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NHRC holds consultation meeting on the draft of NHRC Act

KATHMANDU

The NHRC organized a consultation meeting on the Draft of Human Rights Commission Act 2007 on July 31, in which stakeholders representing different organizations participated.



The participants of the consultation program suggested that the new Act of NHRC should enshrine the spirit of the Paris Principles in order to maintain independency and autonomy of the NHRC.

Laxman Prasad Aryal, the former justice of Supreme Court said that the new law should incorporate the provisions guaranteed by the Interim Constitution. Dr. Gauri Shankar Lal Das, the former Commissioner of the NHRC said that the proposed law should make the NHRC functional to its fullest strength. Sushil Pyakurel, another former Commissioner of the NHRC was of the view that the best practices of other NHRI's should be incorporated in the proposed new Act. Tara Somyang and Tilak Pariyar, members of the Interim Parliament, Padma Mathema, Officiating Secretary of NHRC also expressed their views on the draft of the Act.

The draft committee was formed by the Office of the Prime Minister and Council of Ministers on May 14, 2007. Dr. Trilochan Upreti, Joint Secretary of Office of Prime Minister and Council of Ministers is coordinator of the Committee whereas Babu Ram Regmi, the Joint Secretary of Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs Ministry and Om Prakash Aryal, the Legal Officer of NHRC are the members of the committee and Keshav Prasad Bastoal, the Under Secretary of Office of Prime Minister and Ministers of Council is Member Secretary of the Committee.

HR defenders concern over Child Rights in the CA

LALITPUR.

Stakeholders of child rights have expressed of a crucial role of concerned stakeholders in the entire process of Constituent Assembly for ensuring child rights and its effective implementation.

In the NHRC hosted program with the title "Interaction on the Role of Stakeholders with regard to ensuring Child Rights in the Constituent Assembly", participants including the representatives of political parties, NGOs, civil society, media, child clubs, student unions, and professional organizations underlined the need to address issues relating to the child rights in the Constituent Assembly. Participating on the discussion in the issues raised in the paper presented by Gouri Pradhan of CWIN the participants shed lights on the need of ensuring broader participation of children in the entire process of CA

Stating that the political parties needed to prioritize issues of children in their election manifesto and to respect the concept of "children as zone of peace", the participants said that the effective monitoring was required for ensuring that the child rights are not breached in the CA election.

Participants also agreed to broadly move ahead the campaign to maintain schools as zone of peace and to conduct massive awareness programs among children to ensure child rights in the CA election and in the new constitution to be made by CA.

They underlined the need to advocate in a coordinated approach to prosecute child rights violators and to compensate the victims of the armed conflict and to ensure the child victims the rights to education, health and food and to build network for exchange of information and experiences between organizations working in the field of child rights, government or national and international agencies and for working in the field of capacity development. Agreeing upon the necessary to conduct common campaign for protecting and ensuring child rights in the constitution to be written after CA election, the participants also made commitment for making efforts from all sectors to enforce the implementation of the decisions of NHRC

Winding up the discussion Pradhan said that entire concerned stakeholders have a crucial role to play in ensuring child rights in the Constituent Assembly election process and in the new constitution making process. Over 120 persons from representing different organizations participated in the program.

National Human Rights Commission

Harihar Bhawan, Lalitpur, Nepal
 Phone : 00977-1-5010015 (Hunting Line)
 Fax : 00977-1-5547973, 5547976
 Email: nhrc@nhrcnepal.org Website : http://www.nhrcnepal.org

Editorial Board:

Murari Prasad Kharel Bimal Babu Khatri
 Vidhu Prakash Kayastha

NHRC continues investigation, monitoring

LALITPUR

The NHRC continues its protection related activities by conducting investigations and monitoring across the country.

A team of the Commission's Central Office visited Chitwan from July 18 to July 22 to gather the facts about human rights situation in the district.

The team also visited the Shaktikhor cantonment of People's Liberation Army affiliated to CPN-Maoist and collected information about the condition of the physical infrastructure of the cantonment.

Likewise, NHRC regional office Pokhara summoned police inspector Sujan Joshi of Baidam ward police on July 23 to appear at its office within 24 hours in order to clarify matters related to the complaint lodged against him.

A complaint that Inspector Joshi had detained and tortured two persons in the Baidam Police Station for no apparent reasons.

