



# Newsletter



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## NHRC Retains its 'A' Status



**LALITPUR:** The National Human Rights Commission has received a shot in the arm by retaining its “A” status in its accreditation with the International Coordination Committee (ICC) of the National Human Rights Institutions (NHRIs), Geneva despite widespread criticism from civil society organizations mentioning the constitutional and legal provision of the NHRC was not consistent with the Paris Principles.

Just a month after the appointment of the Commissioners to National Human rights Commission, Nepal (NHRC), the International Coordinating Committee of National Human Rights Institutions (ICC) has given re-accredited the status with ‘A’ category. Since the time of its inception the NHRC has been enjoying its “A” status in ICC and other UN agencies.

Regarding the provisions of new National Human Rights Act - 2012, a few Non- governmental organizations had lodged complaints against the NHRC soon after the Act came into

force. The complainant had put forward their request before the ICC to review the status of the Commission mainly questioning on number of issues pertaining to the selection and appointment of Commissioners, financial autonomy, staffing of the commission and inadequate authority to look into rights violation cases of Nepal Army etc.

On being asked several questions by Sub Committee of the Accreditation under the ICC regarding the allegations made in the complaint against the NHRC-Nepal. International Relation Desk of the Commission with due consultation with the past and present Commission including the Secretary rendered letter in defense to the Committee and explained how national legal and constitutional provision are paralleled to the Paris Principles.

As on date 7 November, 2014, the Sub Committee of Accreditation recommended to the ICC that the NHRC Nepal shall be in “A” status. An endorsement of the ICC bureau, a higher authority, will formally recognize the re-accreditation, the letter sent by the Sub-Committee

on Accreditation (SCA) of ICC to the NHRC reads. The 28<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting of the ICC which is scheduled to be held in Geneva next March will officially adopt the recommendation of the Sub Committee of Accreditation.

*“The re-accreditation has enhanced the credibility of the institution and recognized its independent status.”*

## Press Release

December 17, 2014

### NHRC condemns the Peshawar Massacre

The serious attention of the National Human Rights Commission has been drawn to the spine-chilling incident of massacre of innocent school children and teachers in Peshawar, Pakistan on December 16, 2014 by Talibani rebels.

The Commission condemns the horrendous attack targeted to the innocent children and general people. The Commission, therefore, would like to draw the attention of the United Nations including the international community to eliminate and encumber such incidents and to make initiatives for the protection of the right to life, freedom and dignity.

The Commission, praying for innocent ones killed in the incident to rest in eternal peace, extends its condolences to the bereaved families.

**Mohna Ansari, Spokesperson**

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# Human Rights Friendly Infrastructures and Facilities urged

**LALITPUR:** A high level team of NHRC, under the leadership of Commissioner Sudip Pathak and Govinda Sharma Poudel, has monitored the prisons and detention centers across the country including Kaski, Parbat and Baglung districts in initial phase.

Upon monitoring the district prisons, the attention of the authority has been drawn to the sorry state of district prisons of Kaski, Parvat and Baglung, especially their extremely ramshackle physical infrastructures.

Preliminary report submitted by the monitoring team says that all the detention centers and prisons are overcrowded lacking basic facilities like medical facilities, sanitation, and so on. The team found the jail accommodated 520 inmates in the actual capacity of just 60 inmates.

Expressing the serious concern about the sorry state of existing jails in various districts, the Commission has drawn the attention of the government to the miserable condition of physical infrastructure of the prisons and

detention centers and called on authorities to make necessary improvement so that human rights of the detainees is upheld even while they are serving their term.

The report also suggests some minors are also found living with their parents in some jails with no prospects of future. ‘Their future course of life must be determined and ensured’, the report expresses a sense of urgency.”

Several commissions that were formed in the past have recommended measures to improve the safety and well-being of inmates. Had these recommendations been acted upon, jails in Nepal would have reached international standards,” said Commissioner Pathak.

Earlier, the NHRC had monitored Nakkhu Jail of Lalitpur and Hanumandhoka detention centre.

The NHRC members were accompanied by Investigation and Planning Division Head Yagya Prasad Adhikari NHRC/Regional Office Head Dr. Tikaram Pokhrel, Human Rights

Officers, Shyambau Kafle, Jyoti Ghimire, and some human rights defenders.

Meanwhile, Commissioner Govinda Sharma Paudyal participated in the program entitled ‘The Sixth Year Strategic Plan of the Commission and Universal Periodic Review (UPR)’ organized in Kaski, Parvat and Baglung districts.

At a meeting with the Regional Administrator and the Office Chiefs in Pokhara, Commissioner Paudyal said that the NHRC would focus on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights of the people in order to materialize the recently conceived NHRC maxim, “Access to human rights in every household, a base of peace and development” and he called on all to pledge support from their end.

Similarly, civil society representatives and the coordinator of the forthcoming Magna Meet-2014 called on the Chairperson and the Commissioners. The Commission has said that it will actively participate in the event.



Commissioners Govinda Sharma Paudyal and Sudip Pathak with other NHRC officials during the course of monitoring on the prisons and detention centers in West

Photo: Regional Office, Pokhara

# Practice of Untouchability, a Curse for the Country: Chairperson

Photo: Janak Raj Bhatta, Central Office

**LALITPUR:** Dalit women rights workers have requested the National Human Rights Commission for an initiative to put an end to the discriminatory behavior against Dalit women.

The delegation led by the 'Dalit Women Association' came up with their grievances and made this appeal before the NHRC officials.

Speaking on the occasion, Chair of 'Dalit Women Association,' Durga Sob said that Dalit women have been enduring pervasive discriminatory behavior. She also said that milk produced by the community hasn't been bought by the Non-Dalit and Dalits have been facing the problem of widespread practice of untouchability. She further added that the rights of Dalit women have been violated since they have been undergoing the plight of both physical and mental torment on the ground of inter-caste marriage.

