



राष्ट्रिय मानव अधिकार आयोग

National Human Rights Commission, Nepal

केन्द्रिय कार्यालय Central Office

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Context: World Press Freedom Day

Press Release

May 3, 2020

It is everyone's duty to respect freedom of press and expression

National Human Rights Commission of Nepal expresses good wishes to all the media personnel in the context of the world Press Freedom Day (May 3).

On the occasion of the celebration of the World Press Freedom Day with the theme "Journalism Without Fear or Favour", the Commission expresses its worry towards the situation that more journalists have been victimized this year than the previous year in Nepal. The NHRC received the information that the existence of physical insecurity to the journalists as they are on their duty day to night even faces challenges working in the critical situation, curtailment in the freedom of expression, rearrested by the security force even if the court has provided the verdict to release, misconduct to the journalists, even questioning on the media personnel's function, discouragement to the journalists deployed in the field for reporting, and even prosecuted on cyber-crime in a discriminatory manner on the basis of their writing in the social media.

On the occasion of World Press Freedom Day, the Hon. Chairperson of the Commission Anup Raj Sharma making the report of the Federation of Nepalese Journalists public opined that the government has treated the journalists intolerably rather it should provide protection as he was targeting to the freedom of expression curtailing Bills tabled to the parliament and expressed his doubt on the government's commitment to the freedom of press and acquainted that 'freedom of expression and writing can be restricted' but the thoughts germinated on mind can never be restricted. Freedom of press, freedom of expression and the human rights are interconnected so the journalists should prioritize the people's news, not only the political leaders' news. In the fight of the press freedom civil society and the human rights defenders should join their hands as the press freedom is not only for the journalists but also necessary for the citizens and even the journalists being free from favour and fear should ensure fair and factual journalistic writing. He also informed that in this critical situation generated due to COVID-19, the Commission has been collaborating for the monitoring of the freedom of expression including others.

To ensure the right to information as guaranteed by the Constitution the freedom of expression plays vital role but the misconduct and the discouragement towards the journalists from the security force and even by the responsible agencies are against the rule of law, norms and values of the democracy and human rights as well as the preamble and the Article 17 (a), Article 19 of the Constitution of Nepal, Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, 1948, Article 19 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, 1966 in which Nepal is a state party.

Thus, the Commission requests to the Government of Nepal including concerned all to respect freedom of press and the freedom of expression as well for security and protection of freedom of the journalists on the occasion of World Press Freedom Day.

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Bed Bhattarai
Secretary/Spokesperson