Abdul Kadir Shekh expressed their agony as well. Speaking on the issue, Mr Sushil Lakhe said that the government's inaction in terms of providing compensation even after the Supreme Court's verdict on the issue and on the basis of recommendation of NHRC is a shameful act. He urged to all concerned to join hands together to raise the voice. The representatives from different organizations also delivered the speech at the program. Delivering closing remarks Mr Bed Pd Bhattarai, the regional director said that the government must implement the decision made by the Supreme Court and the NHRC.

Press Meet on Disappeared Peoples' Day

The NHRC BRT Regional Office organized a press meet to mark the day. On the occasion, the Office released a report of the disappearance in the region. According to the report, out of 214 people disappeared in the region; the whereabouts of 62 people are yet to be revealed. Likewise, the Office has stated that it does not have any information regarding the situation of about 61 people that abducted by CPN (M).

Discussion on Constituent Assembly and Human Rights

The NHRC organized a discussion programme among the stakeholders on the role of stakeholders for the constituent assembly and human rights on 17 August 2007 in Kathmandu. At the programme, the representatives from various organizations - governmental, NGOs, INGOs and civil society - shared their works on constituent assembly and human rights. The participants also stressed on the crucial role of the NHRC before, during and after the election of constituent assembly in human rights perspective.

Revision of Curriculum and Textbooks on Human Rights Education

NHRC has prepared the report of Secondary Level Curriculum and Textbook after thorough review. The Commission conducted the review for inclusion of human rights education in school level curriculum. In this regard, the NHRC also conducted the study on knowledge, attitude and practice (KAP) on human rights among teachers and students of secondary level.

Programme on Constituent Assembly Election and Issues of the Children

The NHRC Eastern Regional Office Biratnagar organized a one day awareness programme on the Constituent Assembly on 13 Sept. 2007 on the occasion of Child Rights Day.

A total of 40 students from 20 high schools of Biratnagar city participated in the workshop. At the programme, the Officiating District Education Officer of Morang district expressed the view that aspirations of children must be considered in the election of the Constituent Assembly. The NHRC officers gave lecture on the constituent assembly, child rights, process of constituent assembly and the issues of children in constituent assembly with human rights perspectives.

Celebration of National Day Against Human Trafficking

NHRC and other human rights organizations celebrated the First National Day Against Human Trafficking in Kailali district. It is the day, the Government of Nepal ratified the SAARC Convention on the Control of Women and Children Trafficking for Sex Work 2002.

The HR NGOs and the NHRC staff participated in a rally displaying various informative playcards against human trafficking.

Commissioners Appointed at NHRC

Prime Minister Girija Prasad Koirala has appointed former Chief Justice Kedar Nath Upadhyay as the Chairperson and former Supreme Court Justice Ram Nagina Singh, Gauri Pradhan, Leela Pathak and K.B Rokaya as the members of the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) on September 17, 2007. They were appointed by the Prime Minister on the recommendation of the Constitutional Council. The Parliamentary Special Hearing Committee had approved their nominations on Sept 12. The Chairperson and the members have been appointed after a 15-month's vacuum of leadership at the NHRC. NHRC had remained without the Commissioners following the en masse resignation submitted by the then Commissioners on July 25, 2006.

The newly appointed Chairperson of NHRC Kedar Nath Upadhyay was sworn in on Sept 19. Acting Chief Justice Kedar Prasad Giri



NHRC Chairperson and Members at an interaction program

had administered him oath of office amidst a function organized at the Supreme Court.

Chairperson Upadhyay administered the oath of office to the NHRC members at the NHRC office on the same day.

The appointment of Commissioners at the NHRC for the protection and promotion of human rights in the country by the government has been praised by various national and international organizations.

The Nepal based office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR-Nepal) has also hailed the appointment of the Commissioners as an "important development in human rights in Nepal". The press release issued by OHCHR-Nepal stated that: "The appointment of the Commissioners is an opportunity to develop the NHRC into a credible human rights institution that maintains its independence and upholds national and international human rights standards".

Right to Food-Human Rights

NHRC has expressed its serious concern over the situation of right to food in the country. NHRC stated, in a press statement issued on the occasion of the World Food day 16 Oct 2007, that the people in different parts of the country are living without adequate food and that they are suffering from starvations and famines.

Sufferings of the people, noted the NHRC, are more over caused by lack of the Govt's policy and programs on food security.

The press release also stated: "Right to protection from famines is the fundamental rights of people. The state should ensure that every individual is healthy and its people enjoy adequate nutrition required for a sound physical and mental development and that they enjoy food according to their own cultures. The access to right to food should be ensured even in the time of natural disasters or in other situations".

NHRC recommended the GoN to formulate necessary laws, policy, programs, and plan of actions on food security and implement them effectively.

NHRC Office Bearers Participate in the APF Meeting

A team led by the NHRC Chairperson Kedar Nath Upadhyay participated in the 12th meeting of the Asia Pacific Forum (APF) in Sydney, Australia. The meeting was held from 24-27 Sept 2007. The representatives of NHRIs, Justices, consultants and the representatives from NGOs participated in the meeting.