Similarly, the NHRC has concluded the probe on killings of two persons by warring groups including Maoists during the conflict.

A team of NHRC Biratnagar Regional Office and the Contact Office, Khotang had investigated the killing of Shalikram Adhikari, a resident of Annapurna VDC- 8 and Judhha Sunda, a resident of Timma VDC- 7.

Adhikari was killed on February 7, 2003 by Kirant Workers Party on charge of instigating Maoists against the Kirantis. He was abducted from his house on January 19, 2003. Sundas was shot dead by the Maoist cadre in front of his house in Chhinamakhu VDC- 1 on 15 December 2005 on charge of killing of younger brother of Sundas.

Experience sharing on IHRTP-2007

LALITPUR

An experience-sharing program on the Human Rights Education was organized at the NHRC headquarters on July 10, 2007. The program was based on International Human Rights Training Program (IHRTP) recently took place in Canada. Kosh Raj Neupane, Officiating Regional Director of Far Western regional Office who participated in IHRTP, 2007 shared his experience in IHRTP with the NHRC staff.

Elaborating on the various aspects of IHRTP, Neupane said that the NHRC should internalize relevant emerging methodologies to carry out Human Rights Education program more effectively.

Interaction on CPA and CA

NEPALGUNJ

The NHRC Nepalgunj RO conducted an Interaction Program on the Implementation of Comprehensive Peace Agreement and Constituent Assembly Election at Khalanga of Salyan district on July 11, 2007.

The representatives from various human rights organizations and agencies, political parties, media personnel, Lawyers, business persons and industrialists, eminent figures of civil society, Dalits, women, indigenous community and the representatives of the disabled organizations and agencies working for their rights participated in the interaction program.

Most participants came up with the collective viewpoint that CPA wasn't implemented as anticipated and thus they opined that all the political parties as well as the Nepal government have to work out in more responsive approach for the same.



They also emphasized that it is the duty of all the concerned to initiate the orientation program

for raising the awareness from village to village about the CA election including the protection of citizens' rights to vote in order to successfully conduct election on stipulated date in independent, fair and peaceful manner.

Likewise, the representatives of all the parties present in the interaction program vowed their commitment from their sides to implement the CPA and make the CA election successful.

The participants opined that at a time when the state is heading towards having CA election, such interaction program would be much relevant and fruitful.

The team had an NGO Co-ordination meeting with the organizations and agencies working in field of human rights in Salyan district. Similarly, a discussion was held about the monitoring of the CA election and the development of the mechanism to carry out the monitoring activities.

The team also discussed with the District Security Committee situated in the district on June 11, 2007 about the CPA implementation, human rights, peace and security situation. The team also discussed on the disappeared cases, IDPs and the issues on human rights. Most IDPs from among the 86 families have been reestablished in Salyan district. Likewise, seven police posts out of total 12 have been reinstated whereas two police posts have been reinstated temporarily and there remain three police posts yet to be reinstated.

NHRC Dhangadhi RO organized similar interaction in Dadeldhura. There were 43 participants including GOs, NGOs, political parties, child clubs, Civil society, Human rights Activist from various district of Far western on July 20, 2007.

Likewise NHRC Biratnagar RO organized interaction in Biratnagar. There were 62 participants including GOs, NGOs, political parties, child clubs, HR activists, civil society media personnel from various district of Far western on June 29, 2007. Advocate Ram Prasad Sitaula gave a presentation about Child rights, Child Participation in Constituent Assembly, Sita Ram Rai, president of Nepal Bar Association Biratnagar, and Som Raj Thapa played vital role as commentator by giving segmentation and highlighting important issue and challenges. Speaking at the interaction programme all the participants focus on the issue that the concerned organization and specially to GO and Political party should give serious attention in ensuring the child rights to prove the state committed and sensitize towards guaranteeing the rights of child.

HR defenders form task force

LALITPUR

A group of human rights defenders have recently formed 'Save National Human Rights Commission Campaign' (SNHRCC) a task force with an objective to pressurise the State for appointment of the Commissioners at the National Human Rights Commission of Nepal.

Dr. Gauri Shankar Lal Das, former

Task Force will be in the Human Rights Home, Lalitpur.

