



Human Rights e-Newsletter

National Human Rights Commission of Nepal



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NHRC holds Consultation on Consumer Rights



Minister Bhatta and Chairperson Upadhyay along with the Government Secretaries and officials at the consultative meeting held on consumer rights at the NHRC

Photo: Sarki Man Tamang

Lalitpur: Expressing concern over the prolonged crisis in the fuel supply in the country, the NHRC invited the representatives of the stakeholder agencies to the Commission and held a consultative meeting. During the meeting, the representatives of the government stakeholder agencies underlined in unison the need of national policy that would solve the deepening crisis in the supply of petro-products.

Speaking at the meeting, Minister for Commerce and Supplies Mr. Lekh Raj Bhatta said that the entire system should undergo the improvement phase in the first place.

‘As many as 65 gas companies have been monitored so far. Amongst them, seven gas depots have been monitored under my leadership and this mission will be launched nationwide,’ informed Minister Bhatta.

He mentioned that monitoring with meagre supply is futile and thus the long term policy with regard to the petro-product supply was inevitable at this juncture. He, however, assured

of LPG has hit hard the life of general people despite price hike, the Chairperson made threefold suggestions such as open market, revamping of pricing policy and importing of crude oil. He also urged that since lawlessness is the very cause of impunity, stern action must be taken against the defaulters involved in illegal act such as hoarding.

Stressing on the crisis management in the present situation, the Chairperson urged for subsidy to be given in fuel price to the students and marginalized people.

Member Gauri Pradhan emphasized that it's high time that the Government find both short term and long term solution to the problem of fuel crisis before it is too late.

On the occasion, Member Ram Nagina Singh said, ‘The crisis ridden situation emerged from the acute shortage of petro product has resulted in the incidents of haphazard distribution. This would invite the lawlessness in society. The concerned authority must explore the alternative

that the normalcy in fuel supply will restore within a week.

Chairperson Upadhyaya urged the government to make necessary improvement wherever possible to ease the supply of the petro-products without delay. He also stressed on the need to reform the policy and adopt the necessary measures for the supply of petroleum products.

solution such as bringing in fuel from the neighbouring country China or else the existing situation of free for all would take a terrible turn.’

Similarly, putting forth his views, Purusottam Ojha, secretary at the Prime Minister’s office, suggested that Nepal should hold a direct dialogue with India to resolve the existing petro-crisis. He also stressed that suppliers involved in hoarding should be strictly dealt with so that the message would go that such an illegal act deserves punishment.

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In This Issue...

NHRC Monitors the UPR Recommendations

Kathmandu: The National Human Rights Commission has been preparing monitoring report on the implementation of Universal Periodic Review (UPR) recommendations made by the Human Rights Council, Geneva in 2011.

The Human Rights Council has recommended on various human rights issues. The government of Nepal has accepted most of those recommendations. Following this, the Government has made plan of action on the implementation of UPR recommendations beneath different thematic issues. A total of 127 pertinent human rights issues have been included in the planning.

In this regard, the NHRC has formed a task force headed by its Commissioner Gauri Pradhan including secretary, directors and other senior officials for the monitoring of the UPR recommendations. Monitoring is being carried out on regular basis whether or not the first year implementation status of the plan has progressed from the side of the government.

The NHRC is, therefore, all set to publicize the report any time soon mentioning the

National Human Rights Institutions (NHRIs) of Nepal had submitted a joint report on the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) on human rights situation in Nepal to the UN Human Rights Council, Geneva at the end of year 2010 as a member of United Nations. The three NHRI entities of Nepal include the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC), the National Women Commission (NWC) and the National Dalit Commission (NDC).

The comprehensive review had been made on the issues of various human rights enshrined in HR conventions and Protocols to which Nepal is a party and overall human rights situation in Nepal over the past four years. These apart, the review had also been made on the peace process, transitional justice, condition of disappeared persons and impunity.

recommendations, commitment expressed by the Government, implementation status and the activities pertaining to the NHRC endeavours.

