

A Report on the Cases of Violence against Women and Girls¹

The 111th International Women's Day is being celebrated with the slogan 'Women's Security, Respect, and Employment: The Foundation of Prosperous Nepal'. Nepal is a party to various conventions and treaties, including the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, issued by the United Nations in 1979. Although the condition of women in Nepal has improved, it is not satisfactory. Legal provisions related to women and the state of political participation has improved significantly during the Republican period. Despite this, women in Nepal have been subjected to various forms of structural and gender-based violence. According to the Informal Sector Service Centre (INSEC), which has been monitoring human rights and documenting incidents of human rights violations and abuses, there has not been any decrement in the incidence of violence against women and girls by 2020. This study report is based on the facts and figures recorded by INSEC on the incidents received from all the districts of the country. Incidents that have been reconciled with the police or other agencies or settled after receiving legal reparation are not included in the statistics presented below:

Types of incidents	No. of Victim 2020		No of Victim 2019	
	Women	Girls	Women	Girls
Trafficking	25	34	51	54
Attempt to trafficking	32		69	
Domestic Violence	1346		2079	
Allegation of witchcraft	58		42	
Polygamy	282		383	
Rape	648	989	530	884
Attempted to Rape	152		143	
Sexual abuse	62	335	63	365
Child marriage		40		36
Domestic killing	102		130	
Killing for Dowry	3		13	
Total	2710	1398	3373	1339
<i>From Nepal Human Rights Year Book 2020 and 2021</i>				

Social, Economic and Political changes in Nepali society, increased awareness in people, increase in literacy, efforts to improve legal and administrative mechanisms, changes in attitude towards women, behaviour in society and at home, and legal mechanisms have helped bring incidents of violence against women in public/focus/light. However, the need for legal and structural reform cannot be ruled out if we are to study the increasing

incidence of violence and abuses against women. While INSEC is monitoring the human rights situation of women, very few victims have been mentioned in some of the cases of violations. For instance, victims of unequal wages, traditional discrimination, and safe sexual and reproductive rights have not been documented. In some cases, the victims themselves do not want to bring out the incident therefore; such victims have not been included in the statistics.

The incidence of violence against women has not decreased in 2020. Although there were some reductions in the number of documented incidents, there was no substantial difference in the trend. In 2020, there were 2,605 victims of all kinds of discrimination and abuse against women. In 2020, 32 were victims of attempted trafficking, 1,346 of domestic violence, 58 of alleged witchcraft cases, 648 of rape, 152 of attempted rape cases, 62 of sexual abuse, and 25 of trafficking cases. Also, 102 women were killed by their family members. Last year, the number was 129. Three women were killed for not bringing sufficient dowry and 12 women were subjected to violence for the same reason. In some cases where women were killed by her family members, the victim's side accused their in-laws of murder while the accused party claimed it to be suicide. After the post-mortem report showed the case as suicide, it was found that the police denied filing complaint. Right to life is considered the most import

¹ January-December, 2020

human right. However, women have been killed under various pretexts. Within 2020, 102 women were killed by family members.

This year, 1,398 girls were victims of child rights violations. Among them, 989 were victims of rape, 335 were victims of sexual abuse, 34 were victims of trafficking, and 40 were victims of child marriage.

Types of Victims	Types of Incidences	Province 1	Province 2	Bagmati	Gandaki	Lumbini	Karnali	Sudur Paschim	Total
Child Rights	Child Marriage	6	4	3	5	2	17	3	40
	Trafficking	2	5	8	1	13	1	4	34
	Rape	213	176	235	74	186	48	57	989
	Sexual Abuse	61	51	81	34	72	19	17	335
	Total	282	236	327	114	273	85	81	1398
Women Rights	Trafficking	6	4	5		9	1	7	32
	Domestic Violence	80	27	70	162	668	111	228	1346
	Allegation of Witchcraft	1	23	8	2	14	8	2	58
	Polygamy	72	47	76	9	25	43	10	282
	Rape	131	81	210	36	115	30	45	648
	Attempted Rape	25	29	34	6	30	13	15	152
	Sexual Abuse	6	9	11	8	12	14	2	62
	Trafficking	3	2	5	2	11		2	25
Total	324	222	419	225	884	220	311	2605	
Grand Total		606	458	746	339	1157	305	392	4003

Acid Attack

Sanjeev Sah, 24, of Janakpurdam Sub-Metropolitan-20, Dhanusha was arrested by the District Police Office, Dhanusha on November 14, 2020 on the charge of acid attack on his wife Aarti Sah, 21, and his three-year-old daughter. Accused Sah had absconded after the incident on November 13. According to Inspector Rajesh Sigdel of the District Police Office, Dhanusha, the victim along with her three-year-old daughter was sent to Kathmandu for further treatment after receiving first aid at Janaki Health Care and Teaching Hospital in Janakpur. A case was registered against the accused in the district court on November 26. The accused are in custody for trial on the order of the District Court, Dhanusha.