Underscoring the representativeness of the Dalit women being feeble in society despite the fact the slogan of social inclusion is given considerable hype,



Chairperson Justice Anup Raj Sharma and Commissioner Mohan Ansari with the representatives of the Dalit Women Rights workers at a meeting held at NHRC

she urged the Commission to play a constructive role for the protection and promotion of the rights of Dalit women in the country.

Portraying the practice of untouchability as the curse for the country, Chairperson Justice Anup Raj Sharma pointed out the awareness on instilling attitudinal change.

He stressed on empowering the Dalit community to put an end to all kind of ill-treatment including untouchability

endured by the Dalit community in society.

On the occasion, Commissioner Mohna Ansari said that the Commission is well aware about the rights of the Dalits and thus remains always alert and effortful for the protection and promotion of human rights of Dalit women.

She assured to render support to the Dalit community to establish their rights.

## End all Forms of Discrimination: NHRC

**LALITPUR:** Chairperson Justice Anup Raj Sharma has said that the discriminatory practice on the basis of caste and profession has discarded people's right to live with dignity and such practice should be eliminated as soon as possible.

Sharma made this statement responding to a delegation from the Nepal Khadgi Service Society.

The Nepal Khadgi Service Society, an umbrella organization of the Khadgi community presented the memorandum before the newly appointed NHRC officials about the discriminations allegedly faced by them.

At the backdrop of the caste based discrimination endured by the Khadgi community, Chairperson Sharma said that a person should be allowed to change their surname and for this there needs to be a legal provision.

Speaking on the occasion, Commissioner Prakash Osti, lamenting over the plight the community of Nepal Khadgi Service Society, said that the identity crisis leading to the problem of caste discrimination is well understood.

A person should have the right to live with dignity without being discriminated. If an attempt is made to discriminate an individual on the basis of caste or profession, it is a downright violation of human rights, he added.

Commissioner Mohna Ansari said "The government should create an environment where no one is discriminated against for his/her profession or caste. A special program should be launched to curb such social problems as soon as possible."

Also speaking on the occasion, Manoj Newa Khadgi, chair of the Nepal Khadgi Service Society said that with the

widespread discriminatory behavior endured by the community, they have been facing adverse psychological impact. He also slammed the vernacular dictionary for defining the word that insults the community and asked to amend it as soon as possible.

They objected to the interpretation of Persian word 'Kasai' the slaughterer meaning Khadgi. They unanimously wanted such despising definition from dictionary to be rewritten with necessary corrections. They also demanded changing their surname in their citizenships as per their choice which has not yet been addressed until today.

They also appealed to the NHRC Officials to issue the directives to the concerned government bodies to evolve necessary solution of the problem faced by the community.

16 Day campaign against VAW

# Solidarity for the Rights of the Victims of VAW, Action urged



Participants expressing their solidarity for the right of victims of violence against women in the NHRC Central Office

Photo: Janak Raj Bhatta, Central Office

**LALITPUR:** The National Human Rights Commission organized an interaction program on the occasion of the 16 Days of Activism against Gender Violence.

By internalizing the international slogan, 'Let's challenge militarism and end violence against women,' the program aimed at facilitating an opportunity to individuals and groups in national level to call for the elimination of all forms of violence against women. The objective of the program was also to bring about mass awareness against gender-based violence as a human rights issue at the local and national levels and also to express solidarity against VAW.

In a nutshell, as envisaged by the campaign in international level, the core objective of the campaign was to increase women's safety by highlighting the nature and prevalence of violence against women, to raise awareness on violence against women as a human rights issue, to show solidarity among women around the world, promote women's leadership, lobby government and strengthen local work to tackle violence against women.

Keeping in the mind the importance of all human rights including women's rights, therefore, the Commission is all set to formulate its Six Year Strategic plan on the basis of maxim 'Human rights for all in every household, a base of peace and development.'

Organized by Gender and Social Inclusion Division, NHRC Central

Office, the program was taken to the outskirts of main city Kathmandu to Charikot, Dolakha district and Chautara, Sindhupalchok district.

The participants at the program included honorable district judge, district administration office, organizations and agencies working for the cause of women's rights, women development office, Nepal Police, health workers, legal professionals, and representatives of district based political parties and journalists among others.

Similarly, a program entitled 'The Role of Nepal Police in Minimizing the Violence against Women' was organized in the district police office of Charikot, Dolakha district on December 4, 2014. The personnel based in Dolakha district police office were trained on human rights and violence against women.

The team took to Chautara, the district

headquarter of Sindhupalchok district where a program entitled 'The role of Stakeholders in the Protection of Victim of VAW' was held on 5 December, 2014.

Chaired by the Commissioner and Spokesperson Mohna Ansari, the program was facilitated by the Human Rights Officers Sarita Gyawali and Neetu Gadtula.

This year, the national theme for the campaign is set as 'Peace at home is the base for peace in the world: assume zero tolerance against VAW'

It was unveiled through the program held at Sindhupalchok that an FIR was registered by a victim about being allegedly raped by an accused whose identity was reported to be known as a personnel from Armed Police force. As per the report of the team NHRC, despite the report being registered the perpetrator roamed about scot free on the ground of being police. The Commission has, therefore, commenced the monitoring to seek truth about the incident, the report says.

To raise awareness and trigger action to end the global scourge of violence against women and girls, the UN observes International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women on 25 November every year. The 16 Days of Activism against Gender Violence which follow (ending on 10 December, International Human Rights Day) are a chance to mobilize and raise awareness.



Participants representing the police department at a program held on the protection of the rights of women in Dolakha district

Photo: Representative from Central Office

# The War-Era Incidents investigated

**BARDIYA:** The Commission commenced the investigation on the complaints from Rajapur area regarding the armed conflict period incidents of killing, disappearances and torture on November 13, 2014. The investigation was launched via the NHRC Regional Office, Nepalgunj. During the investigation, the team met with the complainants, families of the victims, eye-witnesses of the incidents, stakeholder authorities and collected the information and the necessary documents related to the incidents. The team also held discussion with the victims' families form Rajapur, Badalpur, Naya Gaon, Manau, Patabhar, Khairichandanpur,

Vimmapur Village Development Committees.