A press release signed by Dr Shiwakoti stated human rights community had expressed concerns regarding the news published in various media sources about the govt's decision to assign administrative responsibility to a secretary of Government of Nepal rather than appointing Commissioners.

Considering the attitude of the government to be against the Paris Principles, Interim Constitution - 2007 and Human Rights Commission

Act- 1997 and responding to the initiative of the office of the NHRC, the representatives of the human rights community had attended a meeting to form a 13-member task force, the press release stated.

Meanwhile the task force organised a rally on July 26 to press the demand of immediate appointment of the Commissioners at the NHRC. The NHRC is without Commissioners after the former Commissioners resigned from their posts on 9 July 2006.

Commissioner of the NHRC is the convener while Dr. Gopal Krishna Shiwakoti has been entrusted to serve as member-secretary of the task force. Sushil Pyakurel, Prof Kapil Shrestha, Shanti Adhikari, Subodhraj Pyakurel, Pradeep Pokhrel, Sharmil Karki, Dipendra Jha and Shova Gautam were included in the task force as members. Sushil Pyakurel and Prof Shrestha are the former Commissioners of NHRC. The Task Force also has a provision to have the representatives of National Disable Federation, Dalit NGO Federation and NEFIN. The secretariat of the



HR defenders in a rally demanding appointment of Commissioners at NHRC

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Human Rights training to jurnos

PAKHRIBAS, DHANKUTA

NHRC Biratnagar Regional Office organized a three-day training Program, from July 12-14, 2007, on Human Rights and Media at Pakhribas, Dhankuta.

Media persons from the districts of Taplejung, Panchthar, Ilam, Jhapa, Morang, Sunsari, Dhankuta, Siraha, Saptari, Udaypur, Okhaldhunga participated in the program.

Facilitators of the training Dr. Shanker Kumar Shrestha, NHRC Ex-secretary, and Kundan Aryal, Gen Sec of INSEC, Bhanubhakta Acharya, Promotion Officer, NHRC on HR issues and Media,

Kamananda Prasad Dev, Chief Judge of the Dhankuta Appellate Court, distributed certificate to the participants in the closing ceremony chaired by NHRC Regional Director Subarna Karmacharya in which Ganesh Bahadur Khatri, Acting Regional Administrator and Dr. Tank Prasad Barakoti, Officiating Chief of Agricultural Research Center, Pakhribas were also present.

NHRC RO releases report

NEPALGUNJ

NHRC RO NPJ recently organized a program to release report covering its activity since its inception on November 22, 2004.

The report consists of the monitoring, investigation, promotional activities of the regional office.

It also consists of the activities of the contact offices Jumla and Rolpa.

The content of the report also contains the status of complaints lodged at the regional.

Releasing the report, Mr Bed Prasad Bhattarai, Regional Director, amidst the program attended by representatives of media, HRNGOs, INGOs, OHCHR and the political parties, said that the objective of the report was to disseminate the achievements attained and the challenges faced by the NHRC Regional Office.

NHRC staff visit MoPR

KATHMANDU

The NHRC staff met with the officials of Ministry of Peace and Reconstruction to discuss the draft bill of Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) on July 15, 2007.

During the meeting, the Convener of task force of TRC drafting committee and Joint Secretary Madhu Regmi and his colleagues apprised the NHRC Staff on the status of the TRC draft bill.

He, however, assured the visiting officials of NHRC that the Ministry would send a copy of the draft bill for inputs of NHRC and suggestions.

MP Gupta visits NHRC NPJ RO

NEPALGUNJ

Jaya Prakash Gupta, MP paid a courtesy visit in NHRC RO NPJ on June 29, 2007.

While briefing the activities of the NHRC to MP Gupta, the officials also urged on the need of parliamentary initiatives on the immediate appointment of the Commissioners at the NHRC.

Issue relating to the volatile situation in the Terai was also raised by the officials during talks with MP Gupta who expressed concern on the issue on the incident of Dec 26, 2007 that erupted in Nepalgunj in which Kamal Nath Yogi, a local, was killed and properties worth millions of Rupees were destroyed.

NHRC organises training for HR defenders

BIRGUNJ

The NHRC organized a three day training program on 'Fundamentals of Human Rights' from July 23- 25, 2007 in Birgunj.