The Universal Periodic Review (UPR) is a unique process which was introduced by Human Rights Council, Geneva in 2006. It involves a review

of the human rights records of all 192 UN Member States once every four years. It provides an opportunity for all member states to declare what actions they have taken to improve the human rights situations in their countries and to overcome challenges for the enjoyment of human rights.

Incident of Death Monitored in Solukhumbu

Solukhumbu: National Human Rights Commission monitored a death case of Bipin Bastola who worked as a teacher in Himganga Higher Secondary School at Choulakharka, Solukhumbu. The victim's family had registered the case at the NHRC asking to investigate the incident.

With the deployment of NHRC team therefore monitoring was carried out on the incident from Feb 13 to 19, 2012.

During the monitoring, the team visited Choulakharka VDC and district headquarter Salleri of Solukhumbu and met with

victim's family, witnesses, police and other stakeholders in connection with the incident. The investigation process is now underway at NHRC.

Okhaldhunga Prison Monitored: Improvement Recommended

Khotang: Following the news published in the Kantipur daily, a monitoring team deployed by NHRC Sub Regional Office, Khotang carried out on-the-spot monitoring at the district prison of Okhaldhunga on the basis of sou motu cognizance on February 2 and 3, 2012.

The team met with the Chief of Prison Administration of Okhaldhunga, Subash Bhattarai, inmates serving their jail term, Chief District Officer Deorshi Sapkota and Superintendent of Police Abi Narayan Kafle and had comprehensive discussion on the basic amenities provided to the inmates and the areas that needed improvement.

During the monitoring, the team found that the prison cells accommodated more inmates than

their capacity. In the capacity of 50 inmates including 25 males and 25 females each, 76 inmates including 63 males, 9 females including 4 children were kept. The physical condition of the prison appeared to be acutely miserable with its age-old infrastructures. The entire building would face devastation during the occurrence of natural catastrophe such as earthquake, the prison officials were quoted as saying.

The monitoring team has forwarded the suggestions with regard to the recommendations on the improvement of physical condition of the district prison to be forwarded to the Government. The suggestions include immediate renovation of the prison, necessary arrangement of amenities to be provided to the inmates as per the rules, arrangement of

the separate cells for the mentally ill prisoners kept together with other normal inmates and the arrangement for the dependant children of the inmates.



A Scene of prison premises at Okhaldhunga district in East

Photo: Sub Regional Office, Khotang

Consultation on the Optional Protocol to CRC held: Govt. Urged to Ratify the Protocol

Lalitpur: A delegation comprising the office bearers of the National Coalition for Children as Zones of Peace and Child Protection (CZOPP) (Human Rights Treaty Monitoring Coordination Committee (HRTMCC)) presented a letter to the Commission amidst a programme held during their visit to the NHRC.

The letter stresses on lobbying with regard to the signing of Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of Child (CRC) on communication procedures following the landmark step for its adoption by the UN General Assembly.

Presenting the letter, the delegates including Mr Tarak Dhital, Chairperson - CZOPP and Mr. Krsihna Subedi, Coordinator - HRTMCC have urged the Commission to host a larger consultation that would create pressure on the Government of Nepal for the ratification of the Optional Protocol to the CRC.

The letter reads that the entire communities working in the field of child rights have been pleased over the issuance of the open invitation for signing to the third Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Right of the Child on a communication procedures, adopted on 19 December 2011 by the General Assembly in its resolution 66/138. The signing ceremony was scheduled for 28 February



Chairperson Upadhyay with the delegates at a consultation held for cultivating pressure on the Government for the ratification of the third Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Right of Child

Photo: Sarki Man Tamang

2012 in Geneva, Switzerland and thereafter at United Nations Headquarters in New York.

The delegates expressed their worries that the Government hasn't come up with the clear substantive view with regard to the signing of the Optional Protocol to the CRC despite strong ground. The request, therefore, has been made that the NHRC utilize its expertise for providing suggestions and cultivating pressure on Government for the ratification of the Optional Protocol to CRC.