The team accomplished the investigation on six complaints on the incidents of disappearances in which Basantu Ultewa, Bagali Chaudhary, Lautan Chaudhary, Gopal Chaidhary, Mangry Chaudhary Mahesh Chaudhary of Badalpur VDC were said to have been disappeared. Investigation was also conducted on the incidents of torture inflicted on the complainant



NHRC Officials during the course of investigation on the war-era incidents in Bardiya district

Photo: Regional Office, Nepalgunj

Gayaprasad Chaudahry of Rajapur VDC. The preliminary investigation on the disappearance of Lahanu Tharu of Naya Gaon VDC, Ward No. 4 was also conducted.

# People of Far West still endure Food Scarcity, Easy access to Food recommended

**DARCHULA:** The NHRC Dhangadhi Regional Office organized a one day interaction program on Right to Food situation in Darchula district. Darchula had suffered heavy floods last year and a majority of people getting displaced from their homes.

The objective of the program was to know the situation of right to food in the district and to empower the local human rights defenders for the protection and promotion of Right to Food. The program also aimed at making the state authorities more responsible and accountable.

During the interaction, it has been found that Darchula was facing food scarcity in the past and total production of food grain was insufficient for the people. They depended on food brought from other nearby districts.

In this regard, the Interim Constitution of Nepal – 2007 has guaranteed the Right to Food sovereignty and ICCPR-1966 and Nepal as a party to these HR instruments have also guaranteed the right to food and freedom from hunger.



Officiating Director Mohan Dev Joshi along with the participants at a program held on the right to food in Darchula district

Photo: Regional Office, Dhangadhi

As per the report, the people of Darchula, especially the flood victims are facing acute problems for want of food.

At the program, Mohan Dev Joshi, Officiating Director of the Regional Office Dhangadhi stressed that the state has to ensure the right to food and has to increase the availability of food with easy access to food where

people can buy the essential food stuff freely and comfortably.

Most of the participants of the program raised their concern that there must be free and fair distribution of food with nutrition and access to food for the marginalized and vulnerable community in the area.

## TJ Mechanisms just a Supplementary of Criminal Justice System, not an Alternative: Chairperson

**L**ALITPUR: Chairperson Justice Anup Raj Sharma has said that the Transitional Justice Mechanisms viz. Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) and Commission for the Inquiry on Disappearances (CID) cannot be the alternative of criminal justice system, but just a supplementary.

He added that the NHRC representative could be withdrawn from the recommendation committee

instantly if the committee breaches the mandates.’

Chairperson Sharma also said that the NHRC is downright against the recommendation of political cadres and individuals charged with human rights violations for the positions in the proposed commissions.

He made these remarks at an event organized with a delegation from Nepal Bar Association at NHRC.

The delegation had called on the Commission to apprise the human rights concerns in the country to the newly appointed officials.

At the program, NBA General Secretary Sunil Kumar Pokharel said only the commissions formed in line with the Supreme Court order and principles of international law can ensure justice to the victims.

NHRC officials said that the collective efforts with ample collaboration will

help develop human rights culture in the country. At the program, NBA officials also urged NHRC to monitor police custodies to develop a responsible criminal justice system.

At the conclusion of the meeting, Chairperson Sharma also reiterated that the officials ignoring the NHRC recommendations shall be exposed at national and international level.



NHRC Officials including the Chairperson Sharma, Commissioners and the representatives from Nepal Bar Association at a program held at NHRC

Photo: Janak Raj Bhatta, Central Office

## Incident of Domestic Violence monitored

**B**ANKE: NHRC Regional Office, Nepalgunj has monitored the incident of fire blazed on Surendra Sukla of Nepalgunj Municipality Ward – 6 by Nilam Sony of Nepalgunj Municipality, Ward-7.

The monitoring team deployed by the Regional Office, Nepalgunj met with the victim Sukla at Bhery Zonal hospital where he is undergoing treatment and collected necessary information from him.

According to the monitoring report, the accused Nilam Sony poured kerosene oil on Surendra Sukla when the latter refused to fulfill the financial demand of Ms. Sony according to victim Sukla. The couple were said to have been in a relationship for a long period of time.

The district police have arrested the perpetrator Nilam Sony for necessary investigation. According to Hospital sources, Mr. Sukla is out of danger now but 30 percent of his body parts have been burnt. The Commission has suggested the hospital management

for effective treatment of the victim.

With regard to the incident, the office of the women and children has also monitored the incident. Supervisor Bindu Kunwar of the Office of Women and Children has suggested the hospital to provide effective treatment to Sukla.

Earlier, eight incidents have taken place in the Banke district in which so many women and children have endured dowry related violence within the last 7 months. A number of women have been allegedly burnt on the ground of inadequate dowry offered to the family of the spouse. The incident of pouring kerosene and burning the male counterpart is the first of its kind in the area.



Human Rights Officer Ramesh Kumar Thapa monitoring the health condition of the victim of domestic violence in Banke

Photo: Regional Office, Nepalgunj

## Disabled-Friendly Law, Attitude and Behaviour a Must: NHRC

**LALITPUR:** Chairperson Justice Anup Raj Sharma has said disabled-friendly attitude, behaviors and laws are necessary to ensure the dignified life of persons with disabilities.

Responding to a delegation from the National Federation of the Disabled Nepal (NFDN) at the Commission, Chairperson Sharma said Commission may not be aware of the problems endured by the persons with disability in certain circumstances. He urged the persons having such grievances to inform the Commission.

He stressed on the implementation of the court verdicts issued in favor of disability-related cases rather than documenting them just for show.

Speaking on the occasion, Commissioner Govinda Sharma Paudel mentioned that the Commission is of the opinion to advance hand-in-hand with the plan of action aimed at promoting the rights of the persons with disabilities based on the related feedback provided by them to the Commission.



NHRC officials along with the participants of National Federation of the Disabled Nepal at a program organized at NHRC

Photo: Janak Raj Bhatta, Central Office

President of the NFDN Shudarsan Subedi had demanded special facilities from the side of the government for persons with psychosocial disabilities, muscular dystrophy, hemophilia, and down syndrome.

