

SITUATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS THIS FORTNIGHT



In this fast-paced world, people seldom have time to read the news every day. Fortnight Human rights update is a new INSECOnline series aimed at disseminating a brief overview of National and International Human rights situation once in every two weeks. The series will be covering severe cases of Human rights violations Nationally and Internationally.

Human rights violations noted this fortnight have been enlisted below:

NATIONAL UPDATES

1. PRIVACY CONCERN AMID ELECTION

A memorandum has been submitted to the Election Commission by 24 NGOs and INGOs including 1,003 members of the public demanding controlled access to electoral roll data available on the poll body's website.

A digital rights organization called Body and Data has tabled three demands, a. limiting the access of the electoral roll data that is available publicly on the Election Commission's website only to relevant individuals to ensure their privacy, b. guaranteeing the privacy and security of the electoral database and c. amendment to laws concerning the election that go against the Constitution and the public's right to privacy. Sapana Sanjeevani, programme coordinator at Body and Data stated that the commissioner has agreed to all the points and acknowledged the flaws in making such data available publicly.

2. URBAN REFUGEES PROTEST OUTSIDE UN, NEPAL OFFICE

Refugees from different countries organized sit-in protest outside the United Nations Nepal office in Pulchowk, demanding for the assurance of their fundamental rights. They complained that the government of Nepal doesn't grant them refugee status which restricts them from exercising the fundamental rights like right to employment.

Protesters have put eleven-point demand stating that they are facing financial trouble after UNHCR Nepal cut off monthly funding support.

3. RAPE AND STATUTE OF LIMITATION

A meeting of the House of Representative has endorsed a proposal to increase the statute of limitation via bill to amend some laws related to sexual violence along with a report of the Law, Justice and Human Rights Committee under HoR.

Statute of limitation has been increased to two years in case of adult survivors and three years in case of minors. The change was instigated by the revelation of an eight-year-old rape case by a beauty pageant organizer and public pressure following the same. Government however has clarified that it wouldn't decide anything in haste.

4. CASE OF SUICIDE ABETMENT

A complaint was filed against Satish Kumar Safi, 24, and Vimallesh Mahara, 19, of Mirchaiya Municipality-2, on the charge of inciting to commit suicide after rape of a minor at area police office. As per the mother of the deceased, the victim committed suicide by hanging herself with a shawl. She also informed that the locals also knew about the incident of rape.

The postmortem of the body was conducted at the BP Koirala Institute of Health Science, Dharan. As per the DSP Hari Bahadur Wali, the police has been searching the absconded accused.

5. LOCALS APPEAL INSEC TO TAKE INITIATIVE FOR THE TIMELY DISTRIBUTION OF SOCIAL SECURITY ALLOWANCE

The beneficiaries of Pacharauta Municipality-8 have requested INSEC Bara Representative, Bhol Nath Poudel, to take initiative for the distribution of Social Security Allowance that has not been timely distributed by Pacharauta Municipality Office.

The social security allowance has to be distributed on time and with just four days remaining for the end of the fiscal year, the delay has hampered the routine of the locals.

Dharmalal Mahato Koiri, a local who is paralyzed for the last seven years hasn't received any allowance and has been struggling with treatment and medication. Bihari Thakur, another resident said that he was worried that he would not get the social security allowance in July as the municipality had not provided previous six-month instalment of the social security allowance. Case is same with Shiva Chaudhary Tharu.

6. WARD CHAIRPERSON INVOLVED IN CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE

The ward chairperson, Bhuwan Singh Ghalan has been arrested in the charge of child sexual abuse in the Kailash Rural Municipality, Makawanpur. Police had received a complaint against him last week.

Makawanpur District Court issued a warrant ordering his arrest. Based on the complaint filed, accused Ghalan sexually abused the child on July 2 in Hetauda while she was there to participate in the President Running Shield Sports Competition.

Sources: INSECOnline, The Himalayan Times, The Kathmandu Post, Onlinekhabar

INTERNATIONAL UPDATES

1. LAW SUIT AGAINST TIKTOK

Social media platform, TikTok has been sued by the families of two girls who allegedly lost their lives as a result of a viral TikTok 'blackout challenge.'

Parents of the two girls have filed a suit in the Los Angeles superior court noting that the challenge encouraged users to choke themselves until they pass-out.

Social Media Victims Law Centre (SMVLC) alleged that the platform's algorithm is so dangerous that it intentionally and repeatedly pushed videos of the challenge into the children's feeds, provoking them to participate in the challenge that is life threatening.

2. GUN LAW AND SOCIAL MEDIA

As a strategy to screen applicants for gun permits, US State of New York has opt to check the social media account of the applicants for a review of their 'character and conduct.' This new requirement is to come into force from September and was included in a law passed last week that sought to preserve some limits on firearms after the Supreme Court ruled that most people have a right to carry a handgun for personal protection.

This strategy was also signed by Governor Kathy Kochul noting that the shooters sometimes publicize their intent to hurt online.

3. NEGLECTING AFRICA COULD TRIGGER LABOUR SHORTAGE

International Monetary Fund's director for Africa stated that the International community would be playing with fire if it failed to help Africa recover from COVID and the impact of the Russia-Ukraine war.

Director of IMF's Africa department, Abebe Aemro Selassie further added that the failure to invest and support the continent would be detrimental to the global economy, as half of the new entrants into the global workforce over the next decade would come from sub-Saharan Africa. Additionally, he mentioned that almost certainly, unless we think robots are going to take care of everything, there is going to be a labour shortage in most advanced economies and even elsewhere.

Three African countries, Ethiopia, Somalia and South Sudan are facing acute food insecurity due to failed rains, rising food prices and lack of donor support at present.

4. CHICAGO SHOOTING : SEVEN KILLED, 30 INJURED

Seven people were killed and more than 30 were injured in the fatal shooting at an independence Day parade in Suburban Chicago. According to the authority, the man alleged to have shot managed to legally obtain five guns, including murder weapon even after a suicide attempt and a threat to 'kill everyone' back in 2019.

Accused Robert Crimo III, 21, has been charged with seven counts of first-degree murder following the massacre. Eric Rinehart, the Lake Country State's attorney stated that, if convicted, the accused would face a maximum sentence of life time imprisonment without the possibility of parole.

5. WORLD HUNGER : TO RISE

According to the United Nations report, up to 10% of the world's population (828 million people) were affected by hunger in the year 2021. This shows increase of world hunger by 46 million in comparison to 2020 and 150 million in comparison to 2019.

David Beasley, Executive Director of WFP stated that there is a real danger that these numbers will climb even higher in the months ahead and the Russia-Ukraine war might as well push the countries into famine.

He further added, the situation could give rise to global destabilization, starvation and unprecedented mass migration.

6. UZBEKISTAN UNREST : AT LEAST 18 KILLED

As per the country's authorities, minimum of 18 people have been killed and 243 have been injured in the Uzbekistan unrest at autonomous province of Karakalpakstan. The unrest occurred over a planned constitutional changes affecting Karakalpakstan's status.

Ria Novosti, a Russian news agency stated that 18 people died as a result of serious injuries caused during massive disorders in Nukus. Following this, 516 people were detained while dispersing the protesters. However, many of them have already been released.

Sources: Aljazeera, BBC, The Guardian

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