Through the letter, they have also

urged the Commission to organize awareness raising programme among the government agencies.

Speaking at the programme, the NHRC Chairperson Upadhyay said that the matter on the concept of reformatory as well as juvenile justice should be raised by giving highest priority to them in the present child rights scenario in the country.

Since the children can't raise their voice for themselves, child rights are to be addressed in collaboration with the international agencies, suggested the Chairperson.

Meanwhile, by issuing a statement, Special Representative of the Secretary General of Violence Against Children, Santos Pais has welcomed UN General Assembly for the adoption of a new protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child introducing a system of individual complaints or children.

The Protocol introducing a system of individual complaints for children is the third protocol of the Convention complementing the Optional Protocols on the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution and Child Pornography and on the involvement of Children in Armed Conflict, which entered into force in 2002.

Monthly Status of the NHRC Decisions (Feb, 2012)

During the month of February, 2012 the NHRC has settled the cases on various complaints registered at the central and regional offices. The settled cases are in connection with 13 cases of illegal killing, 1 case of torture and 1 case of disappearance. Similarly, 27 cases of administrative justice side and 10 cases of torture have been finalised.

The recommendations have been sent to the concerned with regard to the compensations to the victim's family and prosecution against the perpetrators.

Killing of a Woman Draws Widespread Concern: Superstitions, Responsible for Spine Chilling Murder

Chitwan: As the International Women's Day was approaching at the threshold, Thegani Devi Mahato, a 40 year-old woman was killed by a mob at Madi in Chitwan. This is yet another incident of premeditated killing which was said to have taken place on charge of practicing witchcraft, the police investigation reveals.

While the Police investigation is underway, the NHRC has been closely monitoring the follow up situation with regard to the incident. The NHRC Sub Regional Office Butwal has expressed outright condemnation over such inhuman act against someone who was destitute and marginalized. The incident of the spine chilling murder has drawn widespread concern. Meanwhile, the Government has provided NRS 1 Million as a compensation to the family members of the victim.

Thegani Devi Mahato was mercilessly beaten and set on fire while she was still alive. She breathed her last as the flame enveloped her shortly after she was set ablaze. This murder was reported to have been committed on the direction of Mahato's father-in-law Bikram Mahato, eight family members and the so called shaman Jugeshwor Mahato. The locals couldn't dare to intervene the scene and come forward to rescue helpless victim Dengani Devi as they were threatened by the mob, the report says.

It is learnt that ten people in the area have been rounded up in suspicion of their involvement in the heinous murder. The arrestees are Bikram, his wife Bikramiya and son-in-law and four daughters in connection with the incident. They are kept at the Area Police Office Madi. The shaman Jugeshwor Mahato has also been nabbed by the

police on the ground of inciting the incident.

The victim Thegani Devi Mahato, a widow of 40 years, mother of two children - a boy of 12 years and a girl of 9 - originally hailed from Chitwan district, 150 km away from the capital city Kathmandu.

Although the awareness raising programmes are held in the incident prone areas of the country yet the legacy of superstitious hysteria resulting in illegal killings is pervasive in parts of the country. In the past, the series of incidents of witch hunting has been monitored by the NHRC. Following the monitoring on 16 cases of witch hunting so far, the Commission has conducted awareness raising and mediation programmes including the recommendations made for the compensation as well as the prosecution against perpetrators.

Interaction held on Consumer Rights

Morang: The NHRC Regional Office Biratnagar organized an interaction in Biratnagar on consumers' rights entitled "Monitoring of the Rights of the Consumers: Effectiveness and Challenges" on February 3, 2012.

The programme also focused on the NHRC's efforts and engagement for the endorsement of Monitoring Guidelines, 2068. Chaired by the Regional Head Kosh Raj Neupane, the programme was organized in collaboration with Public Forum and Consumers Rights Protection Forum.

During the programme, discussions were held on the monitoring initiatives taken up by Government of Nepal and their achievements.