The participants at the program said in unison that the agreement laid out between the government and persons with disabilities have not been translated into action. They lamented that the court verdicts issued in favor of the persons with disabilities have not been implemented thoroughly

and the persons with disabilities had to bear a number of problems while commuting through public transportation. They have also been suffering from identity crisis and the women with disabilities have been falling prey of most domestic violence.

The delegation led by Sudersan Subedi, the president of NFDN presented the nine point memorandum to the Commission.

## Implementation of the NHRC Recommendations stressed



Chairperson Justice Anup Raj Sharma, Commissioners Mohna Ansari and Sudip Pathak at a program held with the civil society representatives at a meeting held at NHRC

Photo: Janak Raj Bhatta, Central Office

**LALITPUR:** Former NHRC members, civil society representatives and human rights workers have unanimously stressed mounting pressure on the government for the implementation of the NHRC recommendations.

They came up with this at a consultation program organized among the civil society representatives, human rights defenders and the former NHRC Commissioners.

Speaking on the occasion, former NHRC Members Gauri Shanker Lal Das, Professor Kapil Shrestha, Ram Nagina Singh and Dr. K.B. Rokaya said that the Commission should focus exclusively on the implementation of the past recommendations of the Commission.

Chairperson Justice Anup Raj Sharma said that the Commission would focus on the implementation of the recommendations.

Stressing on the justice delivery to the victims through the Commission of Inquiry on Disappearances (CID) and the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC), Chairperson warned, “in the event of the provision of blanket amnesty to the violators of serious human rights violations, the Commission will withdraw its representative.”

He further added, “hearing on the incidents of grave human rights violation must be entertained in regular courts.”

Also speaking on the occasion, Professor Dr. Birendra Mishra, Charan Prasai, Bishnu Pukar Shrestha, Dinesh Tripathi, Sharmila Karki, Ganesh Biswakarma, Jyoti Baniya, Durga Sob, Nirmala Sharma suggested about the future endeavors of the Commission.

Furthermore, Commissioner Prakash Osti, Sudip Pathak and Mohna Ansari also shed light on the future policies and programs of the Commission.

## Development Partners apprised to NHRC Strategic Plan (2015 - 20)

**LALITPUR:** A sharing meeting on the draft of Strategic Plan (2015 -20) was held with the UNDP Resident Coordinator Jamie Mcgoldrick and the representatives of the development partners on 28th September, 2014 at NHRC conference hall.

At the meeting, welcoming the participants to the meeting, NHRC/ Acting Secretary presented on the core content of the soon-to-be drafted strategic plan covering the period of six years beginning 2015 AD.

Portraying the strategic plan as the heart and soul of any organization, Secretary Bhattarai enumerated the achievements made by the Commission with main focus on the human rights concerns and issues to be incorporated in the strategic plan, the lessons learned in the past and the challenges to be contemplated.

He added that, as of today, the Commission has made good strides in handling 11,000 +complaints and of the total 6500 cases have been settled while 45000 have been finalized. 735 cases have been forwarded to the Government of Nepal on the basis of the NHRC investigations.

### Sharing Meeting on the Strategic Plan (2015 - 20)

He disclosed that as per the Commission's record, 14% of the recommendations has been fully implemented whereas 48% has been partially implemented and the remaining 38% is under consideration. Conversely, as per the report sent from the Government, 32 % has been fully implemented, 60% has been partially implemented and 8% remains as pending.

Secretary Bhattarai said that since the reports basically vary, they need to be verified. He added that the Commission is up front in collaboration with the Commission on the Investigation of



Commissioner Sudip Pathak and Acting Secretary Bed Prasad Bhattarai including the representatives of the Development Partners at a Sharing Meeting on the NHRC Strategic Plan (2015-20) held at NHRC.

Photo: Janak Raj Bhatta, Central Office

Abuse of Authority (CIAA) and other judiciary bodies to have its endeavors fulfilled.

He also underlined the need for institutional capacity building together with strengthening the capacity of the staff members of the Commission with regard to emerging human rights issues in the country.

Meanwhile he also shared the theme / slogan of the NHRC 'Human Rights for all in every household, the

base of peace and development,' prepared for the forthcoming 66th International Human Rights Day to be observed on 10th December, 2014.

Following the presentation, thereafter, the proceeding of the meeting focused on the feeds and inputs on the Strategic Plan from the side of the participants.

Commending the comprehensive presentation made by the Acting Secretary Bhattarai, Jean Francois Cuenodh, Head of Cooperation from Embassy of Switzerland said that conceiving and formulating the strategic plan is one endeavor and

plan to implement the strategic plan is another part.

He specifically stressed on the issue of statelessness in the country to be incorporated in the Strategic Plan. He unveiled to have learned about 4 million people being deprived of citizenship.

He said that Swiss Government has been helping for human rights system through different channels. He, however, mentioned that it is too soon to say about further extending the support.

With regard to the Secretary's concern about combating the practice of corruption, he mentioned that there are other bodies working on such burning issue. The need of the hour for the NHRC is to deviate its attention towards contentious human rights issues.

He also requested the Commission to provide the first finalized draft of strategic plan so that he, on behalf of the Swiss Government, can put forward the necessary comments and feedbacks.

Mr. Jan Moller Harsen from the Embassy of Denmark appreciated

that the NHRC is holding many consultative programs and national stakeholders and the development partners.

He added that the formulation of the strategic plan may be carried out on the basis of the lessons learned in the past.

He underlined the changes made in the strategic plan unlike the ones formulated in the past. He mentioned that the decision to extend support will depend on the concerns that the Commission had to bear the brunt of the burden due to the lack of institutional and financial challenges to be contemplated. Strengthening the institutional capacity, on the other hand, lies as the matter of concern, he observed.

He also made it clear that the Danish government's support to the commission depends on how the Commission as the constitution body obtains its independence and autonomy thereby institutionalizing it with main focus on its sustainability.