The meeting reviewed the human rights situation of the Asia Pacific Region and adopted a declaration for the promotion and protection of human rights in the

region. The declaration appeals for the promotion of the rights of the people with disabilities, for the protection of human rights defenders and environment.

During the meeting, NHRC Chairperson Upadhyay briefed the activities, achievements and challenges of NHRC-Nepal. NHRC member Gauri Pradhan and officiating secretary Padma Mathema also participated in the meeting.

The next annual meeting of the APF will be held in Malaysia.

Training to Human Rights Defenders, Dhangadhi

The NHRC, Far Western Regional Office Dhangadhi conducted two days Human Rights Training to the HR Defenders of the region. The two days residential training was conducted on Sept.27 and 28, 2007 at the Regional Training Centre of the Agricultural Development Bank, Dhangadhi. There were 26 (female-9 and male-17) participants from Kailali, Kanchanpur, Dadeldhura, Doti and Achham districts.

The resource persons from NHRC HQ and the Regional Office facilitated the training programme.

NHRC Recommends to Improve Prisons Conditions

The detainees and prisoners at Dillibazar Detention Centre put to an end to their hunger strike on Nov 6, 2007 following efforts of the NHRC and the number of human rights defenders to get the government's commitment to fulfill their demands.



NHRC team gathers information from a prisoner in Dillibazar jail

The NHRC had recommended the government time and again to improve the physical facility and protect the rights of prisoners. NHRC has dispatched a set of recommendations to the government on October 11 and October 31, 2007.

The recommendations sent on Oct 31 include

1. To increase the quality and quantity of rice and daily allowances provided to the prisoners. Currently they receive 700 grams rice and 30 rupees a day.
2. To immediately implement programs for the maintenance and construction of prisons to ensure the sufficient space to the prisoners.

3. To make arrangements for the regular health care of the prisoners and to provide primary health care within the prisons including other health check-ups.
4. To make an arrangement for timely transportation and transportation cost as the detainees and prisoners need to travel in and out prisons for

their health check ups and court related work

5. To implement an effective mechanism to ensure the safe transfer of the minors from jails and detention centers to Children Welfare Centers, and make necessary arrangements for their education, health and other needs
6. To make a provision of special treatment for the mentally ill people and to keep them separate from other detainees and prisoners
7. To implement the suggestions and recommendations made by High Level Recommendation Committee by setting immediate, short-term and long term plan of actions
8. To adopt immediate measures for the protection of prisoners on hunger strike

Deteriorating human rights situation in Siraha and Saptari

Issuing a press statement on Nov 7, 2007, the NHRC expressed its serious concerns on the continued incidents of abductions and killings in Siraha and Saptari districts by various groups.

In a press release, NHRC has stated, "the incidents of killings after abductions by unidentified groups and extortion by various groups fighting in Terai are on rise. Similarly, complaints of inhumane treatment and tortures in the eastern region by the State agencies have also been lodged at the Commission's office",

Taking the nature of violations of human rights in the area into account, the NHRC recommended that the people be given guarantee of security and political parties be sensitive. It also appealed to the government to take legal actions against the perpetrators so as to end impunity.

The press release also states that the NHRC's Eastern Regional Office at Biratnagar had received 14 complaints in a week on illegal detention, torture, abductions, security, rape, compensation, donation and delayed legal proceedings by the State. The Commission has also expressed concern over property seizure, abductions, killings, beatings and mistreatment by YCL and other agitating groups in the Terai.

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Interactions with NGOs and Civil Society

The NHRC organized an interaction program on "Situation of human rights and the role of NHRC" with the members of civil society and representatives of NGOs on Nov 4, 2007.

Speaking on the occasion, Chairperson of the NHRC, Kedar Nath Upadhyay said the Commission works in cooperation with other organisation engaged in the field of human rights, and would make efforts to enforce international conventions and agreements and prevailing laws on human rights

NHRC Members Ram Nagina Singh, Gauri Pradhan, Dr. Leela Pathak and Dr. K.B. Rokaya expressed that the cooperation between the NHRC and the civil society is inevitable for the protection and promotion of human rights in the country. They also highlighted the role of civil society, journalists and human rights organizations in establishing a human rights culture in the country.

Participants of the programme stressed that the Commission should be independent to work for the interest of weaker sections of society and play leading role for the protection of human rights.

Laxman Aryal, former Supreme Court Justice and Coordinator of the Interim Constitution Drafting Committee said the NHRC should work according to people's desire and pay attention to existing laws and international documents for the protection of human rights.

Daman Nath Dhungana, Former Speaker, said the NHRC should be separate from politics, youth should be engaged in the movement for the protection of human rights, Youth Commission should be formed and separate council should be formed for human rights activists.

Surya Prasad Shrestha, Former Chief Election Commissioner, said phase of transition has been prolonging and situation has become complex and stressed that NHRC should pay attention to protect human rights and not to let misuse of national resources