Presenting a paper, Head of District Commerce Office, Gopi Ghimire mentioned that on-going monitoring has sensitized business houses and general people about their duties and rights respectively. He informed that a few legal actions have been taken following the market monitoring.

He, however, lamented that the government lags behind in providing sufficient resources for the monitoring.

Presenting the paper, Director Bed P. Bhattarai shared the NHRC's guidelines on the rights of the consumers. He also went on making the details of the NHRC's actions in the area. Regional Head Kosh Raj Neupane responded to the queries and concerns raised by the participants of the programme.

District Education Officer Yogendra Baral, Chairperson of the public Forum Uttam Dhungel, Mohan Bhattarai commented on the paper.

85 Participants comprising the Chiefs of the Education, Health, Agriculture, Security, Local Development, Electricity Authority, Commerce Department, Human Rights Workers, Consumer



NHRC Directors and the Experts along with the participants of interaction programme on consumer rights held in Biratnagar in Morang

Photo: Regional Office Biratnagar

Rights Workers, Professors and Legal Professionals representatives of local Media among others were present in the programme.

The programme was telecast by the local cable TV stations Makalu and Himshikhar respectively while local media made coverage of the programme.

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NHRC holds...

Similarly, Sushil SJB Rana, secretary of the Ministry of Home Affairs, claimed that petro-crisis has not affected peace and security of the country. Home ministry is ever ready to extend support for market monitoring as and when the support is sought by the concerned, assured Mr. Rana.

He informed that security maintenance notification was issued to all wholesalers and dealers accordingly. Underscoring the

resource crunch to be responsible for present difficult situation, he said, this is not because of hoarding but because of the lack of supplies.

Representatives of the stakeholder government agencies including the Director of the Department of Commerce, Director of the Nepal Oil Corporation including Secretary and the senior NHRC officials were also present in the meeting.

Shedding light on the objective and rationale of the meeting, Director Bed P. Bhattarai moderated during the proceeding of the meeting.

NHRC Monitoring Mission in Dhankuta

Dhankuta: An NHRC fact finding team deployed from January 31 to February 2, 2012 accomplished its mission in Dhankuta. The objective of the mission was to gather information about the alleged prohibition of peaceful protest and unlawful detention

of journalists by Security Forces at Dhankuta Festival area on January 29, 2012. The team met with the Chief District Officer of Dhankuta, Officials of the security forces, Journalists, Human Rights Defenders and other concerned stakeholders and collected information about the incident.

An Overview of Human Rights Situation in Western Nepal

Kaski: Human rights situation in the districts of Western Development Region remained normal with declining number of incidents of human rights violations and abuses. Yet, the human rights culture remains dormant due to the lack of rule of law and widespread impunity. The frequent bandha still continues to affect the life in the region, the report says.

During the month of February, sporadic incidents of criminal offences were reported to have taken place at places as per the report sent from the NHRC Regional Office Pokhara. The incident of killing of the local Tul Bahadur Shahi, 40 by another local Anita Karki, 30 under mysterious circumstances has challenged peace and security in the area in Baglung district. The incident as such in society has put the person's right to life in jeopardy, the report says.

The Bandha programme in protest against the killing of a Dalit affected some districts in the region. Maya BK, 27 of Tanahu had to endure brutal beating by the non-Dalit on the ground of touchability.

In another incident, health workers, in a bid to have their demand fulfilled, opted to padlock Manipal Teaching Hospital over a dispute erupted between the kin of victim and

the hospital administration. Following this, the general people had to bear the problem, the report reveals.

Person's right to private property is still in dearth as because the property arbitrarily confiscated during the armed conflict hasn't been returned to the rightful owners still today. The displaced citizens languishing in Baglung district desperately wait for their safe return to the place of their habitual residence, the report says.

The displaced citizens including Hari Subedi, Nanda Ram Kandel, Surya Chandra Kandel, Chandra Bahadur Pun, Harka Bahadur Rokka, Hom Bahadur Bhandari have submitted a letter at the District Administrative Office demanding the latter to create conducive environment for their safe return. This apparently indicates that the lines in the Comprehensive Peace Accord (CPA) haven't been translated into action in full.