He concluded that Denmark is committed to extending its support but it will decide for further support after having concrete dialogue as to how the support can be made.

Jamie Mcgoldrick, UN Resident Coordinator congratulated the Commission for retain the category

'A' status in the International Coordinating Committee.

Talking about the soon-to-be formulated strategic plan, he laid his emphasis on the incorporating the human rights issues of needy and marginalized section of the people in Nepalese society.

He further said, 'you have the landmark achievement made on various human rights accomplishments on the one hand, you do have challenges to be surmounted over on the other.'

He urged to take the pertinent human rights issues to top level authority for their overall redress since the constitution is on the making at the moment.

He said that the UNDP is ever ready to help the Commission in all its endeavors including the formulation of the strategic plan.

'However, it is collective effort of the development partners to render support for the overall NHRC endeavors,' he observed.

Meanwhile, Acting Secretary responded to the comments facilitated by the participants of the meeting. He said that the Commission is in view of institutional reform up front as suggested by the report produced by the APF representatives headed by Sidothi.

With regard to the transitional justice mechanism, Commissioner Sudip Pathak has been nominated as one of the members of the Recommendation Committee to form two vital commissions such as Commission of the Inquiry on Disappearances (CID) and the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC), Secretary Bhattarai said.

Acknowledging the support extended by the development partners via the one and only project Strengthening the Capacity of the National Human Rights Commission (SCNHRC), Secretary Bhattarai underscored the inevitability to have the project extended as a vital support for discharging many NHRC endeavors.

He also assured that the Commission will provide the first draft of the strategic plan well in time for the necessary feed backs and comments.

Commissioner Sudip Pathak, thanking all the participants of the meeting, delivered his concluding remark. He said that the Commission with new set of Officials will advance all its activities proactively for the protection and promotion of human rights in the country.

He mentioned that the SCNHRC project is the only project in the Commission to support technically and to implement the activities smoothly. Since the project is coming to an end on Dec 2014, he urged the development partners' support through the project.

He also envisaged possible project formulation for the next six years in line with the NHRC's new strategic plan.

Concluding the meeting formally, Commissioner Pathak said that the Commission will duly incorporate all the feedbacks and comments wherever feasible.

Program was facilitated by Jaya Shor Chapagain, the Policy, Research and Planning Division.



Acting Secretary Bed Prasad Bhattarai apprising the content in the draft Strategic Plan through his presentation to the representatives of the Development Partners at a Sharing Meeting.

Photo: Janak Raj Bhatta, Central Office

## Women oriented on Human Rights in Banke

**BANKE:** NHRC Regional Office, Nepalgunj organized a human rights orientation program among human rights defenders and girls on November 11, 2014 in Banke district.

At the program, the participants were familiarized with the universal principles of human rights, norms and values of human rights, human rights laws and state obligations through the presentations of the Deputy Director Murari Prasad Kharel and Human Rights Officer Ramesh Thapa of the Regional Office, NHRC Nepalgunj.

The presentation mainly focused on the Universal Declaration of Human Rights-1948, Civil and Political Rights-1966, Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights – 1966, Convention on the Rights of Child – 1989, Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women-1979, Convention against Torture – 1984, Rights of Migrant Workers and their Families-1990, Convention against Enforced Disappearances – 2006, provisions set forth in the major human rights conventions, mandates, functions and duties of the National Human Rights Commission, difference between crime



Girls and women from Muslim community being oriented on human rights in Banke district

and rights violation, fundamental rights, and the role of the state and state bodies in the protection of human rights .

The presentations were followed by interaction among the girl participants. They expressed their gratitude to the Commission for organizing such a significant program in which they could grasp the skills and knowledge of human rights including the duties of the citizens.

The participants of the program comprised of representatives from Muslim, indigenous people, Brahmins and Chhetris among others.

The team also trained 30 Muslim women of Rajapur of Bardiya district. During the program, the participating women mentioned about the perennial



Photo: Regional Office, Nepalgunj

problems that they face. The team including Deputy Director Murari Prasad Kharel and Human Rights Officer Ramesh Thapa held discussions with the Regional Administration Head of Rajapur Basanta Kumar Kanaujiya and Regional Police Chief Bom Bahadur Khadka and drew their attention towards the problems faced by the Muslim women such as the issuance of citizenship, swift service delivery and security concerns.

Meanwhile, the NHRC Regional Office has also organized an orientation program on human rights among 35 members of 4 child Clubs of the area namely Lali Gurans Club, Milijuli Bal Club, Basanta Bal Club and Bas Bal Club.

## Indigenous People trained on Human Rights in Far West

**KANCHANPUR:** The NHRC Regional Office Dhangadhi organized a two day training on human rights among the representatives of indigenous people including the religious heads and the preachers of the area in Tribhuvan Basti, the southern part of Kanchanpur district.

The objective of the program was to familiarize the representatives from the indigenous people with the concepts and principle of human rights for the promotion and protection of human rights. The program also aimed at exploring the human rights situation of backward communities, to familiarize them with the provisions laid out in the national and international human rights instruments and also to explore challenges and the opportunities in the practical implementation of human rights principles.

were familiarized with human rights principles on the basis of the motto ‘ human rights for all in every household, a base for peace and development.’ They were also informed about the mandates, functions and duties of the Commission. The participants were familiarized with the rights provisioned for the indigenous people in the country and to bring awareness about over all human rights among them.

Forty participants including Rev. Abbot from local monastery, Rev. Father from the local church and the masters from Tharu community, civil servants from indigenous community, women activists and students among others participated in the two day long training.



Officiating Director Mohan Dev Joshi facilitating the training among the indigenous community in Kanchanpur

Photo: Regional Office, Dhangadhi

The participants

# Stakeholders debate on Human Rights Issues in the Constitution

**CHITWAN:** Stakeholder participants at a program entitled 'Human Rights Issues in the Constitution' have laid due emphasis on ensuring economic, social and cultural rights in the soon-to-be drafted new constitution.