Twenty-seven human rights defenders from Bara, Parsa & Rautahat districts participated in the program which was aimed at strengthening capacity of the stakeholders towards promoting and protecting human rights.

Officers of the NHRC and the OHCHR were the facilitators of the training.

The NHRC team also conducted interaction in the districts of Bara and Rautahat respectively on July 27 and 28.



The interaction was focused on the human rights situation, challenges and the issue of election of Constituent Assembly.

The government authorities, human rights activists and defenders, civil society representatives, representatives of professional organizations and the people of the respective area participated in the program. Murari Kharel, the Dy Director of NHRC responded on the queries raised by the participants.

Similarly, the NHRC held a training workshop on "Training Workshop on CA and Human Rights" from June 15 to 16, 2007 in Katmandu. There were all together 30 participants from NHRC.

NHRC expresses concern over threats and abductions

BIRATNAGAR

A press release issued by NHRC has stated that the act of threatening by a Maoist local leader in Khotang district to an INSEC representative and other HR workers of the same district has drawn attention of the NHRC.

Reminding these acts against the CPA-2006 between GON and CPN-M, the NHRC appeals the CPN-M to give instruction to their cadres to refrain from such acts.

The press release also expressed concern of the NHRC over the abduction of individuals. NHRC has received complaints regarding abductions of Shivakumar Yadav, 25, of Siraha district, Bariapatti VDC-6 on June 28, 2007 at around 2 am by a group of some 8-9 cadres of JTMM (Jwala Singh).

Similarly, Balaram Yadav (YCL cadre), son of Jagadesh Yadav of Morang district Jhurkiya VDC-9 was abducted on June 28, 2007 by an unidentified group.

Likewise, Sushil Kumar Singh of Saptari Municipality-7 working at Durga Secondary Boarding School was abducted on July 2, 2007 at 1:40 pm by an unidentified group of some 7-8 people,

The press release also stated that Saroj Koirala, 55, of Saptari Odaha VDC-9 on July 5, 2007 at around 10:30 was abducted by an unidentified group of some 9-10 persons.

Expressing deep concerns on the abductions the NHRC has appealed the concerned parties to honour the rights of individuals by immediately and safely releasing all those abducted.

Another press release issued by the NHRC Headquarters has stated that National Human Rights Commission's attention has been deeply drawn by the press statement issued by July 16, 2007 that has created a state of terror among employees working at the Terai Region. Such a statement of JTMM (Jwala Singh) is against principles and the norms and values of human rights, the NHRC press release stated.

The office of NHRC appeals all concerned parties including JTMM to respect human rights by not carrying out such acts.

Similarly, the NHRC has also drawn the attention of the Government of Nepal to create conducive environment in order to promote and protect the human rights of the people by addressing the genuine demand of the people who have been marginalised and deprived of their human rights.

NHRC Staff discuss CA poll with stakeholders

KATMANDU

The NHRC officials held discussion with the stakeholders on the forthcoming election of Constituent Assembly. A team of the NHRC officials met with the officials of the Election Commission and the Carter Centre on July 12, 2007 in order to discuss various aspects pertaining to the CA election. The NHRC officials focused issues of relating to the Human Rights in the CA election during their meeting with Mr. Dolakh Bahadur Gurung, Election Commissioner, who was accompanied by senior officials of the EC.

Commissioner Gurung expressed that EC will be happy to work in collaboration with different National Institutions.

The team also met Ms. Sarah, Electoral Coordinator of the Carter Centre. She expressed concern on the areas of the concerned on the CA Election. Ms Levit-Shore briefed analysis of the Carter Centre to the visiting NHRC team.

Orientation

DHANGADHI

NHRC Dhangadhi Regional Office carried out an orientation session on July 20, 2007 participated by Dalit activists and facilitators affiliated to Nepal National Dalit Society Welfare Organization (NND SWO) of Kailali district.

Kosh Raj Neupane, Officiating Regional Director, briefed the participant about state obligations on ICERD, treaty reporting and duties, functions and powers of NHRC.

He also highlighted on the protection and promotional activities of the NHRC RO. The participants were inquisitive on the role of NHRC regarding the clash that took place in the district of Doti on the issue of entrance to the Saileshowri Temple. They expressed confidence that the NHRC could play important role to eliminate the caste-based discrimination.