The sorry state of the physical conditions of the prisons in the districts of West, lacking in adoption of scientific method of investigation in police custody, physical and mental torture inflicted on the detainees altogether suggest that the basic human rights of the detainees and inmates haven't been protected in accordance with the human rights standard.

Obliviousness in delivering justice to the general citizens as well as dilly dallying in justice delivery demonstrate that the state players bearing the responsibility to protect and promote the human rights of general citizens are dispirited to advance the justice system. As a consequence, the general people are reeling under prolonged stigmatization, the report reveals.

Above all, the prevalent political instability in the country, lack of rule of law and ever growing culture of impunity have apparently contributed to the violation of civil and political rights as well as social economic and cultural rights of the people, the report says.

Meanwhile, the report says that the NHRC Regional office has conducted investigation on the incidents of domestic violence (1), killing (4), disappearance (2) and torture (2) in Gorkha, Syangja and Kaski districts of West respectively.

Similarly, the NHRC Regional Office Pokhara has received a total of 3 complaints this past month. They include the complaints in connection with the administrative justice (Kaski) -1, missing person (Gorkha) -1 and torture (Kaski) -1. The alleged perpetrators are the police and the then Maoists, the report states.

An Overview of Human Rights Situation in Eastern Nepal

Khotang : The prevailing human rights situation in and around Khotang District in East is based on the complaints registered at the NHRC sub-regional office, Khotang and on-the-spot monitoring and investigation carried out at the disposal of the Sub Regional Office, Khotang.

The NHRC Khotang Office monitored the agitation launched by the Federation for the indigenous community against the case petitioned against the four youths of Diktel on the accusation of slaughtering of bull. The monitoring was carried out incessantly from 4th till 14th Poush, 2068. Similarly, monitoring was also conducted on intimidation harboured against the local media persons of Radio Rupakot, Radio Halesi, Haribol Acharya – the district correspondent of Avenues, Dilli Man Rai of Gorkhapatra Daily, District representative of INSEC Sahendra Rai and Dilip Khatri of Annapurna Post. The latter had broadcast and published news of enforced donation campaign launched among the secretaries of 76 Village Development Committees by the Khumbuwan Rastriya Mukti Morcha on the

ground of upcoming district convention. Following this, the NHRC Sub Regional Office, Khotang serving as catalyst had invited PK Khumbu -the district president of the Khumbuwan Rastriya Mukti Morcha, KRMM cadres, media persons, Chief District Officer of Khotang, Local Development Officer, district level political leaders including the Superintendent of Police and had held discussion to sort out the problem.

Meanwhile, monitoring was carried out on the overall human rights situation of the district including the district prison of Okhaldhunga district from February 1 till 7, 2012. On February 4, a discussion was held among the non-governmental organizations active in the district and developed human rights network among them.



Sub-regional Head Lok Nath Ghimire, Khotang along with the invitee Guests at an Interaction held on the Role of Stakeholders in Minimizing the Violation against Women

Photo: Sub Regional Office, Khotang

Likewise, an interaction was held entitling the role of stakeholders in minimizing the violence against women on February 3, 2012. The participants of the programme comprised of the representatives of various stakeholder agencies of the district.

Planning Meeting on Child Rights with Save the Children for 2012

Kathmandu: Save the Children in collaboration with NHRC organized workshop relating to child rights plan for the year 2012.

The NHRC Secretary Bishal Khanal, in his opening remarks, urged the development of professional plan for the protection and promotion of the rights of the child. He also urged to make a plan paralleled to the NHRC strategic objectives. He also shared that involvement of the child rights focal officers was added advantages for the workshop that enabled to make the plan worthy and effective.

Similarly, Director Bed Prasad Bhattarai emphasized on the strategic and professional relation between Save the Children, which has nearly hundred years of history and the institution like NHRC as constitutional body. He pointed out some of the activities carried out jointly by the both and also explored the strategic relation with Save the Children. Dr. Neena Karki from the Save the Children also wished for the success of the workshop and lauded the NHRC endeavours for the protection and promotion of the rights of children in Nepal.