At a workshop organized jointly by the NHRC Sub Regional Office Butwal and District Bar Association in Chitwan, the participants stressed on the problems related the ESCR rights addressed with effective remedial solutions together with the duties of citizens furnished in the new constitution.

Jaganath Bhandari, former chair of the district level Nepal Bar Association of Chitwan presented a working paper. Presenting it, Mr. Bhandari urged to revamp the provisions set forth as the fundamental rights of the citizens and to give the recognition to the provisions laid out in the international human rights conventions and treaties equal status of law so as to make the standard of human rights wider and stronger. Another participant, Advocate Surya Bohra, in his presentation, stressed on larger discussion and advocacy among the stakeholder organizations and drew the attention through

resources and provision of scientific land, guarantee of social security, employment for youth, right to health, environment and development. The participants also unanimously raised their concern with regard to the violence against women, rights against discrimination and inequality in terms of sexual orientation, disability and marital status etc. They also observed that the directives with regard to positive discrimination needs to be clear.

The participants strongly stressed on the full guarantee of human rights and fundamental freedom in federal structure.

At the program, Mohamani Dhakal of Rastriya Jana Morcha stressed on such federalism which would be congenial as well as affordable in administrative point of view while Dronbabu Sapkota of UCPN (Maoists) clarified his stance on the federalism on the basis of identity and capacity of the people. Bhupato Das of Nepali Congress expressed his hope that the human rights friendly constitution would be drafted soon.



Resource persons and participants at the program held on the human rights friendly constitution in Chitwan

Photo: Sub-Regional Office, Butwal

At the program, presenting a paper including the contentious human rights issues and concerns in the Constituent Assembly along with the mandates, duties and functions of the Commission. Deputy Director Deepak Jung Dhoj Karki asked to provide comments and suggestions from the participants regarding the human rights issues including the issue of independence and autonomy of the Commission as per the status provided by the Paris principle.

the political parties in Constituent Assembly for drafting human rights friendly constitution.

The participants also urged to include the issues related to the incidents as natural disaster since these kinds of incidents are very common in a country like ours. They also laid their strong emphasis on the right to human rights education.

Concerns were raised on the citizens' duties including the rights to water

The participants urged the Commission to take all the comments and feedback provided during the meeting.

Presided over the Chair of Chitwan Chapter Nepal Bar Association, Chudamani Sapkota, the program was participated by 35 participants including the chiefs and the representatives of the local level political parties, journalists, legal professionals and local level human rights organizations among others.

## Torture free Custody urged

**LALITPUR:** Commissioner Sudip Pathak has underscored that the Commission has been doing its utmost to help materialize the concept of torture free custody in the country.

He said this while addressing a training program entitled 'Torture free Custody' organized by Metropolitan Police Commissioners in the capital.

He called upon all stakeholder parties

to be sensitive towards the violation of the rights of detainees and to help them lead their life with dignity after the infliction of torture on them during their custody period.

At the program, Metropolitan Police Commissioner, Additional Police Inspector General Bigyan Raj Sharma as well as other high ranking officers were present.



Commissioner Sudip Pathak addressing a training on human rights to the personnel of Nepal Police

Photo: Janak Raj Bhatta, Central Office

25<sup>th</sup> International Child Rights Day

## Long Term Program urged for Conflict Affected Children

Photo: Janak Raj Bhatta, Central Office



Chairperson Justice Anup Raj Sharma and Acting Secretary Bed P. Bhattarai at a program held on the Conflict Affected Children at NHRC

**LALITPUR:** The organizations working for the armed conflict affected children have urged the Government of Nepal (GoN) to properly identify the conflict affected children, collect their factual data and bring long term programs for their well-being .

Twelve organizations working in the field of child rights have mentioned this in the Memorandum presented to the NHRC Chairperson Justice Anup Raj Sharma.

‘We demand the early implementation of the plan of action with regard to rehabilitation and integration of the armed conflict affected children which hasn’t been implemented even after four years of its announcement the GoN made on 29th December- 2010,’ the Letter of Memorandum says.

Receiving the MoU at NHRC, Chairperson Sharma said that the Commission would advance in collaboration with the organizations working in the field of rights of child.

Chairperson Sharma also affirmed the Commission will incorporate the issues relating the rights of child in the soon-to-be formulated six year strategic plan of the Commission.

On the occasion, the participating armed conflict affected children threw light on both mental and social problems they had face and appealed to the Commission to extend support for acquiring their lost rights.

The delegation led by Anjana Shakya, President of Himalaya Manav Adhikarkarmi Samuha (Himrights) – Nepal presented the 10-point memorandum letter to the Commission.

The delegation consisted of ‘Sundar Nepal’, Human Rights Network and Peace Group – Nepal, ‘Community Development Program – Nepal, NGO Federation of Nepal, ‘Child Concern Center, Nepal, ‘Village Reconstruction Organization, Nepal, Shreepura Community Development Center, ‘Integrated Community Development Campaign, Nepal, Child Welfare Society, Nepal and Village Development Center, Nepal.

## Schools monitored on Int’l Child Rights Day, Imporvement stressed

**BUTWAL:** The NHRC Sub Regional Office, Butwal observed the 25<sup>th</sup> International Child Rights Day. The NHRC marked the day with the slogan ‘Listen to the Voice of Child, Stop Child Abuse,’ and organized an interaction program among the stakeholders of Nawalparasi and Kapilvastu districts.

On the occasion, the Commission in collaboration with District Education Office and District Administration Office monitored the private and public schools of the district in order to know the situation of Child Rights and Right to Education. The monitoring team comprised Human Rights Officer Chandrakanta Chapagain,

from NHRC Sub-Regional Office, Butwal, Deputy Chief District Officer Ravi Gautam, from District Administration Office, Rupandehi and Deputy Education Officer Toya Nath Lamsal, from District Education Office, Rupandehi.

During the monitoring, the team found that toilets of the schools were shabby

due to insufficient water supply and child unfriendly portable water and tap. Only a few schools were found to have child clubs. Similarly, plywood partition between two classes in one Primary School was found causing disturbance in classes on either side. It was also found that a single teacher handled two classes simultaneously.