Allegation of Witchcraft

In Saptari, a 35-year-old woman accused of 'witchcraft' was beaten by her neighbours of age 58, 45, 44, 22 and 41 years on January 26, 2020. The victim's husband lodged a complaint at the Area

Police Office on January 27. The injured were examined at Koshi Hospital, Biratnagar on January 28 after instruction of the District Police Office, Saptari. The victim and her husband held a press conference at Rajbiraj on June 19 saying that the District Government Attorney's Office had written to the Area Police Office, Kadarbona to register a complaint but it was not registered. The victim was treated at the Neuro Hospital, Biratnagar. No complaint was registered till the end of this year.

Honour Killing

INSEC documented the incident of a 26-year-old sister being beaten to death by her 33-year-old brother in Khotang after she denied marrying the man of her brother's choice. The accused has been arrested by the police and the case is being investigated.

Killed after Rape

A 14-year-old boy was arrested by the police for raping and killing a four-year-old girl in Makwanpur. A complaint was lodged against a 16-year-old boy at the District Police Office, Bajhang on September 25 on a charge of raping and killing 12-year-old Samjhana Kami, a 6th grader of Matta Basic School. The victim was raped and killed on September 23. The complaint was lodged against the boy at the District Police Office on September 25, informed Gorkhe Kami, 62, grandfather of the victim. A bench of District Court Judge Padma Raj Pandey on October 16 ordered to send the accused to the Juvenile Rehabilitation Centre, Doti. The post-mortem of the body was conducted at the District Hospital, Simkhet on October 2.

Conclusion

Although incidents of violence against women have been recognized as serious crimes, such crimes will not decrease as long as there is a balance of power between men and women, women's economic dependence and poor enforcement of the law. However, with the joint efforts of all stakeholders and the effective implementation of the law, the cases of violence against women can be reduced. There is no doubt that effective implementation of poverty, illiteracy and economic empowerment programs will help reduce the incidence of violence against women. Looking at the statistics of recent years, it was found that the cases of sexual violence have increased. Therefore, women victims of rape need to be provided psychosocial counselling as well as an environment favourable to integration into the family and society as needed. Even though women are victims of domestic violence, the provision of reconciliation does not address serious cases. Most of the sexual crimes are committed while doing domestic chores, going to the forest for firewood and when they are alone at home. It is very important to provide special training to the health workers working in the local health institutions to enable them to test the incidents of rape in a scientific way. Therefore, the health of the victim should be examined immediately after the incident. Similarly, it is equally necessary to train the police at the local level to enable them to show promptness in addressing the incidents of violence against women immediately.

The state's incompetence towards women's health and sensitivity towards it is another serious issue. It seems impossible for the state alone to address the issue of violence against women and the problems that arise from it. Despite so many commitments from NGOs and state bodies, the growing number of victims is a matter of serious concern. Of course, within this period there has been an increase in awareness of crime. Illegal activities such as covering up the incident, arranging it in the village and the incidents with the support of such activities from the government bodies do not normalize the situation. People's representatives of different levels and levels on issues related to violence against women.

Suggestions

- The orders and directives issued by the Supreme Court regarding the making of women friendly laws should be followed.
- Speedy courts and family courts should be formed for speedy justice.
- Legal provision of punishment should be formulated according to the nature of domestic violence.
- There can be no compensation for the mental, social, and family pain caused by the harassment and abuse of witchcraft. To make quick reparation from the perpetrator available to the victim.

- To provide assistance to women victims of polygamy for easy legal services and financial self-reliance.
- The protection homes brought for the protection of women victims of violence should be organized in all 75 districts and the state should formulate a policy for self-employment, income generation, and employment of such women.
- Reconciliation should not be done in cases of sexual violence.
- Incidents of sexual violence should be investigated swiftly and impartially.
- To mobilize the Office for Combating Violence against Women under the Prime Minister's Office as a body to study and research on violence against women.
- National laws will be amended accordingly for commitments to international treaties.
- Stakeholders including civil society and media should be active in exposing incidents of gender based violence.

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For human rights and social justice

Informal Sector Service Centre (INSEC)

Nagarjun Municipality-10, Syuchatar, P.O.Box: 2726, Kathmandu

Phone: 01-5218770, Fax: 01-5218251

Email: insec@insec.org.np

Website: www.insec.org.np; inseconline.org