At the workshop, Human Rights Officer Manju Khatiwada presented the NHRC mandates on rights of child and objectives and expected outcome of the workshop. Likewise, Human Rights Officer Shree Ram Adhikari presented on Human Rights

and Crime, NHRC involvement in Child Rights, status of Child Rights Cases and major areas focused on Child Rights for the Plan of 2012. Similarly, Dilli Guragain, Advisor of the Save the Children presented the status of law, plans and policies on the protection of Child Rights and International Protection Mechanisms including third Optional Protocol to CRC.

New plan basically focuses on the protection and promotion of rights of child giving priority to abolishing corporal punishment from the government and private schools. The plan also includes the monitoring on the international as well as state obligations through different UN mechanisms including the provision relating to child rights in HRAP.

At the closing of the workshop, Director Bhattarai remarked that two days hard efforts of the participants has helped develop the excellent plan for the year 2012 to protect the rights of the child. He extended sincere thanks to the paper presentators, representatives of Save the Children and NHRC staff members for their active participation in the workshop.



Dr. Neena Karki of Save the Children, NHRC Secretary Bishal Khanal and Director Bed Prasad Bhattarai, facilitating in the workshop on Child Rights Planning

Photo: Child Rights Desk

Save the Children is key donor to the NHRC for the protection and promotion of child rights in Nepal since 2005. After the successful completion of the plan of 2011, the workshop has evolved the plan for the 2012. Save the Children extends financial support to the NHRC for the wider protection of child rights in Nepal via stipulated plan.

NHRC Child Rights Focal Officers from Dhangadhi, Nepalgunj, Pokhara, Butwal, Biratnagar, Lalitpur and Save the Children Regional Officers from its various regional offices participated in the planning workshop.

Consultative Meeting on Draft Complaint Handling Guidelines, 2068

Lalitpur: A consultative meeting was held at the NHRC central office on the draft on complaint handling guidelines. seeking the views and suggestions from the concerned in line with the international human rights standard.

The objective of the programme was to facilitate the comments and suggestions in order to maintain the uniformity in investigation procedures so that the entire process of investigation on the violations of

human rights could be performed in swift and well organized way. Seeking the views and suggestions from the concerned in line with the international human rights standard, the programme also aimed at inculcating responsibility and accountability at all levels.

Deputy Director Yagya Prasad Adhikari had shouldered up the responsibility to give the shape before it was tabled before the Commissioners, the NHRC Senior Officers holding different offices / divisions

namely protection, promotion and Legal Aid Divisions of the Commission.

The session mainly focused on the working modality, field exercise and completeness of the Guidelines.

The programme also threw light on the cases taken up on the basis of sou motu cognizance, referral mechanism in accordance with the newly enacted Act and the availing of the expert service as and when necessary.

Workshop on Human Rights held in Jumla

Jumla: The NHRC Sub-Regional Office, Jumla organized a workshop on Basic Human Rights in Jumla. The objective of the workshop was to share information on basic human rights and intensify knowledge of basic human rights at local level.

At the workshop, the attention of the stakeholders was drawn to the local level initiatives for the

protection of human rights that would help foster human rights culture in the district. The workshop sessions were facilitated by Madev Panta, Chief District Officer, Kamal Lamsal - Secretary, Local Peace Committee, Advocate Padam Bahadur Shahi, Min Bahadur Mahat and Human Rights Officer of KIRDARDS. Speaking at the programme, Rajendra Prasad Naupane, Officiating Head of NHRC Sub Regional Office,

Jumla shared the information on the NHRC, evolution, concept and development of human rights.

31 participants including the representatives from the government and non-governmental sectors including the representatives of INSEC, Dalit Sewa Sangh, Human Rights workers and local level journalists took part in the two day long workshop.

