



# National Human Rights Commission

Central Office

Harihar Bhawan, Pulchowk, Lalitpur, Nepal



May 21, 2012

## Press Release

### NHRC Concerned over Rights Violation in Banda, distorting Communal Harmony

The serious attention of the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) has been drawn towards the '*Nepal Banda*' organized by the **Nepal Federation of Indigenous Nationalities** (NEFIN) placing their demand for federal states bearing identity, proportional election system, inclusive representation, self determination and autonomous states.

In this regard, the NHRC respects the people's right to organize protests program, rallies and sit-in programs in a peaceful way. The NHRC has been incessantly carrying out its monitoring on the Banda programs organized by various groups, communities including the political parties in the changing scenario. It is indeed very much saddening to observe that the social harmony in Nepali society nurtured through ages being distorted by the on-going activities that tend to distort communal harmony. The NHRC appeals to all the concerned parties to sustain communal and social harmony.

During the monitoring carried out by the NHRC, the Banda supporters were found to have restrained violence. Ambulances, buses carrying board examinees and tourists weren't obstructed though the Banda supporters were seen carrying iron rods and batons in their hands at most places. Some protestors were found to be under the influence of alcohol at few places. Even the children were used in the protest program. Likewise, the cyclists were said to have been obstructed. Meanwhile, the police were learned to have rounded up a few protestors at Chabahil including a few places at Baudha.

The NHRC expresses its concern over the incidents of manhandling of Human Rights Defender Pravin Gurung of Human Rights Concern Center, Nepal and vandalizing of his motorcycle in front of Namaste Supermarket, manhandling of the journalists associated with various television, news papers, FM stations and vandalizing of their vehicles at the places including Chabahil, Tinkune, Bal Kumari, Pulchowk and Kupandole. The NHRC condemns the attack on the human rights defenders and journalists aggravating the entire media world. Likewise, the NHRC Officers duo Jiwan Neupane and Shree Ram Adhakari were manhandled and their motorcycles were vandalized by the Banda supporters at Saugalkharka, Bholdhoka in Lalitpur. Similarly, the NHRC staff vehicle was incepted and the staffs were forced to walk on foot. The Banda enforcers forcibly evacuated the patients at a clinic and asked to shut down the clinic.

The NHRC also expresses its concern over the vehicular obstruction caused by the Banda enforcers in Pokhara. The NHRC, therefore, draws the attention of the concerned stakeholders not to obstruct the monitoring conducted by the NHRC as per the mandates for the protection, promotion and fulfillment of human rights pursuant to the Interim constitution of Nepal - 2007 and the NHRC Act - 2012.



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The NHRC also appeals to all the concerned stakeholders to find out the solution through dialogues and talks since the life of general people is hit hard by the Banda and strikes organized in various parts including the Tarai of Nepal for the last few days. The NHRC also appeals to the Government to sensitively address the legitimate demands raised by various groups and communities.

The NHRC urges the government to arrest those involved in activities against law and order and take action against them and also to make the compensation available for the vandalized vehicles. Generally, the rights of people are violated during the Banda and strikes. The NHRC, therefore, appeals to all the concerned parties not to foster the Banda program as culture. The NHRC also urges the Banda organizers to sustain communal harmony, organize Banda programs in disciplined and dignified way, not to take law in hand and also not to use children in the Banda programs in order to make the Banda program peaceful and dignified.

**Bishal Khanal**

**Secretary**