The team also revealed that, during the winter season, students were bound to study sitting on the cold floor and some of the schools were feeding noodles to the children. The team requested the school management not to feed noodles and come up with healthy alternatives instead.

To mark the Day, the NHRC Sub-Regional Office, Butwal also conducted the awareness program for the children of the public schools.



A scene of class room at a school in Butwal during the monitoring on the child rights

Photo: Sub-Regional Office, Butwal

## UN Human Rights Committee Called on the Commission

**LALITPUR:** The Vice-Chairperson of the UN Human Rights Committee Ms. Margo Waterval called on the Commission and met with the Chair and the Commissioners of the NHRC. She was in Nepal for her unofficial follow-up mission for reinforcing the dialogue with the national authorities, NHRC and NGOs to discuss the Committee's recommendations. The Committee has recommended to the Government of Nepal last March 2014 after reviewing the state party report. The Director of the Center for Civil and Political Rights Mr. Patrick Muztzenberg also accompanied the visiting team of UN Human Rights Committee.

During the meeting, Chair of the NHRC Justice Anup Raj Sharma extended thanks to the team on behalf of the Commission and also commended the efforts made by the Committee for the protection of civil and political rights. He also recalled a few decisions made by the Committee for the individual

complaint submitted by the Nepali victim and lauded the efforts of the Committee for the justice provided to the victim. The Chairperson Sharma also briefly explained about the current human rights situation of the country and NHRC's ongoing activities for the protection of the rights of the Nepali people.

The Vice-Chair Ms. Waterval welcomed and appreciated NHRC efforts and ongoing work for the protection and promotion of civil and political rights and congratulated the newly appointed Chair and Commissioners. During the meeting, Commissioner Prakash Osti briefly explained about the ongoing action plan and the soon-to-be drafted Strategic Plan for the next six years.

During the meeting, responding to



Chairperson Sharma and the representatives from the UN Human Rights Committee at a meeting held during the latter's visit at NHRC

a question raised by the team, Ms. Mohna Ansari, Commissioner and Spokesperson of the NHRC briefly explained about the appointment procedure of the Commission and Paris Principles. Mr. Muztzenberg shared the objective and propose of the visit of the Human Rights Committee to Nepal.

Acting Secretary Bed Prasad Bhattarai and Human Rights Officer of the International Desk Shree Ram Adhikari and INSEC Chair Subodhraj Pyakurel were also present in the meeting.

## Coordination between the NHRC and the Finnish Govt. Strengthened

**POKHARA:** The National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) with the support of Strengthening the Capacity of the National Human Rights Commission (SCNHRC), a capacity development UNDP project supporting the NHRC since 2002, organized an interaction program with Finnish decision makers at the NHRC Regional Office, Pokhara on November 10, 2014.

The one day event saw a total of 55 participants, some of which included Finnish Decision Makers such as the Finnish Ambassador to Nepal, Mr. Asko Luukkainen, Finnish Minister and Members of Parliament, Mr. Bed Prasad Bhattarai -Acting Secretary of NHRC, Acting National Project Manager Ms. Aarati Bista, UNDP Program Analyst Mr. Tek Tamata, representatives and staff from SCNHRC project and NHRC central and Pokhara Offices. Various members of the civil society, conflict victims, Human Rights Defenders, journalists and representative from



The team headed by Finnish Minister Asko Luukkainen and the NHRC staff members at a program held in Pokhara

professional organizations as well as NGOs participated in the event.

The major outcomes of the event were to strengthen coordination and relations between NHRC and Finnish Embassy, apprise the information to the Finnish delegates on NHRC's contribution for the promotion and protection of human rights including the status of progress of the programs that they provided support with and also to

make them aware about the human rights situation in Nepal, especially the working of NHRC regional office, Pokhara.

The program was opened by the Finnish Ambassador, Mr. Asko Luukkainen's speech on behalf of the mission regarding the purpose of their visit and closed by Mr. Bed Prasad Bhattarai who delivered concluding remarks on the event.

## People's Right to Health monitored in West: overall Improvement of Hospitals recommended

**BAGLUNG:** The NHRC Regional Office Pokhara carried out a monitoring mission to know the right to health of people in Baglung District and the situation of Dhaulagiri Zonal Hospital, Baglung. The monitoring team headed by Commissioner Govinda Sharma Paudyal including Deputy Director duo Yagya Prasad Adhikari and Dr. Tikaram Pokharel and Human Rights Officers Jyoti Prasad Ghimire and Syam Babu Kafle meet with the hospital management and obtained the information of existing health rights situation of the patients.

The team mainly found that there were insufficient number of doctors and nurses and the renovation and new

building work were not actively carried out by the management which hampered the patients to get proper health service from hospital.

The monitoring team also found that the hospital was not disabled friendly and most of the health related equipment and apparatus were old and obsolete. After monitoring Commissioner Paudyal issued directive to the authority to manage each and every problem as



NHRC team including Commissioner Govinda Sharma Paudyal and other staff members during the monitoring at district hospital, Baglung

early as possible. He suggested the hospital authority to apprise to the Commission about the needful if the government remained oblivion to fulfill the demand of the hospital.

## Stakeholders debate the Human Rights issues in New Constitution in Far-West

**KAILALI:** The NHRC Regional Office, Dhangadhi organized a comprehensive interaction program among the stakeholders at Lamki of Kailali district to brainstorm on human rights related issues and provisions to be incorporated in the soon-to-be promulgated constitution.

At the program, Human Rights Officer Jhanker Rawal threw light on the objective and rationale of the

program while journalist Tirtha Raj Jaisi facilitated the program.

The objective of the program was to identify and collect human rights issues of local level stakeholders and also to identify the role of local level government offices, non-governmental organizations, political parties and stakeholder authorities.

The program also aimed at learning the locally endured problems, challenges

and possibilities with regard to the rights of the Dalit, backward communities and groups and facilitating Commission with the suggestions to the problems on the basis of the in-depth situational facts discovered.