Consultation for the Improvement of Law relating to the Senior Citizens

Lalitpur: A consultation programme on the draft report with regard to the Senior Citizens Act was held on February 7, 2012.

Chaired by Member Ram Nagina Singh, the programme was held with the objective to provide suggestions on the amendment to be facilitated on the draft report of the said Act.

Expert Thakur Raman Acharya presented the paper on the review report on senior citizens Act. Following the paper presentation, the participants facilitated their suggestions and comments on various areas related to the Senior Citizens Act. Also, pointing out the deficient clauses in the law, the participants forwarded their views on the vital substantive clauses to be incorporated in the Act.

Forwarding the proposal to amend the existing Act, the participants also explored the problems lying in the Senior Citizens Act, 2053. Citing the weaknesses and lacking in the Act, they also stressed on the amendment on the provisions laid out in the Senior Citizens Act, 2065.

Comprehensive discussions were held on various other provisions to be included in the Act. They also stressed on the provisions of health insurance,

fulfilment of minimum basic needs with the resources available, establishment of geriatric village in all 75 districts, provident fund for the persons working in the private companies equal to that of the civil servants, refunding of the fund after they cross the age of 60, transferring of geriatric home to the private undertakings.

Similarly, the suggestions were placed with regard to the fund received from the donor agencies for the management of geriatric home, collaboration between the people and government for taking care of the geriatric home, municipalities to allocate the budget from its income for the welfare of the senior citizens.

On the occasion, organizing of training for life-skill development for senior citizens and expansion of geriatric village were suggested at the programme.

The participants also outlined the need of the adoption of 4Rs policy for those who operate the geriatric village as per the provisions included in the Act.

Stressing on the preparation of the draft with regard to Senior Citizens Act to be in line with Human Rights Based Approach (HRBA), the

participants also urged the government and non-governmental service providing companies to make the facilitator/escort available while giving regular normal services to the senior citizens.

Considering the Act to address the generation gap, the participants have urged the Act to include provisions from gender perspectives.

Also discussed was the matter of retirement plan including the University of Third Age (UTA).

Apart from the prevalent policies adoption, suggestions and comments raised during the programme would be included in the report with high priority and, if skipped inadvertently, those would also be included prior to sending the report to the concerned, Member Ram Nagina Singh said in his concluding remark.

35 participants comprising Member Ram Nagina Singh, senior officials including the secretary Bishal Khanal, Director Bed Prasad Bhattarai, Departmental Heads and other staff members were present in the consultation programme.

Nepal Human Rights Int'l Film Festival Held in Capital

Kathmandu: The Human Rights Film Center (HRFC) had organized Nepal Human Rights International Film Festival (NHRIFF)-2012 with the sole objective to protect and promote human rights in Nepal through the medium of film. The festival was held from 23rd till 26th February, 2012.

The National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) had extended support to organize the festival, the second of its kind in the country. The support was also received from the Film Development Board, Nepal Tourism Board and Global Peace Film Festival. The first Human

Rights Film Festival held in Kathmandu two years ago had lured the audience of all walks of life with massive response.

This year, a total of 13 films; nine from foreign countries and the remaining four from Nepal were screened. Among them, the Truth that Wasn't there by Gay Gunarate (the UK, Sri Lanka), My So-Called Enemy by Lisa Gossels (the US), Pushing the Elephant by Beth Davenport and Elizabeth Mandel (Kenya, Rwanda and the US), The Story Behind the Revolution by Khaled Sayed (Egypt, the US) and Project Happiness (the US) were screened.

Having strong connotations to justice, equality and peace, all of the films screened at the festival are hoped to help brew the culture of human rights in Nepalese society in wide spectrum, it is learned from the organizers.

Human Rights Film Centre is an organization which works on human rights through the film. Founded by a group of media professionals and filmmakers for promoting and protecting human rights in Nepal, generates public debate and encourages changes in national policy by making films on Human Rights issues and organizing festival screening.

Radio Programme 'Hamro Adhikar' (Our Rights) on Air

Morang: The radio programme 'Hamro Adhikar' (Our rights) was launched amidst a programme held at the NHRC Regional Office, Biratnagar. The programme is now aired through Biratnagar based FM station B.FM -91.2. Inaugurating the programme, Regional Head Koshraj Neupane said that the main objective of the radio programme was to help develop the human rights culture through the information aired on human rights and NHRC's activities to the people in the area.

Wishing success for the launching of the radio programme on human rights, the



Dy Director Kosh Raj Neupane of Biratnagar RO delivering inaugural speech at a function held during the launching of Radio Programme in Biratnagar

Photo: NHRC RO, Biratnagar

participating human rights organizations provided feedbacks on the nature of the programme and its significance. The speakers of the inauguration programme were Chandi Parajulli (NBA), Dipak Tiwari (INSEC), Bishnu Sharma (ABC Nepal), Dik Ghimire (AI), Jagat Thapa (Jagaran Nepal), Umesh BK (REDEF), Prakash Pariyar (COCAP), Manjita Upadhyay (WOREC), Bimala Bhusal (WOCAR) Chandra Mani Neupane (HURON), Trilok Neupane (PRAYASH), Sandesh Shrestha (BFM) and Arjun Koirala (NHRC).

The radio programme is broadcast every Saturday from 8:00 to 8:30 am.

International Media Mission at NHRC: Press Freedom and Protection of Journalists Stressed

Lalitpur: The NHRC Chairperson Justice Kedar Nath Upadhyay has said that journalists are vulnerable and often subjected to death threat over the issues of their reporting on crime. The miscreants often harbour such threats under political cover. We, together with Federation for Nepalese Journalists (FNJ), are closely monitoring the situation.'

Speaking at the consultation programme held with the International Media Mission (IMM) on 24th February, 2012, the Chairperson said, 'The emerging challenging situation with regard to the protection of journalists exists mostly in Tarai region of Nepal due to impunity.'

The Commission has taken up the cases of attack on journalists through its Regional Offices and sent in the recommendations upon dispensing decision there of. Unfortunately, the perpetrators have not been booked as per law, the Chairperson said.

Member Gauri Pradhan made the visiting team aware about the NHRC activities carried out for press freedom and freedom of expression.

He, however, said that the Commission can't demonstrate judicial activism and prosecute the alleged criminals on its own but it can send recommendations on the incidents of HR violations such as the attack on journalists.



Ms. Jacqui Park of IFJ, the representing the International Media Mission sharing at a consultation held during the visit of IMM to NHRC

Photo: Umesh Rana Magar

In this connection, the Commission has also launched investigation on sou motu basis and sent recommendations to the Government but no heed is paid to take legal action against those involved in such cases, lamented Member Pradhan.

Illustrating the collaboration practice in Mexico and Columbia, the IMM team member asked if FNJ and NHRC collaboration is possible. Responding to this, Member Pradhan said that the activity as such is not mandated to the NHRC. It, however, facilitates suggestions and even forms the task force having the support sought from the civil society and media.

Ms. Jacqui Park of IFJ, the IMM team member expressed hope that upon the endorsement of the draft resolution by the UN General Assembly, it would be instrumental for the protection of journalists worldwide.

Meanwhile, Member Pradhan urged the IMM to come up with the suggestions in writing so that the Commission would be able to work out substantially in collaboration with FNJ for the protection of journalists.

The visiting mission comprised the Article 19, FNJ, World organization of community radio and Media report international. Mr. Shiva Gaole, president of FNJ had led the mission to the NHRC.

Passage of NHRC Act

Kathmandu: The Constituent Assembly in the capacity of Legislature Parliament has enacted the much awaited National Human Rights Commission Act, 2068 recently. Unlike the previous Act, the newly enacted Act contains 35 sections and various sub-sections under 4 different chapters.

The new Act, thus, came into force with effect from January 20, 2012.

For the new NHRC Act, browse the link below in the NHRC's URL
<http://www.nhrcnepal.org//nepali/legislation.php>

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