At the program,

educationist and the front runner of the civil society Badri Prasad Lamsal, Federation for Nepalese Journalists (FNJ) central level councilor Rang Prasad Timalsina,

President of Lamki-Chuha Municipal Development Committee Dil Bahadur Saud, District Executive Member of CPN (UML) Karna Jaisi, Coordinator of Disabled Awareness Society Jayaraj Dhungana, Member of Interparty Women Network Nanada Shahi, Bijaya Karki of Area Police office, Police Inspector of Lamki Police Post Nawaraj Khanal, All Nepal Revolutionary Party Member Birendra B.K. Vice Chair of Lamki Trade & Commerce Association Sushila Shahi and Station Manger of Koseli F.M. Leelaraj Khatri also shared their views on the occasion.

Thirty eight participants comprising the representatives of government offices, chiefs and representatives of local level major political parties, representatives of the NGOs, civil society, women, Dalit and media persons among others participated in the program.



Resource persons and participants at a program held on the HRs issues in new constitution in Kailali

Photo: Regional Office, Dhangadhi



Chairperson Justice Anup Raj Sharma along other commissioners and the participants from HURJA at a program held at NHRC

Photo: Janak Raj Bhatta, Central Office

## Collaborative Efforts a must for the Protection of Human Rights: Chairperson

**LALITPUR:** Chairperson Justice Anup Raj Sharma has said that the Commission will collaborate with the journalists for the protection and promotion of human rights in the country.

Underlining the need for collaboration between the Commission and the mainstream media at a program organized by Human Rights Journalists Association (HURJA), to welcome the new Officials at the NHRC premises, Chairperson Sharma said that the media has pivotal role to

help spheres of human rights reach in every household in the country.

He added that economic, social and cultural rights will be duly incorporated as a major agenda in the forthcoming Six Year Action Plan of the commission.

He reiterated that the concerned authorities will be made accountable for implementing the recommendations made by the NHRC in the past.

At the program, Commissioners Sudip

Pathak, Mohana Ansari and Govinda Sharma Poudel also spoke on the role of media in strengthening the human rights system in the country.

Drawing attention of the Commission to the issues faced by journalists in their field of work, President of HURJA, Chhatra Shankar spoke on the mechanisms of collaboration between NHRC and the association to strengthen the Human Rights condition.

## Stakeholders provide Inputs through Workshop on UPR Report

**BAGLUNG/KASKI:** Stakeholders provided feedbacks and suggestions on the Universal Periodic Review Report-2015 at the consultative workshops organized in Baglung and Kaski district of West.

Both the programs held on November 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup>, 2014 in Baglung and Pokhara were inaugurated by the Commissioner Govinda Sharma Paudyal.

At the program, the inputs and suggestions were collected from the participants comprising the chiefs and representatives of the district based government offices including

education, health, agriculture, livestock, forest, local development, administration and security offices. Also, the human rights workers, social organizations and agencies, civil society, media persons, legal professional including the people of all walks of life participated in the program.

The presentation made by the human Rights officer Shyam Babu Kafle and Jyoti Ghimire was followed by the comprehensive discussions on the contentious human rights issues and comments and feedbacks were collected for incorporating

them in the UPR report- 2015. They included education, health, domestic violence, rampant arrest spree, detention, torture and prison, right to development, rights of migrant workers, rights of senior citizens, caste based discrimination and untouchability, implementation of the provisions laid out in the international human rights conventions and treaties, transitional justice and over all human rights situation in the country.

In total, 138 participants took part in the program.

### Combat Violence against Women from Home itself: Chairperson

**LALITPUR:** The NHRC Chairperson Justice Anup Raj Sharma has stressed on the need to combat against the violence against women (VAW) from home itself.

Chairperson Sharma pointed this out while speaking at a program held on the occasion of the 16 day campaign against VAW on Tuesday.

Underscoring the need to take the movement against VAW far and wide, Chairperson opined that provided commitment is made to prevent and control VAW, the movement will be materialized.

Also speaking on the occasion, Commissioner Mohna Ansari said that

every member of the society needs to inculcate concerted efforts to put an end to VAW with high alertness. She stressed that all should have commitment and confidence in order to end pervasive VAW in society.

At the program, Division Head of Gender and Social Inclusion Sarita Gyawali, throwing light on the background of VAW, said that we all need to contribute from our own side to end the violence against women in society.

Commissioners Prakash Osti and Govinda Sharma Poudyal were also present at the event.

### Human Rights in Each Household: a Base for Peace and Development

**LALITPUR:** The National Human Rights Commission has set the slogan “Human rights in each household: a base for peace and development’ for the 66<sup>th</sup> International Human Rights Day (December 10).

The Commission will advance its human rights activities on the basis of this slogan for six years.

The Commission has urged all the concerned stakeholders to accomplish the human rights activities keeping the chief value of this slogan at the pinnacle.

### Human Rights Defenders of Asia Pacific called on the Commission

Photo: Janak Raj Bhatta, Central Office



NHRC Acting Secretary and other staff members along with the human rights defenders from Asia Pacific at a program held at NHRC

**LALITPUR:** The participants of DTP 24<sup>th</sup> Annual Human Rights and People’s Diplomacy Training for Human Rights Defenders from the Asia Pacific held in Kathmandu and Pokhara from 3-19 November, 2014 visited the NHRC.

The training was held by Diplomacy Training Program in coordination with the INSEC. There were more

than 30 participants in the training program from 14 different countries. As a part of the training program, the participants visited NHRC to acquaint with the mandate, role, duties and function of NHRC for the promotion and protection of human rights as an independent national institution.

At the program, Human Rights Officers presented on NHRC and its role for the promotion and protection of human rights. The participants of the DTP training program raised their concerns and queries after the presentation which was responded jointly by Acting Secretary Bed Prasad Bhattarai, Human Rights Officers Basudev Bajgain, Samjhana Sharma and Suresh Malla.

At the program, International Consultant John Pace shed light on the objectives of the program and also delivered vote of thanks. Executive Director of DTP Patrick Earle was also present in the program.

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